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SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS REPORT
MOYALE CLUSTER

Marsabit County Deputy Governor Solomon Gubo, making opening remarks during Moyale Cluster co creation event.

DISCLAIMER

This report was produced at the request of the Cross-Border Community Resilience (CBCR) Activity implemented by Chemonics and ACDI/VOCA through funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The report was prepared independently by the Centre of Excellence International Consult (CEIC). The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID or the United States

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FOREWORD

This social network analysis (SNA) has been produced within the context of the Cross-border Community Resilience (CBCR) Activity as part of the building blocks towards its programming. The aim of this assessment is to provide a platform for understanding the relationship, interaction, and communication among actors in the livelihood, social cohesion, and natural resource systems domains across the Moyale cluster.

More specifically, the SNA identifies three kinds of organizations or people across the three domains, and assesses their capacities for systems level change. These include 1) Central nodes -the well connected, critical sources and repositories of information, and who have influence, 2) Knowledge brokers - those who create bridges between groups; and 3) Peripheral actors - those who are unconnected and can be at risk of exiting the network. The SNA goes further to examine the types and dynamics of relationships (for example, strong vs weak ties) between the various actors/organizations across the social cohesion, natural resource systems and livelihood sectors.

Against this backdrop, the CBCR Activity is well placed to effectively plan for collaborations and partnerships across the three domains (of social cohesion, livelihoods and natural resource systems) in the Moyale cluster, and minimize the risks of conflict and fostering weak partnerships. Nonetheless, the SNA is not an end unto itself, but provides valuable lessons in understanding the power relations, networking, and level of information sharing among key actors in social cohesion, livelihoods and natural resource systems across the Moyale cluster.

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Cross Border Community Resilience Activity (CBCR).

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CDCB wishes to acknowledge all government institutions, CSOs, and NGOs, informal institutions' leaders, and individuals who supported us during the research, and those who took part in interviews and consultative workshops for their fruitful contributions.

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Acronyms

CBCR	Cross Border Community Resilience
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBTN	Cross Border Trade Network
CDCB	Center for Development and Capacity Building
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FCBTN	Formal Cross Border Trade Network
ICBTN	Informal Cross Border Trade Network
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
LDO	Local Development Organizations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Peasant/Pastoral Association (grassroots government structure)
SNA	Social Network Analysis
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
OSBP	One Stop Border Post
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
KII	Key Informant Interviews
ECD	Early and Childhood Development
EDO	Elemi Development Organization
DDG	Danish Demining Group
FBO	Faith –Based Organization
CPC	County Peace Committee
CIFA	Community Initiative and Facilitation Assistance
MWADO	Marsabit Women Advocacy and Development Organization
KLMC	Kenya Livestock Marketing Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a Social Network Analysis (SNA) undertaken in the Moyale cluster. The overall objective of the SNA was to understand and map the actors, relationships, information flows, gaps/roadblocks, and the building blocks for systems level change. Specifically, the SNA sought to identify three kinds of organizations or people: 1) central nodes – organizations or people who are well connected, are critical sources and repositories of information, and who have influence; 2) knowledge brokers – those who create bridges between groups; and 3) peripheral actors – those who are unconnected and can be at risk of exiting the networks in the social cohesion, livelihoods, and natural resource management (NRM) domains.

To achieve the stated objectives, the SNA employed a mix of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The qualitative approach included the collection and analysis of primary qualitative data generated through key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with a wide range of actors involved in promoting community livelihoods, social cohesion, and NRM in the cluster. This was complemented with an extensive review of related literature on the subject. Quantitative network data was generated through a survey administered to a total of 42 actors – representatives of organizations or community groups – sampled through a roster building process that involved a combination of cluster, purposive, and snowball sampling methods. Data from the sample were generated using a questionnaire-based interview administered either in-person or through phone interviews where in-person communication was not possible.

Data generated through qualitative and quantitative approaches were analyzed simultaneously by using a combination of network maps generated by the Social Network Visualizer (SocNetV) and CytoScape software, and narrative descriptions of the qualitative data. Finally, actors under each functional domain were mapped separately using visual information from social network maps juxtaposed with qualitative information generated through interviews and FGDs. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the main findings from the analysis.

First, mapping of the social cohesion actors network in the Moyale cluster showed that the Borana zonal administration (in Ethiopia), the County Government of Marsabit (Kenya), clan councils of elders, and the *Gada*[1] institutions across both sides of the border are the central nodes in the network. Because the settlements of the Borana, Garri, and Gabra straddle the Ethiopia-Kenya border, these communities' councils of elders and leaders of the *Gada* system were found to maintain strong connections with government agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs) and/or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious leaders, and women's and youth groups on both sides of the border. The special

[1] This is an indigenous governance system among the dominant Borana, Gabra, and Garri communities in the Moyale cluster.

ability of clan elders and the *Gada* institution to transcend international borders, and their unique links to others in the network demonstrate that they are central figures that should be taken seriously in designing and implementing social cohesion programs and projects such as those in the area of conflict resolution and peace-building.

On the other hand, youth and women's groups, minorities' councils of elders, and religious institutions were identified to exist on the periphery of the network of main actors in the social cohesion domain in the cluster. Councils of elders of minority communities, such as the Konso and Burji, were reported to lack adequate participation and influence in dialogue platforms with government agencies and NGOs.

The final group identified through the social cohesion actor network mapping process was that of the knowledge brokers. They consist mainly of NGOs, sectoral offices at the zonal level, *kebele* administrations, and religious institutions. Notwithstanding their role as key actors on their own, zonal sectoral offices act as bridges between regional government and district administrative units. The *kebele* level of administration functions primarily as a link between communities and district administration in matters of development planning and execution. The administrative architecture of the Ethiopian state renders the federal, regional, and district administration the basic planning units on all matters of administration and development. Similarly, NGOs and CSOs were identified to function as knowledge brokers in the social cohesion network through their engagement in conflict research and policy advocacy for peace-building, activities which are ultimately intended to strengthen social cohesion.

The mapping of livelihood actors showed that regional and *woreda* (district) level administrative units, the County Government of Marsabit, NGOs, and informal cross-border traders (ICBT) across both sides of the cluster were identified to be the central nodes. They also have connections with most actors in the network. Although lacking in organization, ICBT networks, in particular, were identified as influential actors playing crucial economic and livelihoods roles, especially in the context of the current devastating drought.

Conversely, local community networks, milk traders, and livestock owners were largely described as being peripheral due to their weak relationships with the central nodes in the livelihood network. Livestock owners were found to be peripheral actors in the livelihoods network due to a variety of complex factors. These include lack of efficient livestock markets, weak financial systems, and information asymmetries arising from weak information systems.

Knowledge brokers in the livelihoods network include the Borana zonal sectoral offices engaged in livelihood activities, the *kebele* administration (mainly owing to the statutory reasons described above),

and cattle traders and brokers. Both local and cross-border cattle brokers were described as widely engaging in market information manipulation, price setting, and bargaining prices for the traders they represent. Ultimately, this has a negative effect on the livelihoods of pastoral communities who happen to receive a smaller proportion of the market value of their livestock sales. Unlike on the Ethiopian side, Marsabit County has a local Chamber of Commerce. The Kenyan Livestock Marketing Council (KLMC) is affiliated with the Chamber, and serves as an important link across the cattle market value chain.

