

Nature of Conflicts resulting from Artisanal Gold Exploration in Ikolomani Sub-County, Kakamega County-Kenya

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Abstract: *Gold mining has caused many conflicts in different parts of the world. The mining communities conflict because of the scarce resources and the high demand of the precious gold. Most of the mining communities are poor, and find it necessary to extract the gold to try and put bread on the table. Artisanal miners do not have the required equipment to mine gold. There arise many conflicts in Ikolomani that would not be there if gold mining was not done. This research investigated the nature of conflicts resulting from gold mining in Ikolomani-Sub County. The paper aims at examining the contribution of gold mining to conflict in the region. Thus, the results reveal the manifestation of conflict resulting from gold mining, the causes, and the parties that conflict because of gold mining.*

Key Words: Artisanal, Gold Mining, Conflicts, Miners

1.0 Introduction

Gold mining is a significant sector in the world economy and in at least 34 African Countries. Ikolomani gold mines are found in Kakamega County. Many countries worldwide have had conflicts resulting from artisanal gold mining. Most artisanal gold miners are from socially and economically marginalized communities and turn to mining in order to escape extreme poverty, unemployment and landlessness. Sometimes the gold is present, but in low and unexpected quantities especially considering the depth of the mines. The low quantity of gold is used for sustaining their lives. As a result of this, there are many conflicts from artisanal gold mining. The research sought to establish the nature of community conflicts that result from gold mining in Ikolomani division. The study sought to

determine how conflicts manifest in the area as a result of gold mining, causes of conflicts, incidence of conflict and the parties involved.

A. 2.0 Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the theory of cumulative and cyclical interdependence as its framework. Cumulative and cyclical interdependence theory originated from the works of Myrdal (1997) who coined it as “interlocking, circular, interdependence within a process of cumulative causation”. Myrdal argued that personal and community well-being are closely linked in a cascade of negative consequences, and that closure of a factory or other crises can lead to a cascade of personal and community problems including migration of people from a community. Thus, the interdependence of factors causing conflict actually accelerates once a cycle of

decline starts. For example, at the community level, resource use conflict leads to migration, closing retail stores and declining local tax revenue which leads to a deterioration of schools and leads back to poorly trained workers, resulting in firms not being able to utilize technology fully, which turns back to a greater conflict. This cycle also repeats itself at the individual level.

3.0 Methodology

The study employed descriptive and evaluation research design. The study was conducted in Ikolomani Sub-County, Kakamega County, Kenya. This study adopted stratified random sampling for sub-locations, proportionate random sampling, and simple random sampling for miners and purposive sampling for village elders and assistant-chiefs. There are 1050 miners in the selected sub-locations where 10% were selected for the study. The study population constituted the 105 miners, 6 village elders and 3 sub chiefs. Data collection methods included Primary sources including, Focus Group Discussions, Observations checklists, Interviews Schedules and Questionnaires. Secondary Sources which were relevant documents and reports were used. Qualitative data from focus group discussions and interview guides was analysed using thematic narratives. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS, MS Excel and Access to give measures of central tendency (mean, mode, median) and frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics were used particularly Chi Square to give the association among the variables.

4.0 Study Findings

The research sought to establish the nature of community conflicts that result from artisanal gold mining in Ikolomani division. The objective sought to determine how conflicts manifest in the area as a result of gold mining, causes of conflicts, incidence of conflict and the parties involved. To achieve this objective, the researcher administered questionnaires to miners, conducted FGDs with the miners, interviewed assistant chiefs and village elders as well as officials from the department of geology. Observation technique

was also used to help identify the nature of conflicts in the area.

B. 4.1 Incidences of Conflict

The study sought to establish the frequency and incidence of conflict in Ikolomani Sub County. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they witnessed any conflicts. The results are indicated in Figure 4.7.

