SPIRITUAL APPROCHES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE CASE OF AFRICA INLAND CHURCH AMONG THE TUGEN AND POKOT OF BARINGO PLAINS, KENYA

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Introduction

The role of Religion in resolving conflicts in society can be discussed both positively and negatively respectively. This is true because religion is often depicted as a trigger factor in many conflicts due to the fact that people relate to it as part of their indentifies (Kellas, 1998:33). Accordingly, in some parts of the world, people from different religions live in peace and coexist without any conflict. Therefore, the relationship between religion and conflict is a complex one, and scholars need to take into consideration many factors before one can argue that religion is the main cause of conflict (Goldstein, 1994:159). Religion in this context is glue that can bind and unify a nation or group of people or it can lead to the destruction of nations as well as lead to intra-state conflicts.

In areas where protracted ethnic conflicts thrive, churches in general and Africa Inland Church in particular have had to play a central role in peace building and reconciliation as part of Christian ministry and mission (Wells, 1997:14). This is in conformity with the teachings of Jesus Christ

who advocated for peaceful co-existence among believers and the rest of the world (Mathew5:9; 18:15-17; Hebrews 12:14)

In addition to the role of the church as antidote to conflicts, the phenomenon of ethnicity becomes an intrinsic component of the social-political realities of multi- ethnic states in the world in general and Africa in particular (Goldstein, 1994). Today, ethnicisation of politics and politicians of the ethnic communities have become very common and have diffused mutual intolerance and have thus sharpened ethnic consciousness among various communities in Kenya in particular (Njogu, Ngeta and Wanjau(ed), 2010). At this juncture, the process of socio-economic change, the ethnic dimensions of the power structure, and the policies, strategies as well as tactics adopted by various governments in response to the urges and aspirations of different ethnic groups provided a ground for clear understanding of ethnicity, ethnic and their dimensions as it relates to resources among other factors.

Achoka, (2009) reiterated that twenty first century presents several formidable challenges to mankind development. The challenges are experienced at the global national and regional scales. Common among these are hungers, poverty, conflict, war and terrorist. Consequently, mankind yearns for change for better because mankind development cannot take place in the absences of peace. The dramatic and often detrimental occurrence of inter – ethnics conflicts among communities, globally remain one of the intriguing issues among nations. Ethnic violence evokes profound emotions, debates and controversies as well as raising some fundamentals concerns. Conflicts are part and parcel of human societies because societies have variations.

Ethnic conflicts in Kenya occur frequently, although most are minor skirmishes. A significant increase on severity of such conflicts between the various population groups inhabiting country

was witnessed after the introduction of multi party policies in the early nineties, especially during the 2007-08 Kenyan crises. Major conflicts have also led to exoduses of the ethnic minority communities with root in other geographical areas. The factors identified as the sources of outbreak of communal violence among populations living in close proximity to each other include: colonial policies, political instigation, availability of land, access to water and pasture, loss of traditional grazing land, cattle raiding in Kenya, lack of alternative source of livelihood, fears of terrorism, harassment and theft and extortion (SK Cherutich, 2016).

Conflicts can be dealt   in a constructive and peaceful manner (Paffenholz, 2003). However managing ethnic conflict is inclusive because interested groups want to benefit from the same conflict they want to manage (Wirmark 2009). In the recent past churches have been among the peace actors, because conflict resolution and reconciliation constitute a very important mission. Moreover the church is mobilizing forces that bind different people together (Wirmark 2009). The church can only actualize the potentials of peace building and reconciliation because this is Devine call prerogative. Reconciliation therefore becomes part of the churches mission and of the ministry of every Christian (Wells 1997). Indeed the bible is the core point of reference for the church (Romans 12:18). It highlights several principles of peace building and reconciliation including love, justice, forgiveness and peace (Ecclesiastis 3:17). This exalts the values of human life and the rule of law. The church is called the body of Christ to maintain the integrity; churches must advocate for peace and love among the adherents. Ethnic conflicts are threats to the harmony of society and the integrity and the body of Christ. (Pope John Paul II) in his faith proclaims that violence is evil, unacceptable as a solution to problems and that violence in unworthy to man.