Mapping of actors in the NRM domain identified cross-border committees as the main central node, with many connections with most of the actors in the network. Although they have no official status, they have strong connections with both state and non-state institutions such as NGOs, CSOs, and traditional institutions. Similarly, the Borana zonal level pastoral development and water resource management agencies in Marsabit County were identified to be central nodes in NRM on the Ethiopian side of the cluster. In contrast, customary institutions were found to occupy a peripheral position in the network of NRM actors. Finally, NGOs were identified as knowledge brokers in the NRM domain through their role in research, information dissemination, and facilitating the establishment of cross-border committees as part of improving cross-border NRM.

With respect to conflict sensitivity and cross-border dynamics, the findings of this study suggest that inter-community social cohesion among the Borana, Gabra, Konso, and Burji communities has been improving substantially over the last few years. Besides a common respect and support for the G*ada* system among these communities, the initiation of a joint regular (yearly) dialogue forum among the communities' councils of elders has played a substantial role in improving social cohesion among them. On the contrary, among the Borana and Garri communities, cycles of inter-community conflicts over swathes of land and traditional water wells across Hudet, Gof, and Le'e areas, and unresolved claims and counterclaims over the administrative rights of the border town of Moyale have led to a substantial depletion of inter-community cohesion. As a result, the hostility between the two communities and their respective alliances among inhabitants of the Moyale border town was identified as a key conflict sensitive issue in the cluster.

Even within the indicated constraints on social cohesion, cross-border interactions involving informal traders, mutual support among cross-border kin, and cross-border schooling of children take place on a daily basis. In this regard, cross-border committees were identified as the key actors with an influential role in facilitating harmonious cross-border interaction. These committees were also reported as having the potential to serve as connectors for a peace-building agenda among cross-border communities and their respective cultural institutions across the cluster. In sum, given the centrality of peace to the communities' livelihoods and to the sustainability of their natural environment, there is a strong need for strengthening inter-community cohesion across the Moyale cluster.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following measures in light of its findings and conclusions:

1. The CBCR Activity and related stakeholders should work on enhancing effective coordination among the main actors in the Moyale cluster through network-building initiatives to create operational synergies among functionally interconnected actors across the social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM domains.

2. Given the uniquely influential role of the councils of elders and the *Gada* system in both the social cohesion and NRM domains, stakeholders should work to strengthen these indigenous institutions. This can be done through providing technical and logistic support such as capacity building programs and the establishment and/or scaling-up of regular inter-community dialogue platforms among leaders of traditional institutions.

3. Stakeholders should initiate research-based advocacy programs for legal and policy reforms to facilitate improved cross-border interactions for actors and communities. These should have a particular focus on cross-border harmonization of regulations on trade and NGO operations. In this regard, supporting the establishment of business associations and a local Chamber of Commerce (that was found to be lacking on the Ethiopian side of the cluster) could supplement the advocacy initiatives.

4. Given the multiplicity of actors and social networks, and the different power centers and power relations from both customary and modern (or rather government) institutions, the study recommends that NGOs and other development actors should promote and practice a polycentric governance approach. This refers to a system of governance wherein several autonomous but mutually interdependent actors take each other into account, and explore alternative pathways of cooperation without a disproportionate domination coming from any of them.

5. Further studies should be undertaken to assess the actual and potential contributions of the actor networks and their central nodes, knowledge brokers, and peripheral actors across the three domains. The studies should particularly focus on uncovering the workings and reciprocal influences of the intricate system of cross-border traditional community networks, on one hand, and external programs for intervention by government agencies and NGOs, on the other hand,

in supporting or hindering social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM in the cluster. This is with the view to using the outputs as inputs for improving future program design and implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

International borders in Africa, as officially recognized by the African Assembly of Heads of States and Governments in July 1964, have largely divided the same ethnic communities into citizens of different countries. The Assembly opted for such an arrangement on the premise that if national boundaries were to be drawn based on ethnic settlements, the newly independent African states would face further internal splits, and could end up in unfolding conflicts in the process of drawing new international boundaries[2]. The borders of the Horn of Africa, as they stand today, are thus political constructs born out of such strategic compromises made by colonial and post-colonial governments[3].

Cross-border communities in the Moyale cluster are typical cases that can be examined within the above context. The cluster is inhabited by three major pastoral community groups: the Borana, the Garri, and the Gabra. These community groups live on both sides of the Ethiopia-Kenya border, sharing similar socio-cultural identities[4]. Among these, the Borana constitute the largest demographic group, followed by the Garri and the Gabra, respectively.

The Borana, known for owning the largest number of cattle in the region, inhabit the Borana zone. The zone encompasses five of the six districts included in the Moyale cluster on the Ethiopian side, and Marsabit County on the Kenyan side. Notwithstanding their long history of interaction with the Somali, the overwhelming majority of the Borana have remained monolingual, speaking only Afaan Oromo. Except for the Isiolo Borana who were Islamized in the 1930s and 1940s, the Marsabit and the Ethiopian Borana have until recently resisted Islamization and stuck to their traditional religious beliefs[5].

The Garri are a bilingual group who speak both Oromo and Somali languages, and constitute the demographic majority in Ethiopia's Dawa Zone and Kenya's Mandera County that neighbor the Moyale cluster. Whereas the Garri can be found in most towns of the districts in this cluster as minorities who largely engage in trade, the only district where they have come to be a substantial demographic group over the last two decades is Moyale. In addition to their bilingualism, the Garri also generally have mixed Oromo-Somali cultural markers which give them the advantage of switching between ethnic groups and countries across the Ethiopia-Kenya border.

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[2] Organization of African Unity, '1964 Resolution Adopted by the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government Held in Cairo, UAR, From 17 to 21 July 1964,' July 1964, https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9514-1964_ahg_res_1-24_i_e.pdf (accessed 13 March 2023).

[3] Constatine Manda, Josie Knowles, John Connors and Stephen Mwombela, 'Borders: Social Interaction and Economic and Political Integration of the East African Community,' November 2014, https://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/cega_hidden_pages/5/Manda_Borders.pdf (accessed 14 March 2023). .

[4] Ashreka Hajisano, 'Informal Cross Border Trade along the Ethiopia-Kenya Border: The Case of Women Traders in Moyale' (Unpublished MA thesis, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, 2019).