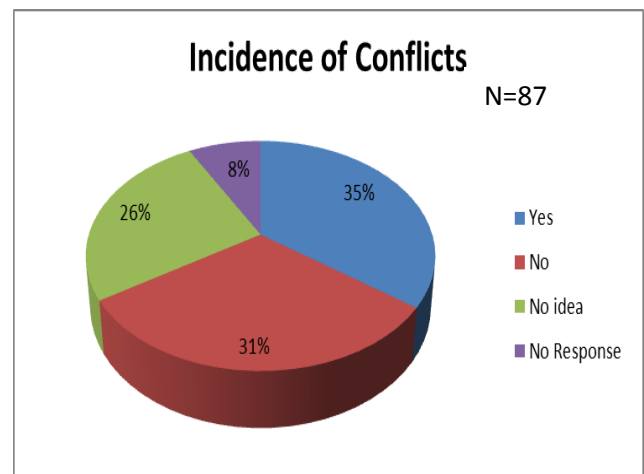


Figure 4.7 Incidence of Conflicts Resulting from Gold Mining (Source: Field Data, 2016)

A Chi Square test conducted on the responses indicated that there were highly significant ($P < 0.01$) variations in the response ($X^2_{1,0.01} = 337.50$) among miners. When asked whether there were any conflicts that arise as a result of gold mining and mining in the area, majority of the respondents 30(37%) admitted that there are several conflicts resulting from gold mining. This left a distribution of 27(31%) who believed that gold mining does not bring any conflict in the area, while 23(26%) of the respondents had no idea.

Results from FGDs with the miners indicated that there were conflicts that affect the local community resulting from artisanal gold mining. The respondents agreed that in one way or another, there are many disputes in the area that would not be there, were it not for the gold mining activities. Results from FGDs and interviews revealed that conflict prevalence within the area has been on the increase, adversely affecting the community directly or indirectly. Interviews with

village elders and assistant chiefs indicated that the conflicts have been there, and are indeed increasing. These local administrators attributed the increment in conflicts to the increased number of miners and the reduced mining land as well as the decline in the gold deposits at the mines.

The researchers witnessed several conflicts in the field. In Lirhembe Sub-location, the miners had a conflict with the land owner who claimed that they had dug the tunnel up to beneath his house. He reported to the police and some miners were arrested. The miners and the land owner exchanged insults as they struggled to resolve the dispute. In Musoli, the researchers observed the miners' conflict after the dealers bought the days harvest. One of the miner who had not been present the whole day and just came a few minutes before the group discovered a stone believed to be having gold was denied the pay. He argued that the work that the group had done since morning is not the one that had borne the fruits, but what he had contributed the few minutes he was there. The group members, however, refused to give him a share. Some members supported him while the majority were against that. The two groups started throwing stones at each other, and only settled the dispute next day when the miner was given a small share.

The results from interviews with the assistant chiefs and village elders indicate that conflicts have been there in Ikolomani because of gold mining. The miners have been conflicting amongst themselves because the gold deposits are low. There are too many expectations as compared to the reality in the field. There are continuous conflicts that occur in Ikolomani as a result of gold mining. Gold mining in Ikolomani additionally causes conflicts among the different indigenous communities especially between the Idakho and Isukha sub communities who constantly compete over the control and exploitation of gold mining. Unrealistic demands are usually as a result of lack of information and communication between government, mining companies and local communities. The tensions related to the environmental fallout from mining activities in Ikolomani division are clearly taking their toll. Conflicts stand offs between mining companies and anti-mining companies in the

mining region, example the village members built their houses at the vulnerable areas near the mining site and this presents threat to their lives.

The conflicts which arise are caused by the expectations verses the reality. This is due to the fact that when hiring the land for gold mining purposes the prospector has a high expectation of finding huge quantity of gold but sometimes that is not the case, the reality can unfold itself in a positive or negative way. In a negative way in that some prospectors who rent the land from the owners for exploring purposes will not comply with the idea that it is not guaranteed to find gold or at times gold is found in small amount and that the earlier agreed capital amount for hiring the land should be cleared with the land owner. This worsens the situation, thereby, fuelling up conflict between the land owner and the prospector. Other conflict arises among the miners due to some members stealing the communal products. This leads to major thefts within the mining group. They also conflict due to working time.

C. 4.2 Causes of Conflicts

The study sought to establish the reasons for conflicts associated with gold mining in Ikolomani Sub County.