The church has been involved in peace building processes in areas affected by ethnic conflicts in Africa (Akerlund, 2001:111). The church has also been involved in peace building and reconciliation of Kenya, the Catholic Church has been strengthened by a commission i.e. Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) which maintain support on social justice networks across all Tasmania. The Roman Catholic has been offering food and shelter to the victims of ethnic resource conflict with the aim of restoring peace.

Therefore, the conflict between the Tugen and the Pokot communities of Baringo plains in Baringo County has been protracted for a very long time and hence an investigation of sorts should be carried to ascertain the reasons as well as establishing strategies aimed at jettisoning the impasse within the visioning of the AIC church. However, most conflicts in Baringo plains are caused by scarcity of natural resources, persistent droughts as a result of climatic changes. Coupled with climate changes issues, socio-economic and political marginalization, and active resistance by pastoral communities to adapt to modernity, and availability of light weapons are the major factors causing confusion and protracted conflicts among the Tugen and Pokot communities. This study, therefore, set to out to examine the role Africa Inland church in conflict resolution among the Tugen and Pokot communities of Baringo plains, Kenya.

Review of related literature

Peace building is a long-term process that covers all activities intended to promote peace and overcome violence. According to Paffenholz (2003) the overall aim of peace building is to prevent violent outbreaks of conflicts or to make sustainable transformation of violent conflicts into peaceful action. Thus, conflicts can be dealt in a constructive and peaceful manner.

According to Wirmark (1997), managing ethnic conflicts is elusive because interest groups sometimes want to benefit from the same conflicts they want to manage. She cites the example of Kenya's political establishment, which during the ethnic clashes of 1992 and 1997 exhibited partisanship in solving the clashes. As stated earlier, political affiliation is one of the causes of ethnic conflicts. Thus, Wirmark's assertion is probably true. Indeed in 1992 and 1997, there was the General election that overly used ethnic blocs. It was noted that ethnic conflicts occurred in areas perceived to oppose the then ruling party, Kenya African National Union (KANU). In such scenario, management of ethnic conflict by the Government of the day was unjustifiable due to its lack of neutrality. It is with apparent lack of neutrality by the Government that religious groups and churches come in to consolidate peace and to support structures that tend to support peace.

In his Action Programme for peace (1992), Boutros Boutros- Ghali a former UN Secretary General. He wrote about peace building after conflicts as an action to identify and support structures which would tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse in conflict (ibid, 21). He further notes that peace building implies building structures for peace in all phases of a conflict, not merely after the violent phase has been replaced by a fragile peace. Structures that contribute to strengthening and solidifying peace can be institutions that offer forms for peaceful conflict resolution or that prevent violence, such as church institutions.

Overview of Scheper (2002) on women, war and religion, highlights prevention of violent conflicts by underlining need to explore newer approaches. Further, he notes that peaceful solutions to violent conflicts need to be sought especially those that deal with communities at different levels. Maina (2000) in her study on ethnicity among the communities of Nakuru

District discusses various strategies of managing ethnic conflicts. These include channeling of power to methods that attract unity such as one party state; reallocation of resources to the less disadvantaged, enforcement of laws that call for co-existence into various communities and use of a national language policy and common ideology.

Maina (2000) seems to think about ethnic conflicts from the national scale, hence her strategies of one party state. She fails to realize that ethnic conflicts start at the grassroots where people interact in their daily chores. She further proposes reallocation of resources to less disadvantaged but he does not suggest the reallocation process. All these are geared towards attaining equality, but equality without peaceful coexistence will rarely stand.

Generally the works under review in this section offered insights in to the research by identifying and discussing some of the methods that are used in peace building and reconciliation. However, the works have not evaluated critically the roles of the churches in peace building and reconciliation which is the main task of this research.

Borrini-Feyerabend *et al*. (2000) state that collaborative management is a situation in which two or more parties negotiate, define and guarantee among themselves the sharing of the management functions, entitlements and responsibilities for a given territory or set of natural resources. The institutional arrangements for collaborative management can take many forms, ranging from official recognition of customary tenure rights to yearly contracts that allow villagers highly restricted access to State lands. State agencies may share resource allocation or management responsibilities with communities, including indigenous ones, and other parties such as user groups, NGOs and corporations (Castro and Nielsen, 2001).

The role of the church in peacemaking and reconciliation is strengthened by the fact that the social and political crisis in the society questions radically the message of the gospel. According to Thomas Aquinas (1946), peace is the tranquility that flows from right order. When we put right order into the structures of our society, the tranquility that results is peace. Many people, however, perceive peace as the absence of war or violence. In this model, peace is seen as the transformation of contextual and destructive interactions into more co-operative and constructive existence.