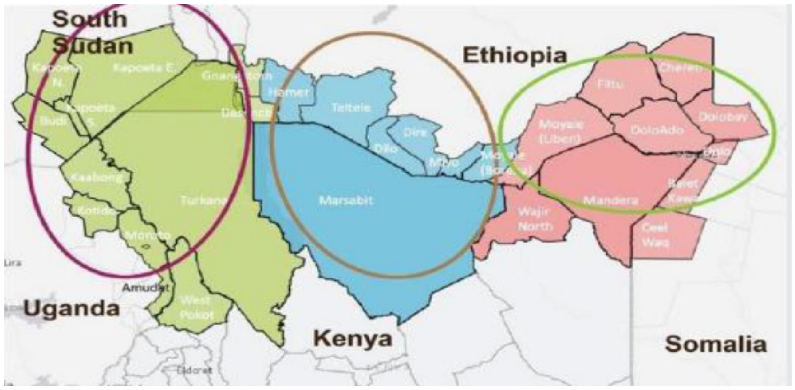
[5] Yehualaeshet Muluneh, Fekadu Adugna and Ayalew Gebre, ,The Tyranny of Borders: Politics of Identity and Conflicts,' *In Borderland Dynamics in East Africa: Cases from Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda*, eds. Leif Manger Fekadu Adugna, Munzoul Assal and Eria Olowo Onyang (Addis Ababa: Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, 2019).

The Gabra are found in and around Moyale across both sides of the Ethiopian and Kenyan border. Among the Gabra, ethnic identity is even more fluid than the Garri. They are endowed with cultural markers that help them fit into both the Oromo and the Somali ethnic groups. Whereas they speak Afaan Oromo and practice their own version of the *Gada* system, closely linked to that of the Borana, their house building style and camel-based culture associate them with the Somali. Over the past decades, some elite groups among the Gabra and government actors have engaged in political entrepreneurship by skillfully switching allegiance between Oromo and Somali. The fluid identity has thus served as a "resource" that can be exploited for politico-economic gains, thereby igniting occasional costly conflicts among the communities.

Among the minority groups in the cluster are the Konso who mainly inhabit Konso district, also referred to as Konsoland, which borders the Borana from the northwestern side. Many of them are also found across several districts such as Teltelle, Yabello, and Moyale in the Borana zone in the Oromia National Regional State.

Finally, the Burji largely inhabit Burji district, also referred to as the Burjiland, in an area north of Yabello town in the Borana zone. They can also be found in significant numbers across Mega, Teltelle, and Yabello. The Burji also live as farmers and traders in Marsabit on the Kenyan side of the Moyale cross-border cluster. The map below indicates the sketch of the study area in the cluster.

Figure 1: Moyale and the surrounding border clusters (the CBCR Activity's areas of operation)



Source: Adapted from UNDP Development Plan Analysis Needs Assessment and Cross-border Planning Guidelines, 2020.

In short, the two sides of the Moyale cluster are home to the same ethnic groups living in similar ecologies, sharing similar livelihoods systems and trans-boundary mobility patterns across the cluster[6]. These communities have strong socio-cultural ties and economic interdependence. However, the cross-border communities are generally marginalized and impoverished due to, among other reasons, their geographic, political and cultural distance from the respective centers in Ethiopia and Kenya, conflicts, and unwarranted skepticism by the centers in fear of irredentist movement[7]. Consequently, the region is presently known for being war-torn, underdeveloped, and dominated by inter-community conflicts.

On the other hand, though they have not been given adequate attention, such socio-cultural inter-linkages do have useful roles to play, including serving as a bridge for inter-state cooperation and regional integration. If tapped into, such ties could enhance the current efforts to realize regional integration in terms of economy, security, and environmental issues through the already functioning continental and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). It is also with this perspective that the CBCR Activity commissioned this social network analysis (SNA) of the Moyale cluster.

As the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) regional project designed to enhance resilience among communities in borderland clusters across the Horn of Africa, the CBCR Activity seeks to strengthen resilience capacity through promoting social cohesion, improving livelihoods, and supporting sustainable natural resource management (NRM) as a foundation for resilience programming in the Moyale cluster. In line with that, the objective of this SNA is to understand and map the actors, relationships, information flows, gaps/roadblocks and the building blocks for systems level change.

The SNA sought to identify three kinds of organizations or people: 1) central nodes – organizations or people who are well connected, are critical sources and repositories of information, and who have influence; 2) knowledge brokers – those who create bridges between groups; and 3) peripheral actors – those who are unconnected and can be at risk of exiting the network.

The SNA showed that most of the main actors across the three domains of the CBCR Activity's intervention (social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM) are involved in at least two or even all three domains. Among these, government agencies were identified as central nodes across the three functional domains. Likewise, councils of elders and the *Gada* institution were found to constitute

[6] Messay Mulugeta and Girma Defere Tegegn, 'Cross Border Community Integration in the Kenyan and Ethiopian Borderlands,' Politics and IR Working Paper No 3, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Johannesburg, April 2022, https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/dpir-working-paper-no-3-cross-border-integration-final.pdf (accessed 18 March 2023).

[7] David Davis and Will Moore, 'Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior,' *International Studies Quarterly* 41 (1) (1997): 171–84.

central nodes in both the social cohesion and NRM domains. Whereas NGOs were found to be among the central nodes in the livelihoods domain, they serve as knowledge brokers in the social cohesion and NRM domains. Youth and women's groups and minority groups' councils of elders were identified as peripheral actors in the social cohesion network.

Moreover, the SNA showed that there are closely knit and internally cohesive informal community networks. These networks are supported by a regular information sharing mechanism known as *da'imtu* among most of the Ethiopia-Kenya cross-border communities. However, coordination and information sharing within and between actors from government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector was found to be weak, especially on the Ethiopian side of the cluster.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The Overall Research Approach

To achieve the stated objectives, the SNA employed a mix of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The qualitative approach involved the collection and analysis of primary qualitative data generated through key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), and systematic field observations and oral history with a wide range of actors involved in livelihoods, social cohesion, and NRM in September 2022.

Secondary qualitative data was collected through a critical review of related literature including academic research papers, government policy papers, and reports from regional organizations. Quantitative network data was generated through a survey administered to representatives from organizations currently in operation in the cluster in all the three functional domains. The qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed simultaneously by using a combination of software-generated network maps and narrative descriptions of the qualitative data.

2.2. Sampling and Sampling Procedure

The study first identified the main actors in relation to the CBCR Activity both at macro and grassroots levels. The actors at the macro level mainly consisted of formal organizational actors such as government agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and members of the private sector such as local business associations. Grassroots level actors included a variety of mostly informal community groups such as councils of elders, members of the *Gada* system, customary NRM institutions, informal cross-border trade (ICBT) networks, and community social support networks.

Second, considering the large size of the cluster and the number of districts bordering Ethiopia and Kenya, the cluster was divided into three sub-clusters for the purpose of organizing field work for this study. The first sub-cluster constituted Jinca and Taltele in the Borana zone of Ethiopia, and Illeret and Sabarei in Marsabit County, Kenya. The second sub-cluster consisted of Miyo/Mega of Ethiopia, and Dukana and Sololo in Marsabit County, whereas Moyale towns in Ethiopia and Kenya were included in the third sub-cluster.