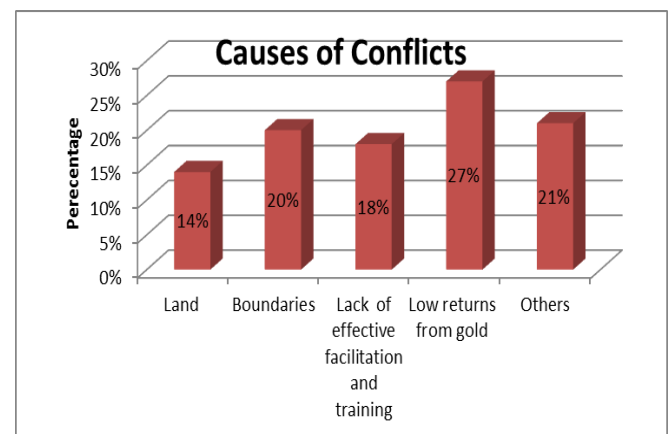


Figure 4.8 Causes Of Conflict As A Result Of Gold Mining In Ikolomani Sub-County

(Source: Field Data, 2016)

A Chi Square test gave $X^2_{5,0.00}=170.12$, with $p<0.01$. Therefore, there was a highly significant ($p<0.01$) variation in the reasons for participation in conflict. On the causes of conflict in the gold

mining areas in Ikolomani division, 12(14%) of the miners felt that land is a cause of the conflicts involving gold mining. 17(20%) of the miners were of the opinion that boundary issues are the main causes of conflict in Ikolomani Division. 16(18%) pointed out that lack of effective facilitation and training make the miners to conflict amongst themselves, with the mining companies and with government officials. The largest percentage of respondents 24(27%) were of the opinion that the low returns from gold mines cause majority of the conflicts. However, 18(21%) did not answer this question.

Further information from key informants revealed that some people engage in conflicts to scare miners so that the number can reduce and allow some fewer people to benefit from the gold deposits. Information from interviews also indicated that poverty, and historical family injustices were among conflicts in Ikolomani Sub County because of artisanal gold mining.

The results from the questionnaires indicate that conflicts arise when a person or a company extends its activities of exploring gold to another person's land 12(14%). During interviews with officials from the geology department, the officials gave an example of the Municipal Gold Mining site in Lirembe Village. There was a conflict between the miners and their neighbours simply because they were accused of crossing over to another person's boundary, which lead to the destruction of the fence belonging to the Municipal Gold mine. According to the assistant chiefs interviewed, in some cases, the miners dig underground tunnels where they mine beyond their boundaries. They start mining in another person's land, causing danger to his or her buildings and crops. This makes the miners and the land owner conflict as the land owner claims that the miners are taking resources in his land without consent. One of the miners stated that:

Some of the miners are thieves. They discovered that there is the possibility of gold deposits in my land when we were digging a toilet pit. They came to my land at night and started digging. They destroyed the latrine that we had fixed during the day. I was surprised to

wake up in the morning and find that I did not have a latrine. I fixed it again and they returned tonight. I called a witchdoctor who went around the pit. They were frightened and did not come back. (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

During FGDs, the miners agreed that they have a tendency of mining in public reserves such as roads and land preserved for schools and hospitals. The miners explore the land claiming that it is public land, and should be used to benefit the community. However, government officials are quick to notice such activities and take legal action against the miners. In fact, there is a case between the government and miners who were found exploring land preserved for roads.



Plate 4.2: Miners Mining on the Musoli-Mumbesta Road

Land is one of the treasured resources in Africa. People value land and feel irritated when it is endangered. Thus, in Ikolomani, anyone who goes beyond his or her boundaries to explore another person's land causes conflicts. In fact, the government introduced title deeds so that every person can have his or her own land. Conflicts in mining areas are related to land and land boundaries. In Ikolomani Sub-County, some miners rent land for exploring and gold mining purposes, but they do not pay as earlier agreed between the miner and the land owner.