The church's charisma and likewise her unique nature vis-avis reconciliation, at whatever level it needs to be achieved, lies in the fact that she always goes back to that reconciliation at the source. For by reason of her essential mission, the church feels an obligation to go to the roots of the conflict, in order to bring healing and to re-establish, so to speak, an equally original reconciliation which will be the effective principle of all true reconciliation. Therefore, the church has the mission of proclaiming this reconciliation (Pope Paul II, 1984).

In the context of the change now taking place on the continent, the church has a role to play in reducing or eliminating all together the root causes of simmering or open conflicts and effecting true peace. One way of effecting true peace is by becoming agents of peace building and reconciliation (Magesa, 2003:90). Marvin C. Ott enumerates the characteristics and skills of a successful mediator in conflict situations, in our case, the church. Indeed the church has impartiality regarding issues of dispute. It commands respect of and is acceptable to all protagonists. It has the knowledge and skill to deal out with challenging issues of conflict. These characteristics informed this study in its pursuit of structuring the complementary approach.

Magesa (1996) equates peace with conflict transformation and resolution. He maintains that peace is achieved only when the root causes of the differences of conflicting relationships are explored and resolved. He defined reconciliation as "the act by which people who have been apart and split off from one another begin to stroll or match together again" (ibid).He equates reconciliation with conflict resolution, but in his view, reconciliation has dimensions   and more profound implications, because it makes an individual to transcend the ethnic affiliation and embrace the sense of love, which unites all people.

Observing this tendency of human beings committing themselves to kill others, Joseph Montville (2002) argues that church values have a very significant role to play in highlighting and reversing this destructive groups' process. This is the parabolic role of any church in society, to be a source of influence, in organic and pervasive ways as a free corporate decision-maker in the society. However, the pervasiveness of churches will become a reality if all the living deity of the universe. Though Montville's argument is based on inter-religious faith, it can apply to Christian Churches in Kenya. According to Magesa, there are four core values that promote healing in a conflict situation from religious worldview. The first value he notes is the fact that all human beings have "human dignity" or rather all human beings are created in the image of God (Magesa 1987).

Second, human beings live in God's world. Therefore as creatures, they need to accommodate one another. Third, religion or rather churches should help humanity to cross the boundary of negative ethnicity that characterizes our society (Magesa, 1987:71-86). Churches should thus emphasize commonality of Kenyans particularly the essential characteristic of humanity,

shunning the accidental characteristics such as political party affiliation, negative ethnicity and the geographical divides.

Fourth, churches should preach the Gospel. They need to emphasize that justice is required for human prosperity and peace. Therefore, church leaders, as shepherds who tend congregations comprising diverse political, socio-economic, cultural and ethno-linguistic backgrounds need to be impartial on various stand points as heads of churches. This will limit divisions within congregations, hence harmony and unity (Kobia, 2005).

Chile is one of the Latin America countries which suffered the same effect as Kenya from trauma and continued suffering from dictatorial regimes, discord and enmity (Aldunate 1997:45-47). As Kenya, Chile's wounds are rooted in the land issues and the extreme poverty of vast majority and population. Human rights' violation reached its peak during President Pinochet's regime. Over the years, different attempts of reconciliation have been made. Church has taken a good lead on this perspective on the basis of its Christian Ministry.

Taking an example from Church in Chile, the Kenyan Church has to take the core inspiration of reconciliation that stems from the Gospel. So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that you have something against your brother, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and come back and present your offering (Matthew 5:23-24). Also the Lord's Prayer holds …. Forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 6:12).

Churches may get into difficulties when brokering peace due to lack of proper methods. The current research, therefore, endeavored to establish the process of peace building and reconciliation, which the churches use in North Baringo Sub-County and Tiaty Sub-County

churches. At the same time the study tried to investigate whether they have been fulfilling their mission of building peace and reconciling the Tugen and Pokot community in natural resource conflicts.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed non-violence theory. Non-violence theory is credited to Mahatma Gandhi who adopted it as a philosophy and an ideal way of life (M. Nagler, 2009. He practiced it personally as a means of achieving goals intended to jettison the ills of society through symbolic protests, civil disobedience and non-cooperation with the *status squo* (M. Nagler, 2009).