The sub-clusters were chosen on the basis of their ethno-linguistic composition and the high cross-border interaction and interdependence of the community groups. The selection of specific individuals for KIIs and FGDs was made by considering their familiarity and knowledge on the issues being investigated, their position/role in the communities, location, age, and sex variables to ensure fair participation and representation from all categories. Gender and disability inclusion were also among the selection criteria given due attention while selecting the participants.

Further, the selection of organizations to be surveyed was done through a roster building process that involved a combination of cluster, purposive, and snowball sampling methods. Initially, the actors across the three functional domains were clustered into government, NGOs/CSOs, traditional institutions, community networks, and the private sector. A workshop was then organized for a group of purposively sampled key actors from each cluster to identify other key actors working alongside them (snowballing) in their respective operational domains. Finally, a survey was conducted using a

questionnaire-based interview administered either in-person or through phone interviews when in-person communication was found to be impossible due to security, time, and location constraints.

Table 1: Data collection process by method, location, category, and number of respondents

Data Collection Method	**Location/ Community**	**Category of Respondents (from both sides)**	**Number of respondents**
Interviews (Key Informant Interviews & In-depth Interview	Dire, Miyo Moyale Teletele Dillo, Hamer, and Marsabit	Government agencies	8
		Cultural institutions & community networks	11
		NGOs	4
		Private Sector	4
Sub-Total			**27**
Survey	Dire, Miyo Moyale Teletele Dillo, Hamer, and Marsabit	Government agencies	12
		Cultural institutions & community networks	11
		NGOs	6
		Private Sector	3
Sub-Total			**32**
Focus Group Discussions	Dire, Miyo Moyale Teletele Dillo, Hamer and Marsabit	Community leaders, women and youth groups, border security officers, cross border traders.	**84**
Total			**143**

2.3. Data Analysis Methods

Data generated through qualitative and quantitative approaches was analyzed simultaneously by using a combination of network maps generated by the Social Network Visualizer (SocNetV) and CytoScape software and narrative descriptions of the qualitative data. The analysis also involved mapping actors under each of the social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM functional domains by using data from the two sources. However, classification of the main actors into a specific category among these functional domains was found to be less clear-cut as most actors are involved in at least two or even all three functional domains.

Though several actors implementing programs and projects aimed at peace-building often mixed with other engagements in livelihoods and/or NRM, most actors on the Ethiopian side of the cluster did not have social cohesion as a distinct area of focus in their operational programming. For example, while there is the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) along with its grassroots level field office in Marsabit on the Kenyan side, this study did not identify any actor working with such a distinct focus on social cohesion as a functional domain on the Ethiopian side of the cluster.

Nonetheless, for the purposes of this SNA, the study classified those actors primarily involved in maintaining peace and security as well as those contributing in strengthening harmonious co-existence among inter-, intra- and cross-border communities as actors in the social cohesion domain. Following this adjustment, actors under each functional domain were mapped as central nodes, knowledge brokers,

and peripheral actors separately by juxtaposing the visual information generated by a social network map with the analysis of qualitative data generated through KIIs and FGDs.

2.4. Ethical Considerations and Data Security Issues

The research team paid due attention to ethical considerations as an important research principle throughout its research process. Accordingly, the team adhered to respect for others, beneficence, and justice in the study. To ensure that these principles were maintained throughout the study period, continuous monitoring and follow-up support were provided to ensure that the fieldworkers stuck to the procedures put in place.

Moreover, KIIs and FGDs were conducted after securing informed consent from the study participants. Data collectors gave each participant a copy of the consent form to ensure that the data gathering process was properly conducted in accordance with ethical procedures that maintain privacy.

The research team also exercised strict data security and safety measures throughout the entire data collection cycle. Hence, no data was shared or transferred to third parties without the informed consent of all concerned participants. Similarly, in order to protect against the risk of data theft during file transport and dissemination process, secure data transmission mechanisms were followed.

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section provides the social network analysis of the key actors across the Moyale cluster in relation to the CBCR Activity's areas of intervention - social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM. The section begins by first describing a list of main actors involved in promoting social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM in the cluster. It then goes on to map actors that are specifically involved in promoting social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM. In doing so, it employs a combination of visual information generated by a social network map, and qualitative data generated through KIIs and FGDs to identify: 1) central nodes, that is, organizations or people who are well connected, are critical sources and repositories of information and who have influence; 2) knowledge brokers – those who create bridges between groups; and 3) peripheral actors – those who are unconnected and can thus be at risk of exiting the network.

The section concludes the analysis by discussing some cross-cutting issues including conflict sensitivity and cross-border dynamics across the cluster, and then wraps up the report with a conclusion and recommendations section.

3.1. MAIN ACTORS IN THE SOCIAL NETWORKS IN THE MOYALE CLUSTER

The main actors in relation to the CBCR Activity's areas of intervention were identified both at macro and grassroots levels. The actors at the macro level mainly consisted of formal organizational actors such as government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs), and members of the private sector such as local business associations. Grassroots level actors include a variety of mostly informal community groups such as councils of elders, members of the *Gada* system, customary NRM institutions, informal cross-border trade (ICBT) networks, and community social support networks. The following section provides a general description of the two groups of actors and their roles in maintaining social cohesion, and promoting livelihoods and NRM across the cluster.

Government agencies: Zonal, *woreda,* and *kebele* administrations and their political leadership, along with their sectoral offices such as peace and security offices, pastoral development agencies, and water resources management agencies are some of the key government institutions that play crucial roles in social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM in the Borana zone of Ethiopia.

The zonal level of administration and its line departments perform their administrative functions by overseeing and coordinating the activities of w*oreda* administrations and their line offices at the district level. The zonal administrative units also function as bridges between the regional and district administrative units where issues of development administration planning and execution are formally managed.

Led by formally elected *woreda* councils, the *woreda* administration has an expansive role in the planning and execution of local administrative and development activities across social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM domains. The district administration unit and its sectoral divisions manage security and justice affairs, provide health, education and municipal services, manage water resources, pastoral and/or agricultural development, livestock health offices, and oversee the activities of financial institutions.

The *kebele* administration is the smallest administrative unit with its own *kebele* council and *kebele* administrators. The *kebele* is tasked with execution of district plans at grassroots levels.

Marsabit County, on the Kenyan side of the cluster, is one of the 47 devolved units in Kenya. The County is led by an elected Governor and their deputy. The Marsabit County Government, as is currently constituted, has County Executive members (CECs) who are in charge of policy development and implementation in the county[8]. There are also 25 County Chief Officers (Cos) appointed by the County Governor. The Chief Officers are the accounting officers in the various county departments and, therefore, play a significant role in the day-to-day running of county affairs. Each of the county departments has directors who are technical experts that are tasked with the implementation of departmental programs.

At the sub-county level there is the sub-county administrator who is in charge of development activities in their sub-county. He/she is assisted by a deputy sub-county administrator and ward administrators from the respective wards, just like the directors of the various county departments. The sub-county administration regularly interacts with development actors implementing interventions in the sub-county, and closely works in the local communities. They work alongside the local national government administrators such as chiefs in addressing community issues. They are one of the most significant and ideal community entry points.