Another case of conflict over gold mining in Ikolomani Sub-County which presents itself indirectly from the study is fuelled by the secrecy

of mining agreements and the lack of involvement of legal officers to represent the locals, which remains a major source of mistrust and potential conflict. The locals feel conned, since the mining process will be taking place in their ancestral land, and if the processes are shrouded in secrecy, this alienates the locals and feeds the suspicion that only a few well-heeled individuals will benefit from the mineral wealth. Such exclusion is often a cause of conflict between investors and local communities. African Barrick Gold Company in Ikolomani Sub-County was invaded and investor's property looted by the local communities who felt disregarded and alienated in their own land (Wrigley, 2009).

While mining, miners work in a communal way. This is because it is difficult to extract the reef alone. However, while dividing the amount of the reef they have obtained, some the miners are discontented and result into conflicts. As well, other conflict arises among the miners due to some members stealing the communal products. This leads to major thefts within the mining group. They also conflict due to working time. The interviewed miners indicate this by giving the example that, they might agree to work until six in the evening. However, some miners may like to extend till seven. These results into conflicts that in some times is severe.

D. 4.3 Manifestation of Conflicts

The study sought to investigate how conflicts resulting from artisanal gold mining are manifested in the area.

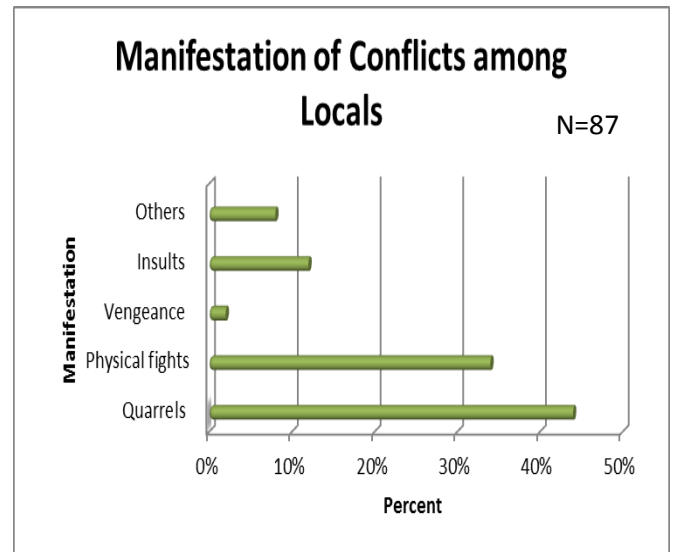


Figure 4.9 Manifestation Of Conflicts Among Locals

(Source: Field Data, 2016)

Out of the 87 miners, 38(44%) pointed out that conflicts resulting from artisanal gold mining in Ikolomani are manifested in from of quarrels, 26(34%) indicated physical fights, 2(2%) vengeance and 10(12%) indicated that they are in form of insults. Respondents from FGDs pointed out that quarrels are the most common method of manifestation of disagreements. The community has also witnessed frequent fights especially if the parties involved fail to settle their disagreement amicably. According to the assistant chiefs, insults and intimidation are common manifestations. Some people who fail to immediately show their emotions keep them and plan to revenge. The researcher witnessed miners quarrelling after a stone that was believed to have gold deposits was excavated. All the miners came to the spotted stone and a fight resulted, leaving three miners injured and taken to the hospital. It took the intervention of the village elder to calm the situation.

Unfortunately, artisanal gold mining in Ikolomani has become a spate of crime and violence. In remote areas of Ikolomani, people are being found dead, the victims of hot tempers and greed. One miner in Musoli who was shot and robbed of his gold said:

You can't trust anyone, even your friends and those you work with. Your own friends would kill you. They follow you and kill you to take away your sweat. I am alive by luck. (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

A former chairman of the Kakamega County Council, said the villagers had threatened to invade his home, which is not too far from the road, because there is a tunnel from the abandoned mines, which passes through his compound. To secure his property, he had to call in Administration Police officers to keep the villagers away from his home. At one point, police and administration officials were called in to disperse the villagers who had gathered at the site in large numbers.