Even though Gandhi did not invent the method per se, Gandhi is referred to as the father of non-violence method because he raised non-violence action to a level never before achieved (M. Shepard, 2002). Indeed, according to Krishna Kripalani (1990), Gandhi became the first individual to extend the principle of non-violence from the individual to socio-political spheres with far-reaching consequences. It was Gandhi who began to apply *satyagraha* more appropriated to the evils of society from a religious point of view. His application of non-violence should not be viewed as a mark of weakness rather as appropriate weapon. This method, which is passive violence rather than active, was applicable according to Gandhi because it avoided perpetration of violence. Further, Gandhi argued that Non-violence theory is accepting violence on oneself without inflicting on another (Gandhi, 1928). In addition, Gandhi admonished that those who use that method are blessed because it is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. As explained in his autobiography, *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the basis of truth searching (Gandhi, 2003). The truth is that non-violence is the epitome of courage because one is not afraid of the consequences of non-violence.

Other protagonists of non-violence theory include Martin Luther King Jr. In particular, King theorized and practiced non-violence in view of the civil rights movement in America (King, 1958). He advocated for peaceful coe-existence and reconciliation from a Biblical perspective and contended that "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools" (King 1958). In his book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, King outlines six principles for the operationalization of non-violence theory namely: Non-violence is a way of life for courageous people; non-violence seeks to win friendship and understanding; non-violence seeks to defeat injustice not people; non-violence holds that suffering can educate and transform; non-violence chooses to love instead of hate; non-violence believes that the universe is on the side of justice (King, 1958).

Apart from King other advocates of non-violence theory consist of Gene Sharp (2013), Joddy Williams (1995), Arun Gandhi (2016), Mairead Maguire (1999) and Desmond Tutu (1999). All these authors and protagonists of non-violence theory advocate resolving challenges and problems through a peaceful process. Desmond Tutu in particular contends that warring communities and races need to create a peaceful atmosphere by means of Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He further argues that Christians should be at the forefront in shunning away violence and embracing non-violence method in a view of a attaining a brighter and peaceful future for all (Tutu, 2016, 2014, 2010, 2008).

In relation to Africa Inland Church, demonstrating Christ's love is the epitome of reconciliation, harmony and peaceful co-existence among communities. This is enshrined in the church's objective number five namely: To show and demonstrate Christ love for people by engaging in selective community development projects based on Biblical and evangelical principles and

practices (AIC-Kenya website). This is in tandem with Christ teaching when he said, "….But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles (Matthew 5:39-41). This teaching by Christ is opposed to the teaching of Moses which advocated violence for violence when argued, "….eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand , foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound , bruise for bruise…(Exodus 21:24-25). In essence Jesus Christ using his church on earth advocates for conflict resolution and reconciliation by peaceful means which can only be achieved by non-violence method.

Methodology used

This paper utilized a descriptive research design to describe the dynamics of the conflict between the Tugen and Pokot communities in relation to the role of Africa Inland Church's approach to resolve the protracted conflict in Baringo plains using both qualitative and quantitative data as proposed by Kerlinger (1986),Ogula (2005) and Orodho (2003). This study took place within Baringo plains at the border between Tiaty and Baringo North Sub-counties of Baringo County. The researcher targeted the following specific AIC churches branches which were of concern, namely: Chesesoi, Cheptumo, Kipnai, Kagir, Loiwat , Churo, Komolion, Chemolingot, Nginyany Chemintany, Tilingwo, Kalabata, Kapturo, Chemoe, Chepkesin, Tuluk, Kisumet, Sibilo, Kinyach and Yatya. Baringo plains was selected because there have been persistent conflicts occurring frequently regardless of Kenya Government interventions.

The total target population was 593 respondents (baptized and registered members including 20 pastors and 130 elders from the 20 local churches mentioned below) drawn from the following

local churches Chesesoi (27), Cheptumo (28), Kipnai (28), Kagir (21), Loiwat (38) , Churo (33), Komolion (26), Chemolingot (28), Nginyany (33), Chemintany (28), Tilingwo 54), Kalabata (43), Kapturo (28), Chemoe (31), Chepkesin (21), Tuluk (16), Kisumet (31), Sibilo (16) and Yatya (39), Kinyach (28).