Additionally, the county has an elected assembly whose membership comprises elected representatives from the 20 electoral wards in the county and nominated members from different political parties, who represent different special groups including women, youths, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and other minorities. The County Assembly is independent from the county administration and its main roles are oversight and budget making. The assembly is led by a speaker, elected by the county assembly members, and a clerk. The County Assembly also has various committees in charge of the different sectors such as water, health, education, and livestock. It plays a significant role in resource distribution and allocation to the different sectors.

The County Steering Group (CSG) is an eminent coordination platform which is chaired by the County Governor, and co-chaired by the County Commissioner who represents the national government at the devolved levels. The CSG also draws membership from NGOs and the private sector operating in the county. The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), which is a principal national government agency in the NRM and livelihoods sectors, serves as the secretariat of the CSG.

Similarly, the sub-county levels have steering groups that coordinate the various development actors in the sub-county to ensure efficiency in resource use and synergy among actors. The sub-county steering groups are equally convened and coordinated by the NDMA office in Moyale.

NGO and/or CSO actors: There are various international and local NGOs and CSOs that have been working across the Moyale cluster. Some of the most prominent NGOs that operate in the cluster include Community Initiative and Facilitation Assistance (CIFA), Interpeace, HUNDEE, Cordaid, CARE

[8] County Government of Marsabit, 'Marsabit County Government,' 2023, https://marsabit.co.ke (accessed 17 June 2023).

Ethiopia/CARE Borana, Mercy Corps, GOAL Ethiopia and Merile. Their activity in the cluster is so diverse that it spans across all the social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM domains.

Interpeace works on social cohesion through its peace-building initiatives to end violence in the Borana and Gabra inhabited areas of Marsabit County. HUNDEE is a local CSO operating in Ethiopia's several districts in the Borana zone. Its programs focus on livelihoods support, resilience building, citizens' engagement, and youth and women empowerment. CIFA operates in Moyale, Miyo and Dillo, and is mainly engaged in relief, women's empowerment, and water works, including the maintenance of the existing water infrastructure. Cordaid also operates in Moyale and Miyo areas to support the communities with water and sanitation services, and a drought recovery fund for women and the elderly. Mercy Corps also operates in water works, and food and nutrition supply for children and pregnant mothers in Moyale. GOAL Ethiopia's main activities are water and sanitation, nutrition, and health development activities for the communities in Moyale, Dilo, Arero, and Taltalle. For its part, Merile engages in NRM issues such as reforestation in addition to other activities, including cash support for nutrition and undertaking development projects like road maintenance in Moyale. CARE Borana entirely works on emergency relief or food aid for the community members in the Borana zone.

In Marsabit County, there are several sector working groups in health and nutrition sectors, water and sanitation, livestock, among others. Some of these working groups are the Water and Environmental Sanitation Coordination Mechanism (WESCOORD), the gender and social protection technical working group, the livestock technical working group, food security and nutrition, cash transfers technical working group, and resilient livelihoods.

Overall, as can be observed from the above description, NGOs are playing a key role in implementing development projects that are not sufficiently addressed by the government in all the three functional domains. This, in turn, indicates that they are key actors in the social networks being analyzed in this study as will be seen in subsequent parts of the analysis.

Councils of elders and their cultural institutions: Councils of elders and their cultural institutions are informal governance structures that play parallel and, sometimes, even more influential roles in the domains of social cohesion and NRM across all pastoral communities inhabiting the cluster. They also contribute to livelihoods and promoting resilience since they have a strong credibility for mobilizing social capital both independently and in partnership with other governmental and non-governmental livelihoods actors. It would thus be more reasonable to reiterate the composition of the cluster in terms of the main ethnic groups, before proceeding further to discussing the role of elders and their cultural institutions.

To begin with, the Moyale cluster is inhabited by three major pastoral community groups: the Borana, the Garri, and the Gabra. These community groups live on the Ethiopia-Kenya border, sharing similar socio-cultural identities with their counterparts[9]. Next to the three major groups, in terms of demographic size, are the Konso and Burji communities who – though largely inhabit their own special districts in the cluster's neighboring areas – constitute sizeable minority groups that are found across several towns in the cluster. There are also several other migrant inhabitants of the cluster including the Amhara, Gurage, Silte, Wolayta, Sidama, Kembata, and other Ethiopian nationalities who often live in urban centers of the cluster as minorities with smaller populations.

The Borana, Garri, Gabra, Konso, and Burji communities all have a traditional system of governance, along with their respective councils of elders who oversee matters of peace and security in their communities. Generally, the elders have a central role in decision-making among the three pastoral communities. Heads of village and heads of the homestead (*Jars Moga*) have responsibility to organize elders' meetings if there are any issues. The decisions made in meetings should be followed by all community members. However, as most elders are illiterate, it is difficult for them to discuss current development issues or government policies. Thus, new groups, such as youth and women's groups, and committees are invited to join the discussions with elders. Once a decision is made, the new groups are expected to be the main players to implement it[10].

The *Gada* system and its institutions: The *Gada* system is an all-embracing institution among the communities in the Moyale cluster. Among the Borana, in particular, the *Gada* subsumes all other indigenous institutions, including those on NRM such as well councils (*Kora Ella*) and grazing councils (*Kora dheda*), and provides the authority and legitimacy that enables them to operate effectively. The system encourages consensus-based decision-making and peaceful co-existence in the community.

The *Gada* is under the overall leadership of the *Abba Gada* who is publicly elected for a single 8-year term. There are three other elected community leaders, namely: *hayu* (also called *licho*), *qaye,* and *jalaba* (envoy), while elders share the ordinary designation of t*orbicha* or *jarsa.* Leaders' authorities vary, descending from *hayu* to *torbicha*, but their roles in matters of clan administration are complementary. The *qaye* organizes the assembly of the *milo* (in consultation with the *hayu*) and summons extraordinary meetings when there is a need to address emergencies in his social security zone**.** The *jalaba* acts as an envoy and a knowledge broker between distant sub-clan members (groups).

Customary NRM institutions: The Borana, Garri, and Gabra communities living along the Ethiopia-Kenya border have long relied on customary institutions to guide the use of natural resources in their

[9] Muluneh, Adugna, and Gebre. supra n 5.
[10] Asmarom Legesse, *Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1973).

rangelands across international borders, administrative boundaries, and ethnicities. They have developed an institutional system with regards to primary and secondary rights of access to water and pastures, with procedures and principles for negotiations between different pastoralist groups.

These indigenous institutional frameworks govern the mobility of pastoralists and their livestock, maintain and restore collaboration among clans and ethnic groups, and provide a framework for managing disputes and conflict[11].

Among the Borana, for example, customary institutions help the community to use the available natural resources such as water. For example, the *Abba ela* or *confi* is symbolically taken as the founder and overseer of a water well, the *chora* is the water management council, and the *Abba heerega* is in charge of the daily watering supervision. *Abba heerega* has the social status to organize labor and herds to facilitate orderly use of the water wells[12]. Furthermore, watering day is coordinated by individuals known as the *abba guya* (father of the watering day).