According to Veiga & McAllister (2001), gold mining boomtowns are often lawless places rife with theft, prostitution, drug and alcohol abuse, and murders. The people who suffer the most in these towns are not always gold miners. Visitors and other locals who are not part of the mining suffer from the evils associated with mining. People behave differently when faced by conflicting situations. There are some who forgive and move on with life. Others have vengeful mind and start planning what they will do to harm a person who harmed them, or one that they believe wronged them. Some people get irritated and start a physical fight immediately. The fight can result to other crimes such as murder. In case one is defeated in the physical fight, he might plan to eliminate the enemy or fight again.

4.4 Parties Involved In Conflict

The study sought to investigate the parties involved in conflicts resulting from artisanal gold mining. The results from questionnaire are in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Parties Involved in Conflicts in Ikolomani Sub-County

Parties involved	Frequency	Percentage
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Among the Miners	35	40%
Miners and mining companies	24	28%
Miners and government	13	15%
Government and mining companies	10	11%
Among dealers	5	6%
Total	87	100%

(Source, Field data, 2016)

Conflict between Artisanal Miners and Gold Exploring Companies

Among the 87 miners given the questionnaires, 24(28%) believed that there are conflicts between the miners and the mining companies. The results obtained from the study indicated that in recent years, there has been an increase in the living standard. This has led to people looking for other ways to enhance their livelihood. As a result, mining of gold has become one of the main escape goats. Thus, there has been an increased competition in the small scale mining in Ikolomani Sub-County escalating cases of disputes. As well, big companies have initiated mining activities in order to prospect gold availability and quantities. Due to the high demand in the mineral, there are various parties involved in conflict due to competition over gold mining (Yelpaala & Ali, 2005). According to the informants from the geological department representatives interviewed, the main kind of conflict that has inhabited the area is the conflict between the artisanal miners and the mining companies. Currently in place, the Viva Mining Company Limited has been in conflict with the local communities which are the main artisanal miners for a period of seven months now. The company is an international mining organization that has conducted several mining activities in Uganda. The conflict comes as a result of competition in mining field and the artisans fear

that they will be overwhelmed. The conflict is reaching alarming rate that require urgent solution.

One of the critical elements in the conflict situations is the divergence of opinions on the expectations of mining and development at the local community level. Community had high hopes of the impact of mining on the development and wellbeing of the local areas. As was argued in literature, the “resource curse” and the continued social deprivation in the mining communities might have led to this “development dreams” (Shilaro, 2000).

According to Shilaro (2000), gold resources have been in the Ikolomani for quite a long time but its role in fostering the development progress of the local people has been questionable. Hence, the realization of foreign investment, the community-self assessment of financial benefits, as well as corporate promises considerably shaped expectations. The people, therefore, expected much from the mining companies and the actual realization of social benefits were far below their initial expectations. These benefits in comparison with the environmental impact of mining operations became the breeding grounds for potential disputes and conflicts that evolved later in the area (Ibid). Though Mining Companies assert that these expectations are imaginary and often lie outside their sphere of influence as business entities, they also highlighted the projects that have been developed as part of their corporate social responsibility programs. CSR remains mining company’s tool for driving the development progress of their catchment areas (Viega & McAllister, 2001).

Conflict among Artisanal Miners

Results from the questionnaires indicate that majority of the miners 35(40%) believe that most of the conflicts resulting from artisanal gold mining are among the miners. During focus group discussions and interviews, the respondents indicated that, there is a severe conflict between the artisanal mining groups. The miners have formed mining groups to help each other in the digging and mining process. There is a lot of

competition in the mining groups as they try to secure sites believed to have gold. Consequently, the mining groups are in continuous conflicts. This comes as a result of competition in the mining field.

As well, they conflict due to the fact that some members are in more than one group. Miners agreed during FGDs that they belong to more than one group to maximize on the income. Therefore, these members are benefiting from different groups that make others members of the group uncomfortable. According to the interviews with assistant chiefs, when it comes to sharing of revenues, some members may want to benefit more than the others by using petty excuses, disagreements usually occurs during sharing of revenues. The artisanal miners are not trained and they mine using minimal mining skills that exist. During their mining activities, they blast stones in unprofessional manner. Mostly, this leads to cracking houses, which causes major conflicts in the area.

Not every person in Ikolomani is a miner or is involved in mining activities. According to one of the chiefs interviewed, the non-mining residents find the gold mining a nuisance in their lives. The miners occasionally conflict with the locals because they dig in private land without considering the boundaries.