Table 3.1: Target population distribution table

S/No	Name of local church	Numbers of ordinary church members	Numbers of church elders	Number of pastors	Totals
1	Chesesoi	20	7	1	28
2	Cheptumo	15	7	1	23
3	Kipnai	20	7	1	28
4	Kagir	15	5	1	21
5	Loiwat	30	7	1	38
6	Churo	25	7	1	33
7	Komolion	20	5	1	26
8	Chemolingot	20	7	1	28
9	Nginyany	25	7	1	33
10	Chemintany	20	7	1	28
11	Tilingwo	40	13	1	54
12	Kalabata	35	7	1	43
13	Kapturo	20	7	1	28
14	Chemoe	25	5	1	31
15	Chepkesin	15	5	1	21

16	Tuluk	10	5	1	16
17	Kisumet	25	5	1	31
18	Sibilo	10	5	1	16
19	Yatya	33	5	1	39
20	Kinyach	20	7	1	28
Totals		**443**	**130**	**20**	**593**

Source: Researcher 2016

Purposive sampling was employed to determine the sample size using Mugenda and Mugenda's 30% formula (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The researcher, therefore, computed the 593 respondents based on the ordinary church members, church elders and pastors to arrive at the sample size as shown in the table below. Therefore, the researcher interviewed a total of 178 respondents among which 133 were ordinary church members, 39 church elders and 6 pastors. This study, using purposive sampling, selected the 3 pastors from among the Pokot local churches and the 3 pastors from among the Tugen local churches. Further, the researcher interviewed 2 elders from each local church. Consequently, the researcher purposely distributed the 133 church members equally among the 20 local churches and since we could not could not interview 6.5 persons, the researcher rounded to it to 7 people. This meant that 7 baptized and registered ordinary members were interviewed from the 20 local churches across the targeted study area.

Table 3.2: Sample size distribution Table

	Target pop	sampled
Pastors	20	6
Church Elders	130	39
Church Members	443	133
Total	**593**	**178**

Source: Researcher 2016

The researcher prepared questionnaires and interview schedules and asked for permission from the National Commission for Science and technology and innovation (NACOSTI) and a pre-visited the targeted Africa Inland churches bordering Tiaty and Baringo North Sub-Counties for familiarization. During the visit the researcher informed the churches management about the purpose of the intended study and made an appointment for data collection. The researcher in person collected the data from the respondents using the questionnaires and interview schedule instruments. The instruments were administered by the researcher and collected later

This study utilized questionnaires and interview schedules to gather the appropriate information and research data. The questionnaires were both close-ended and open-ended items. The close-ended questions being those that the respondents who would give "yes" or "no" for an answer while the open-ended would require more thoughtful answers with details included.

Gathoni (2008) defined a questionnaire as a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. In the case of this study, the researcher constructed closed-ended and open ended questionnaires which were administered to 6 church pastors, church elders and

133 ordinary and registered church members. The use of questionnaires was advantageous because it gave the respondents adequate time to give well thought answers and poised to allow dependable and reliable information.

Consequently, a structured interview schedule (sample questions which guided the researcher) was used to obtain information from the respondents. This technique was significant because it enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of people's attitudes, preferences and behaviors as explained by Ogula (Ogula, 2005). The technique was, however, used flexibly to enable the interviewer to probe the interviewed for additional details. It also gave chances to illiterate respondents to participate in the process.

After collection from the field, the data were coded and cleaned to remove outliers or missing values and were categorized manually according to the questionnaires and interview schedule themes items using frequency distribution tables and percentages. The coded data were then transferred to a computer sheet and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Program Version 22. Data were then presented by the use of tables, pie charts and graphs.

Presentation of Findings
Conflict resolution and reconciliation process from a Biblical perspective can be discussed within the context of Romans 12:18. Christians are called to seek peace with one another and by implication their respective communities. This command to create a world filled with a holistic sense of peace, *shalom*-peace, (John 14:27), does not mean turning a blind eye to injustice, be it personal or structural, indeed, another imperative, that of *mishpat* (justice) requires all people, as bearers of God's image to work for the restoration of shattered and distorted social order in which we live. The achievement of justice is a necessary prerequisite for the establishment of

peace, but the justice to be worked for cannot be simple be indentified with the demands of any one ethnic society or poverty stricken grouping-it must be truly impartial, without bias to the rich and the poor (Deuteronomy 1:17).