The use of natural resources is calendar-based, depending on the principal users, seasons of a year, and period of utilization. The provisions of the customary institutions include rules stipulating resource use types such as allocations for pasture, farming, and communal land (*kalo*) enclosures. All the rules are proclaimed during the *Gumi Gayo* (general assembly) which holds every eight years.

The private sector: Although there is a dearth of well-organized business community actors, especially on the Ethiopian side, the Moyale cluster is nonetheless an area of vibrant business activities with diverse actors engaged in both local and cross-border trade. Formal traders such as exporters and importers of wheat, maize, beans, and milk, and informal traders such as contraband traders play an important role in promoting social cohesion and livelihoods, though they have negligible contribution to NRM activities.

Another group of key actors within the private sector is the informal cross-border traders (ICBT) network. Informal cross-border trade takes place along the Ethiopia-Kenya border with significant quantities of goods flowing in and out of the two countries. The ICBT network is worth understanding in relation to how their community livelihoods activities and social networks serve to maintain and strengthen social cohesion. The key informants and participants in FGDs across the borderland communities repeatedly stressed that cross-border trade across the Moyale border town plays crucial economic and social roles in their lives, especially in the face of the ongoing devastating drought which was also intensely felt by members of the research team deployed there.

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[11] Sara Pavanello and Simon Levine, 'Rules of the Range: Natural Resources Management in Kenya–Ethiopia Border Areas,' Overseas Development Institute, September 2011, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/133574/5976.pdf (accessed 17 June 2023).

[12] Aneesa Kassam, 'Decisions in the Shade: Political and Juridical Processes among the Oromo-Borana,' *African Studies Review* 49(3) (2006): 68-69.

Cross-border social networks were described as being very effective for the resilience of pastoral communities' livelihoods. This is if they are not impeded by unduly imposed border political and administrative regulations[13]. However, these social network systems have been under pressure due to drought and geopolitical factors, as well as the associated inter-communal conflicts. As one key informant in Taltalle in the Borana zone stated:

> *"Yes, our livelihood is much connected with contraband trade activities. Especially during severe droughts seasons, we support ourselves and our families with what we gain from the cross-border trade activities. But now the district administrators ambush here and rob us of what we earn. We are currently unable to do not only the contraband trade but also legal trade because the security forces are harassing us."*[14]

An elderly Konso woman in Taltalle supported the above opinion, narrating thus:

> *"Sometimes we go through Sololo to Kenya and trade, but that road is sometimes closed. However, it also means that we have a relationship with the people living in Kenya. Our relationship is for both business and social. On the part of the Ethiopian government, there is an arrest of everyone they find across the border. They sometimes label people as members of Shane, a fighting group that the government labeled as a terrorist group."*[15]

The most common goods traded by women across the borders include clothes, especially for women, sanitary items such as soaps, cosmetics, shoes of all types (new and used), small size electronics such as mobile phones, solar light devices, household utility materials, drinks such as sodas and juices, and household utensils.

Men also engage in smuggling networks to trade products that cannot be produced locally. These include electronics, vehicle spare parts, and even weapons. In this regard, the research participants pointed out diverse groups of male actors in ICBT, including government employees, who trade to supplement the often meager monthly income from their jobs. In particular, the research participants in a validation workshop stressed that some of those working within government structures such as security, the police, and members of the local military are also involved in ICBT as key actors. Other informal trade actors include women and children.

Another dimension of ICBT is related with the cattle market that is characterized by a diversity of actors. Pastoralists, primarily from the Borana, Gabra, and Garri communities supply cattle, sheep, goats, and camels to the market. Study participants were unanimously of the opinion that the overall cattle market networks are highly influenced by brokers and the informal market chain.

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[13] FGD participants, Moyale town, Ethiopia, 22 September 2022.
[14] Personal interview, Konso woman, Taltalle, Ethiopia, 17 September 2022.
[15] Personal interview, woman, Miyo, Ethiopia, 19 September 2022.

With respect to the specific community background of the actors and brokers involved in the informal cross border trade activity, workshop participants debated and reached near consensus in concluding that the Burji, Gabra, Garri, and Borana have stakes, in that order. Participants were also of the opinion that individuals (mainly youths) from other regions in Ethiopia such as the Wolayita, Guraggie, Kembata, Hadiya, and Amhara participated in petty informal trade activities. In general, clan and kinship relationships on either side of the border help the traders to cross the border not as traders, but as regular people who wanted to visit relatives.

ICBT is also closely connected with social cohesion. It was reported that it is the interconnection between clans and relatives on either side of the border that helps informal women traders to obtain information about what is in demand on either side of the border. Women who have no relatives also have the possibility of getting connected into the network through intermediaries. They also engage in border crossing using their local networks between traders and custom officers. Overall, borders seem to be less problematic at the local level than at the state or sub-state levels.

Community social support networks: Most of these community networks are formed either on the basis of membership to a common clan/community, a neighborhood, or a common livelihood. According to a key informant in Moyale, all communities (clan or ethnic) have their own ways of forming and operating networks among themselves which, are coordinated by the *Abbaa oalaa* and/or *Abbaa Qa'ee* among the Borana, *Ugaski* among the Garri, and *Jarolegelaa* among the Gabra[16].

What is astounding, however, is the research participants' articulation of social networks and their conscious realization of its place in their livelihoods. The following are just a few of some of the striking descriptions provided by informants.

> *"Without social networks there is no relationship, without relationship there is no peace, and without peace there is no country. No one can live without a country. So… social networks are the secrets to our existence."*[17]

> *"There is no activity in our lives that does not require social relationships. If our relationships with our workmates, neighbors, and other community members living here in Miyo are not right, we will be alone and we will then be eaten by wild animals [apparently using the "lone grazer" metaphor]."*[18]

> *"As I just told you, any job requires a social network. For example, we now get most of what we use from Kenya, including what we eat. Therefore, if we do not have good relations with this*

[16] These are community councils of elders.
[17] Personal interview, Abbaa *dheeda* (father of the range), Dillo, Ethiopia, September 2022.
[18] Personal interview, woman, Miyo/ Hiddi Lola, Ethiopia, September 2022.

community outside our country's borders, we will fall into serious trouble. Especially our business requires good relationships."[19]

As a further validation of the above assertions by the community members, this study identified more than half a dozen complex systems of social networks that community members use to provide each other with social support systems, share natural resources such as grazing land and water points, and to maintain peace and order. Some of the most common social support networks pointed out by study participants included *dabaree*, *hariyyaa*, *marroo, ekub*, *afosha/Iddir* and *buusaa gonofaa.*

Dabaree is a clan-based social network where members of a village neighborhood provide milk cows to drought-stricken households on a temporary basis. Under such arrangements, a family may receive milk animals from kinsmen and clan members to tackle seasonal or long-term milk shortages. This tradition bestows upon the recipient the right to milk, while ownership of animals to the provider. The *dabaree* social network can thus be considered a fallback institutional mechanism for ex-post insurance as well as for gap-filling in the context of high risks such as raids and the intensifying climate change induced droughts[20].