There are a lot of cultural beliefs surrounding the gold mining in Ikolomani. These cultural beliefs fuel a lot of conflict in the community. An elder from Shivagala said that the miners are not allowed to sleep with their wives when going into the pits, thus fueling infidelity and break-up in marriages.

You can imagine a miner working 24/7 and yet he is not supposed to sleep with his wife. So how does she survive? (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

The village elders also said that women are not supposed to help in prospecting and mining. They are only expected to cook and fetch water for the miners. While going to sell the gold, the miners do not shake hands with people. They believe if they do so, the *imaali* will disappear mysteriously.

Thus, in case something happens to the harvested gold, the miners argue that one of the group members either greeted someone or slept with his wife. This fuels conflicts among the miners as no one accepts he is the reason behind the disappearance. During FGDs, the miners argued that some miners also believe that the mineral is only bequeathed to some families. At Shivagala village, one man and his brothers are among the few mining families that believe they have a birth right to the mineral.

According to one of the assistant chiefs interviewed, some of the miners believe the gold is from their ancestors and thus bury some of the cash they receive at gravesites. Consequently, some of the members of the community dig up graves at night to steal the money buried with the departed. The assistant chief cited a case in his village where a grave was excavated a few months ago by thieves who believed that some money was buried. The departed had been mining gold since he was 15 years. He died at the age of 56. He had inherited the job from his father and grandfather. This, he had to be buried with some money to appease his spirit.

Apart from their beliefs, they use their money to marry many wives and keep mistresses. Some have several children with different women. During FGDs, miners agreed that they have more than one wife because women like them. They have gold and women believe that they can sustain them. This makes their families to fail as they cannot sustain many women. The money they get from mining activities is too little to sustain more than one family. They are faced with continuous family conflicts as they cannot provide what they promise when marrying many wives.

Government and Mining Companies

Results from the questionnaires indicate that 11% of the miners believe that the government conflict with the mining companies that explore gold in the area. Assistant chiefs and elders interviewed agreed that the government has been conflicting with the mining companies because some want to excavate land without proper licences from the authority. In addition, they leave huge holes on

the ground which increases risk of the population. In Lireembe sub location, the researchers observed several holes that were dug by the African Barrick Mining Company as they explored the land. They found no traces of gold in some holes and left them uncovered. The uncovered holes have been breeding grounds for mosquitoes and other dangerous pests and snakes. The NEMA was against the companies after the chiefs and assistant chiefs in the area reported the incidences (Wrigley, 2008).

According to government records, conflict between government and the mining companies also exist (WPGM, 2013). Interviews with officials from the geology department pointed out that the government through the ministry of mining has revoked the license of African Barrick Mining Company that was carrying out mining activities in the area among many other companies. The action has created much friction between the companies and the authority since the company had paid huge royalties in order to obtain the mining license.

According to the Mining Act, when a mining company winds up its businesses, it should take the responsibility to rehabilitate the affected area. All open holes should be covered, suspected poisonous wastes dumped and buried, and machinery used moved away. It is unfortunate that in some parts of Ikolomani gold mines, deep open grounds and some abandoned heavy machinery can still be seen at the sites. This poses a great danger to the local community (Werner, 2010).

Conflict among Dealers and with the Miners

According to the results from questionnaires 5(16%) of the miners pointed out that conflicts involve dealers. FGDs responses indicated that the artisanal miners are not able to extract huge amount of gold due to their inadequate techniques and abilities to mine in large quantities. Therefore, when they mine, they sell their products on daily routine. This leads to selling of very little amounts to buyers. This necessitates the presence of dealers who buy their product at a very low price.

The dealership market is open to anyone willing to buy the gold. Thus, it results into competition that turns out to be conflict among the dealers who try to establish a regular customer.