Africa Inland Church activities related to conflict resolution and reconciliation are not structurally aligned with the church's *order of service manual* or in the *Katiba* but, based on the Gospel of Great Commission and admonitions of Jesus towards peace Matthew 28:18-19; Matthew 5:9). During the interview of the pastors, majority of them from the two regions (Tugen and Pokot churches) responded that intercessory meetings, reconciliation forums and teaching of Christian biblical values among the communities to be the core steps undertaken for peace sake. On the other hand, the church elders and the ordinary church members interviewed concurred with the pastors' responses.

This section outlines the steps taken by the Africa inland church to reduce animosities among the Tugen and the Pokot Communities. The church pastors responded that the steps taken by the Africa Inland Church in conflict resolution include prayer, fasting and intercessory meetings. To the church, this strategy was key because in a desperate situation like the protracted conflict among the Tugen and Pokot, the people involved and the church had to seek for a divine intervention. Divine intervention was necessary because even the government has not been able to jettison the impasse. This strategy is not new as it has been used both the Old and the New Testament.

In the 14th year of King Hezekiah for example, Sennacharib, the Assyrian king attacked all the fortified cities of the kingdom of Judah rendering the Israelites hopeless and desolate. The Assyrian army was stronger than that of the kingdom of Judah prompting the Israelites to seek

the divine intervention. As the Bible indicates, both Isaiah the prophet, and Hezekiah went to God in prayer and God gave them victory against their enemy (Isaiah 36). Similarly, when Ezra was re-building the walls in Jerusalem (Ezra 3), the enemies tried to disorganize him but he interceded by pray and there was a divine intervention. Jesus on the other hand, at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus went to wilderness and lived a solitary life for 40 days and 40 nights to defeat the enemy by divine means (Mathew 4). In the desert experience, Jesus teaches us that there is need to seek divine intervention when faced with crises beyond us. Trough the experiences of the Old and New Testament, there is prove from a religious point of view that prayer is effective and brings results to crises such war and conflicts (Daniel 9; Zechariah 4; Mathew 21; Philippians 4; Hebrews 5).

African Inland Church, therefore, believes in the power of prayer as outlined by scriptures of the Bible. The church approves that prayer, intercessory and fasting precedes mission and action. Bible scholars, such as John Dear (1993), support this stand by indicating that evil can be resisted effectively by prayer. However, this does not mean that prayer alone was used by Africa Inland church to jettison the impasse in Baringo plains. The church used other steps as shown below.

According the respondents, AIC was also involved in the processes of mitigation, reconciliation meetings, life values' impartation and planting of new churches in conflict prone areas which allowed inter-community pastors peace meetings to be held. On this issue, of church elders responded that the church's steps to curb conflict was done through organizing stake-holders for peace meetings which included the members of parliament, county government personnel, chiefs, council of elders and members of county assemblies.

In addition, the ordinary church members said that AIC advocated for seminar fora to instill inter-community harmony and repair broken relationships between the Tugen and the Pokot. The respondents added that Africa Inland Church organized conferences, workshops and other meetings to sensitize the youth and women in particular on the value of good relationship between the warring communities. This process tallied very well with the strategy Jesus used to address his agenda and ministry. Jesus not only addressed spiritual matters in his ministry but also the economic and political issues. For, example Jesus fed the hunger and healed the sick (Mark 6; Mathew 10). He also advocated that people must pay taxes (Mathew 17). Therefore, according the respondents, AIC was not only addressing the spiritual concerns of the Pokot and Tugen but also other physical issues affecting them as outlined above. This is in tandem with Mathew 25: 43 which Jesus instructed his disciples and all future Christians to ensure that the poor and vulnerable people are supported.   The table below summarizes the responses by the respondents on the steps taken by African Inland church in conflict resolution and reconciliation

Responses on the steps taken by the Africa Inland Church on conflict resolution and reconciliation

Respondents	Steps taken by the church	No. of responses	Percentage of responses
Pastors 6	Intercessory prayers	2	33.3%
	Reconciliation meetings	1	16.7%
	Teaching biblical values	1	16.7%
	Planting new churches	1	16.7%
	Others	1	16.7%
		6	**100%**

Church elders (39)	Intercessory prayers	15	38.5%
	Reconciliation meetings	12	30.8%
	Teaching biblical values	4	10.3
	Planting new churches	5	12.2%
	Others	3	7.7%
		39	**100%**
Church embers (133)	Intercessory prayers	48	36.1%
	Reconciliation meetings	35	26.3%
	Teaching biblical values	15	11.3%
	Planting new churches	25	18.8%
	Others	10	7.5%
		133	**100%**

Source: Researcher 2016

Intercessory prayers and reconciliation meetings have been highlighted as the major steps taken to address resource conflicts among Pokots and Tugens. According to Kobia (2005), he observed that peace is achieved only when the root cause are addressed and resolved.