On many occasions, study participants made references to the existence of a social network of *hariyya* (same age class which spans eight years, as per the *Gada* grade). *Hariyya* is a social network of male age mates in which the youth culturally perform rituals ('*nyaachisa*') together, that is, when teenage boys become 'youth' class called *raaba*. It has also been observed in the literature that such age sets perform various interrelated functions of a social, political, and economic nature to promote solidarity among the cohort. One such function is the ritual of *korbeessa hariyaa,* which is an important get-together event for members of the age-set residing in one area. The participants spend one night at the residence of a host, singing songs that inculcate the values of bravery and virility. During the adolescent stage they dwell on love songs. They challenge one another by reciting their outstanding achievements[21]. Members of the *hariyya* social network also organize age-set meetings to discuss matters internal to the group and their relations with others. This is also in line with what Asmerom Legese[22] a *Gada* scholar, observed in his study. According to him, age grading is one of the major structural features of the Borana, and it is a key social variable that organizes social networking among age mates[23].

[19] Personal interview, 70-year-old woman, Moyale, Ethiopia, September 2022.
[20] Boku Tache and Espen Sjaastad, 'Pastoralists Conception of Poverty: An Analysis of Traditional and Conventional Indicators from Borana, Ethiopia,' *World Development* 38(8) (2008): 1168-1178.
[21] Ibid
[22] Legesse, supra n 10.
[23] Ibid.

In contrast to the male dominated social networks such as the *hariyyaa* above, some other networks among the Borana are designed by and for women. A typical case is the *marroo* social network. Women study participants stated that *marroo* has no formal rules or leaders and that the functioning of *marroo* is based on the societal value of helping each other and expressing solidarity. The *marroo* is a voluntary social support network between friends, neighbors, and families in which all women participate, regardless of livelihood bases, economic status, and age differences. In such frameworks, mutual support assistance takes the form of informal inter-household networks of women.

In the context of acute needs, research participants also described situations where village members upgrade the mutual support system into quasi sub-clan cooperation beyond *ollittii* (above family) by 'accepting' one another as members of one's own sub-clan. While the extent of village-level interdependence depends largely on harmony among members, the role of the village head (*abbaaollaa*) was said to be essential in creating the harmonious relationships required for the mobilization of village resources to support the poor members. In this case, voluntary mutual assistance is organized through relations of kinship, friendship, or cohabitation.

For example, residents in a mixed-clan village (*ollaa)* exercise resource sharing or reciprocal borrowing in daily life, based on the neighborhood principle of *ollittii.* The essence of such village networks is expressed in a biological metaphor, *ollaa fi duddaan ejjan* ('one stands with the support of his/her back and villagers)*,* to emphasize the role villagers play in supporting their members in order for them to stand upright economically, like the backbone upholds the body[24]. In relation to this, informants cited *afosha* (the near equivalent of *Idir)* which is a neighborhood-based social support network, and *ikub*, another neighborhood-based social network established mostly for financial (savings) purposes, and marriage-based social networks among in-laws and their extended families. A Borana woman from Miyo observed how they use their own association:

> *"We women also have our own association [*afosha*]. If there is anything that makes this women's association unique, it is that its members come together from different ethnic groups. The name of our association is called* Badhaatu*. It is a place where we establish good relations with members of other ethnic communities around us. We are standing by each other for work (labor support) and for helping each other financially."*[25]

Similarly, a Konso woman stated thus:

> *"We have several mutual support associations among women. One is called* daraaraa*, another* afooshaarehmata *[Muslim: Afosha] and still another* Iddir Maaramii *[Orthodox Christian: Iddir]. Some of our associations are working to give loans to poor members from time to time so that they can start business with it and change their lives. […] And there is no ethnic or*

[24] Tache and Sjaastad, supra n 19.
[25] Personal interview, Borana woman, Miyo, Ethiopia, 21 September 2022.

religious supremacy in our association at the moment […] but in our district, there is Borana supremacy in government offices."[26]

Afoshas also display some level of institutional variation from village to village. Some of them, as described mostly by women study participants, have evolved in terms of the social support service package. A woman at Moyale town expands the value of using *afosha* as:

"There is nothing that our women's association has not contributed to my life. For example, I borrowed money from our association to start trading. I am now selling potatoes to support myself and my family. And when I have a small program, I get food and drinking utensils from this association."[27]

Likewise, there were instances where they were described as offering some form of health insurance services for their members. However, since not everyone has the same set of resources and access to *afoshas*, such institutional arrangements of community social networks may exclude the poorest and the most marginalized ones[28].

The last, but most pervasive, social support actor network that spans the Ethiopia-Kenya border as identified by this study is the *busa gonofa*. The primary function of this community network is to deal with the effects of serious livelihood shocks such as droughts and raids among their network members through the transfer of livestock. *Busa gonofa* contributions are sought from members through clan leadership participation in the *Gada* system. Contributions for fellow network members whose cases have been approved through the relevant *Gada* system are compulsory, with any non-compliance often entailing measures ranging from banishment from the social network to complete revocation of clan membership.

Finally, although it is primarily concerned with livelihoods support, *busa gonofa* also performs well in strengthening social cohesion among sub-clans inhabiting the two sides of the Ethiopia-Kenya border. This cross-border bridging role was made specifically evident during community discussions in which study participants recounted instances where clan members receive social support in the form of cattle restocking from clan members from either side of the Ethiopia-Kenya border.

3.2. Mapping Actors in the Moyale Cluster

[26] Personal interview, Konso woman, Taltalle, Ethiopia, 17 September 2022.