During FGDs, miners pointed out that some miners do not even know the exact measurement of the gold. They give their harvest to the dealers who measure and give them the measurements. The dealers steal the gold and lie to the miners. This makes the miners to fight with them several times. The miners do not have the machines that ascertain the exact weight. Many of them sell the gold to the brokers at night because they believe it is a taboo to do business during the day. They are, thus, exploited where much of the gold is mined. When the expectations of the miners do not meet what the dealers tell them, there ends up to be a conflict which turns to violence if not resolved immediately. The miners believe that no other person including their wives, other than a fellow miner should see the precious metal. The gold is mostly sold under the cover of the night. A senior official in the Ministry of Mining pointed out that:

This is where the problem is because brokers easily take advantage of the miners' beliefs and ignorance to exploit them by even fixing much lower prices. (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

In case another dealer comes with a different price, the miners want to take their gold from the earlier dealer. This causes a lot of conflict among the dealers and the miners.

Miners and Government

Results from the questionnaires revealed that 13(15%) of the miners argued that the miners conflict with the government. As well, results from officials from the geological department representatives' interviews indicated that there is always a conflict between the artisanal miners and the authority. This comes as a result of the government denying miners the license to carry out mining activities. In addition, the conflict can be as a result of the mining group polluting the air in their mining activities. Thus, the government through its departments such as NEMA, conflict with miners as it tries to regulate the air pollution. The miners bring about environmental

degradation that makes the government dissatisfied with their activities. In some cases, the government ban such activities which in turn bring conflicts (UNDP, 2011).

According to The Daily Nation, Thursday, January 22, 2015, Construction work on the Musoli-Khwisero road in Kakamega County has been temporary suspended because villagers have taken over the site in search of gold. The equipment taken to the site by the contractor had not moved because it was unsafe to continue with the work with so many people digging. A supervisor with East African Trading Development and Engineering Company, which was awarded the Sh1 billion contract to build the 24-kilometre road said:

We had been unable to do our work because of the presence of villagers. The villagers said we were on the wrong place. They wanted us to wait until the complete exploring gold in that area, which was impossible. We had a deadline to meet and could not wait for them to finish on the unknown date. We have talked to administration officials and leaders to talk to the community to allow us to work. (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

The researcher observed that the business of finding gold is very risky for the residents of this village. They have to manually dig a hole into the ground. The holes are too deep and with insufficient supply of fresh air. To handle this, the young men descent into the hole with green leaves tied around their waists and forehead, the point being that plants release oxygen during the day and take in carbon dioxide. The assistant chiefs during interviews said that officials from NEMA usually came to the mines with police officers and arrest the miners who are risking their lives. Every citizen belongs to the government and risking life is a crime in Kenya (Shemyakina, 2011). Unfortunately, the miners are ready to continue conflicting with the government officials. One of the miners said:

The work is too risky but the stomach does not understand such things. We just must eat and to do that we just must work. Though we usually get little deposits of gold from these mines, but

the little we get is usually enough to meet our daily needs. (Ikolomani Sub-county, 2016).

Due to the benefits associated with gold mining and bearing in mind its small quantity, there is increased competition which leads to conflict between the ambitions of the people and the government who look only after their interest rather than for the people, thus, mining of gold serve as a curse for the people who have a low relative standard of living.

This study agrees with a study conducted by Humanitarian Policy Group (2009) that pointed out that when it comes to natural resources, rulers do not need to tax their citizens because they have a guaranteed source of income from natural resources. As a result, citizens have less incentives to be watchful with how government spends its money, thus, citizens are often poorly served by their rulers (Humanitarian Policy Group, 2009).

E. 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Full understanding of the nature, extent, causes and levels of conflicts is necessary if there are to be taken into account the strategies formulated for integration, peace building and reconstruction to avoid fuelling of conflicts. Evidently from this study, multiple characteristics including quarrels, insults, vengefulness and injuries, brutality, scale and extent as well as different motivational factors spell out the changing nature of conflict. Additionally, conflicts in the Sub-County result from more than one cause. The most common factors that contribute to conflicts resulting from artisanal and small; scale gold mining in the area are land, boundaries, lack of effective training and low returns from gold. The miners conflict amongst themselves, with the neighbours and with the government authorities as well. There have also been conflicts between miners and the mining companies and the mining dealers because of the low quantity available. It is recommended that clear policies should be made and implemented in the mining sector which will improve the working relationship among different stakeholders in the gold fields.

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