In regard to the conflict resolution and reconciliation process employed by the Africa Inland Church in Baringo plains, of the pastors responded that the church need to employ tangible methods to curb protracted conflicts and bring a lasting solution the warring communities.

As findings confirm, mapping and adjudication of land for both the Tugen and Pokot within the precincts needed to be done to minimize the conflicts. The church's role on this issue was to put on pressure on the government to speed up the process of land adjunction and to mediate

between the warring communities not fight over boundaries (Isaish1:8) based on the principle of reasoning together. The church's thinking on the mapping and adjunction was to ensure that communal land ownership is transformed into individual land ownership.

Consequently, the church sensitized the communities on the need for the government to improve on transportation system and communication networks and encouraged the community leaders to put pressure on the government to build roads and provide the necessary infrastructure for communication systems. The respondents indicated that such messages were communicated by pastors during Sunday sermons and when church elders who sometimes double up as community leaders are invited to community peace meetings.

Further, Africa Inland Church initiated Interdenominational meetings to mobilize the two communities to advocate for the introduction of a holistic education in the curriculum for knowledge impartation and acquisition amongst the learners particularly on issues related to harmonious living. In the same way, Africa Inland Church sponsored inter-community gospel competition songs to forge interaction between the communities from an Interdenominational perspective. The denominations which were persuaded by Africa Inland Church to form the Interdenominational fellowship to advocate for the activities above include: Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, Roman Catholic Church among others.

Besides, Africa Inland Church fronted peace workshops, donated food and other basic items to the displaced people who frequently ran to Kinyach, Ayatya, and Kapturo AIC local churches after the skirmishes of cattle rustling related activities over the last 10 years. The respondents also cited the role of Africa Inland Church of advocating for the government to build pastoral boarding institutions to accommodate the children of the pastoral communities, the church also

requested the government to create a game reserve within the border line of the Tugen and the Pokot as this would reduce boundary tensions.

Similarly, the church elders who filled the questionnaires responded by indicating that income generating activities such as irrigation schemes to be created to keep the youth of the two communities busy. The elders also pointed out that since the area in which the protracted conflicts occur is sanctuary of minerals such as diatomite, the youth can be employed. The church, through the elders, identified the creation of industries as one the major opportunities for which the government could use to minimize conflicts because the   youth could channel their energies to employment rather than raiding for cattle.
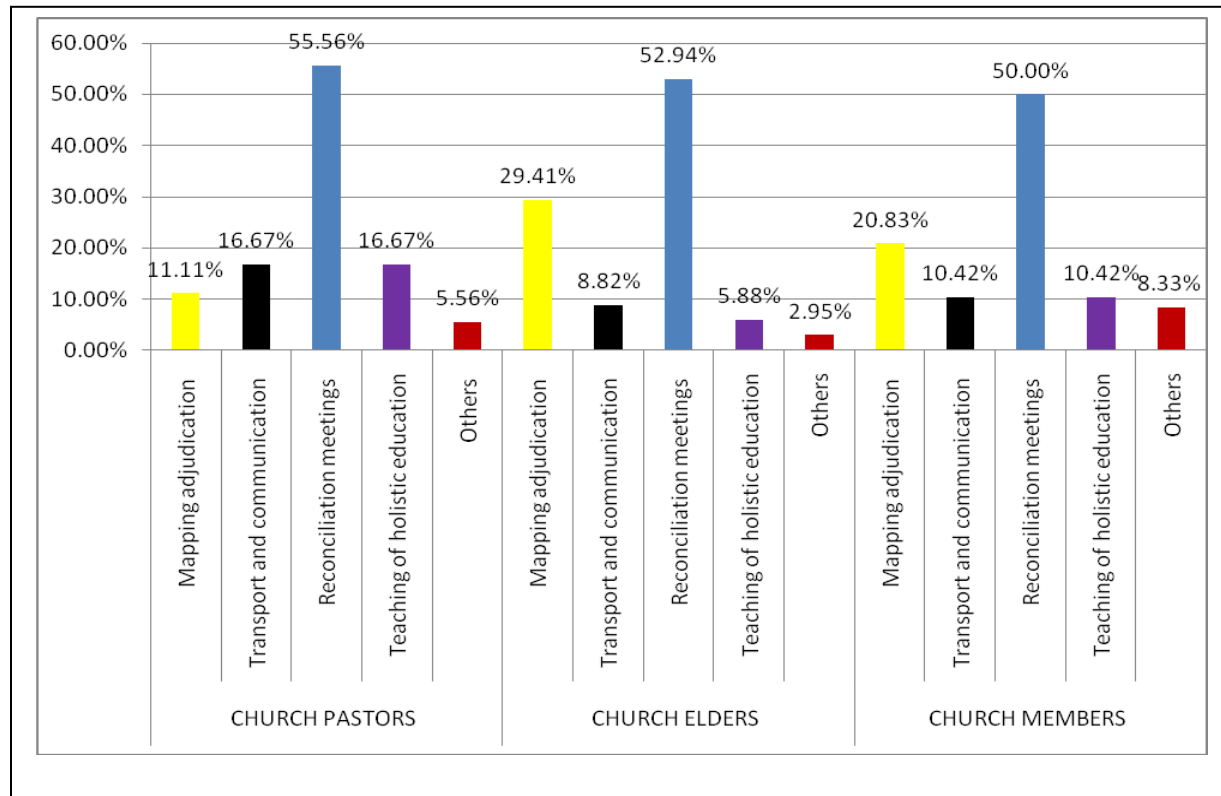
According to the information provided by the ordinary church members, 78% answered the questionnaires and interviewed and their responses were sharing the same sentiments with the pastors on issues related to the conflicts amongst the warring communities. The respondents also pointed out that the church leadership was the safaricom company to install boosters to enhance communication and efficient networking for people to communicate and pass exchange ideas where the landscape is hostile like Kapturo which is hilly and mountains hence rendering communication network difficult.

Respondents also, during the interview of the church pastors and the church elders, gave similar information to that of the ordinary members on the fact that every household should teach their siblings on the consequences of war so that they can value their lives. The church members who were interviewed their responses concurred with the pastors and the church elders. They also added that there is need for more boreholes to be drilled in several areas to reduce the scrambling of water springs during the dry seasons. In all these, Africa Inland Church was playing the role

of reaching out to the government and Non Governmental Organizations to hasten the development agenda that could change the people's attitudes towards harmony and unity among warring communities.

Below are the summary of the methods employed by the church to bring a lasting solution.

Responses of methods to be employed by the church to bring a lasting conflict solution

Source: Resear Church pastors 6   Church elders 39   Church members 133

The findings indicate that African Inland Church played a fundamental role in conflict resolution and reconciliation by organizing the necessary meetings to enable the members of the warring communities to dialogue. Some of the major reconciliation meetings took place Kinyach, Kapturo, and Chemoe in 2012 after serious attacks by the Pokot on the Tugen took place. The church also took upon itself to initiate interdenominational meetings to involve more churches

besides AIC in the matter of reducing animosities among the Tugen and Pokot. In addition, as indicated above, there were also competitions and camp meetings organized by AIC to bring together the warring communities. Mapping and adjudication is a new phenomenon that respondents that was used to address conflicts.

According to Kobia (2005), a strategy to address conflict includes emphasis on justice and being impartial on various stand points. The church has the obligation to go to the roots of conflict in order to bring healing and to re-establish, so to speak, and equal original reconciliation which will be the effective principle of all true reconciliations (Pope Paul II, 1984). This seem to suggest the same as Kobia (2005) who emphasized that church leaders and shepherds who tend congregations with diverse political socio-economic, cultural and ethno-linguistic backgrounds need to be impartial on various stand points as heads of churches. This seems to agree with the same issues arising in natural resource conflict among the Pokot and the Tugen communities living in Baringo County. These suggestions limit divisions and hence create harmony and unity in conjunction with Mugesa (2003:90).

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