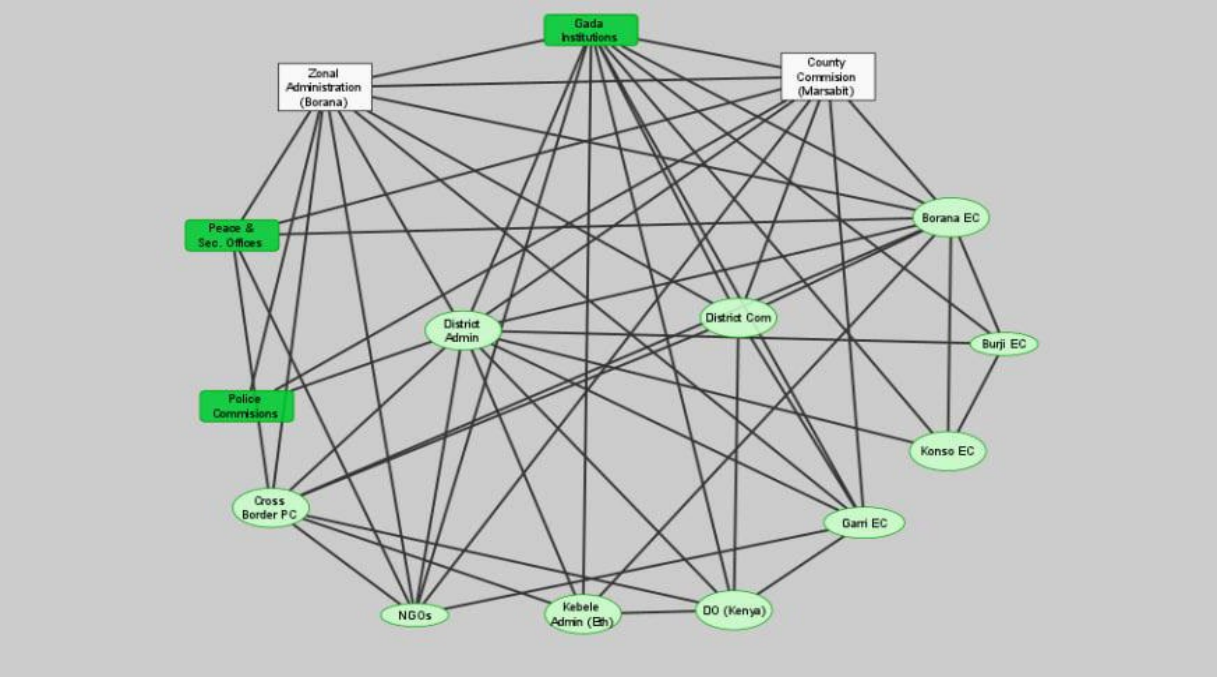
[27] Personal interview, businesswoman, Moyale, Ethiopia, 22 September 2022.

[28] Bernier Quinn and Ruth Meinzen-Dick, ,'Resilience and Social Capital, ' International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), 2014, https://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/128152/filename/128363.pdf (accessed 17 June 2023).

The discussions that follow seek to identify 1) central nodes, that is, organizations or people who are well connected, are critical sources and repositories of information and who have influence; 2) knowledge brokers – those who create bridges between groups; and 3) peripheral actors – those who are unconnected and can thus be at risk of exiting the networks. The actors' identification is across the three functional domains of social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM in the Moyale cluster.

3.2.1. SOCIAL COHESION ACTORS

Figure 2: Social Cohesion Actors Network in the Moyale Cluster



Central Nodes

The Borana zonal administration, the County Government of Marsabit, the *Gada* institution, and clan councils of elders across both sides of the border were found to be the central nodes among the social cohesion actors in the cluster.

As can be observed from the network map presented in Fig 2, the Borana zonal administration and the County Government of Marsabit both interact with 10 of the 15 social cohesion actors identified in this study. Similarly, the *Gada* Institution and councils of elders interact with 11 and 10 of the 15 social cohesion actors, respectively. In this regard, study participants attested that the zonal administrator and

county officials both maintain strong connections not only between themselves, but also with most other actors from their respective government agencies, councils of elders, the business community, and civil society actors.

Moreover, the zonal administrative unit maintains close connections with zonal peace and security officers and the police commission – the two zonal level departments that are directly involved in maintaining social cohesion. Additionally, they both have strong links with local administrations, border peace committees, councils of elders, and religious institutions.

Likewise, the councils of elders have strong connections with zonal, *woreda,* and *kebele* level administrative structures across the Borana zone. At the same time, given that the settlement of the Borana, Garri, and Gabra straddle both sides of the Ethiopia-Kenya border, these same clan elders have similar strong connections with county, district, and division level government structures on the Kenyan side of the cluster. They also interact with civil society groups and/or NGOs, religious leaders, women, and youth groups in their communities.

In the case of the *Gada* system, the *Abba Gada* sends the *Gada* council members as emissaries where he cannot reach himself. Whereas the *Abba G*ada and *Hayyu* largely interact directly with zonal level government structure, *woreda* and *kebele* administrations largely work in parallel with the lower/local level structures such as the *qaye* and *jalaba* whose role was described earlier under section 3.1. Moreover, clan elders interact with each other to resolve inter-community disputes and to build peace and harmony among their respective communities. The key informants identified the *Gada* system as a unifying factor in inter-communal relations among members of the Konso, Burji, and Gabra clans, and as a bridge of inter-clan diplomacy.

According to study participants the Borana *Abba Gada* and his counterparts from the Konso and the Burji communities convene and hold discussions every year on matters of inter-community unity as well as peace and harmony across the neighborhood and the whole land (country). In one of these occasions, the Borana *Abba Gada* was reported to have sent a messenger from Yabello to summon his counterparts from the two communities for discussion on matters of peace-building. A 79-year-old key informant narrated the resolution they reached following the peace talks, as follows:

> *"A person who goes against peace does not belong to any clan. Even if they were born to the Borana they will no longer be considered as a Borana, even if they were born to the Konso, they will no longer be considered as a Konso, and even if they were born to Burji they will no longer be considered as a Burji. Instead, any person who goes against peace will be considered as a wicked person with no clan."*[29]

[29] Personal interview, key informant, Taltelle, Ethiopia, September 2022.

According to this informant as well as many others from the area, unity and peaceful coexistence has since been growing among them after this decision was made between the respective customary leaders of these communities. Moreover, study participants described the special regard with which the Konso community is held among the Borana, not only for their high regard for the Borana culture, but also for their special skills and dedication in designing and manufacturing Borana cultural dresses and ornaments such as *kellecha, rufa, saddeqa, barto, michira*, and so forth.

The above empirical evidence is very much in line with what another research report[30] insightfully concluded a couple of decades ago. The report noted that respect and support for the *Gada* among the diverse local communities are closely linked to ethnic lines and, when present, serves as a key unifying factor among them. The authors, besides empirically demonstrating the actual intercommunity relations at the time, pointed out the potential for a growing harmonious relationship among the Borana, Gabra, and Konso communities. This is because these groups are either allied to, or have close associations with, the Borana based on their affiliation with the *Gada* system.

Although the Garri also have their own traditional institution of elders known as *Ugaas*, the *Gada* system is known to the Garri as well. In times of more peaceful inter-ethnic relations, there is evidence of consultation and negotiation between the two groups' traditional structures. However, in very recent times, the Borana–Garri relationship has been characterized by conflict around disputed regional borders – the southeastern border of Oromiya regional state and the adjacent Somali regional state.

Overall, the ability of clan elders and the *Gada* institution to be connected to many groups and their unique connections with others in the social cohesion network demonstrates that they are influential actors that should not be overlooked in designing and implementing social cohesion programs.

Peripheral Actors

Youth and women's groups, minorities' councils of elders, and religious institutions were largely identified to exist on the periphery of the social cohesion actor networks in the cluster. Councils of elders among minority groups such as the Konso and the Burji were reported to lack adequate participation and influence in dialogue platforms with government agencies and NGOs. Similarly, study participants from these minority groups reported not being adequately represented in the local administration as well. Primarily, the Borana, Gabra, and the Garri were said to be the clans who dominate the local administrations, including government agencies responsible for social cohesion.

[30] Boku Tache, 'Pastoralism under Stress: Resources, Institutions and Poverty among the Borana Oromo in Southern Ethiopia,' (PhD Thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway, 2008).

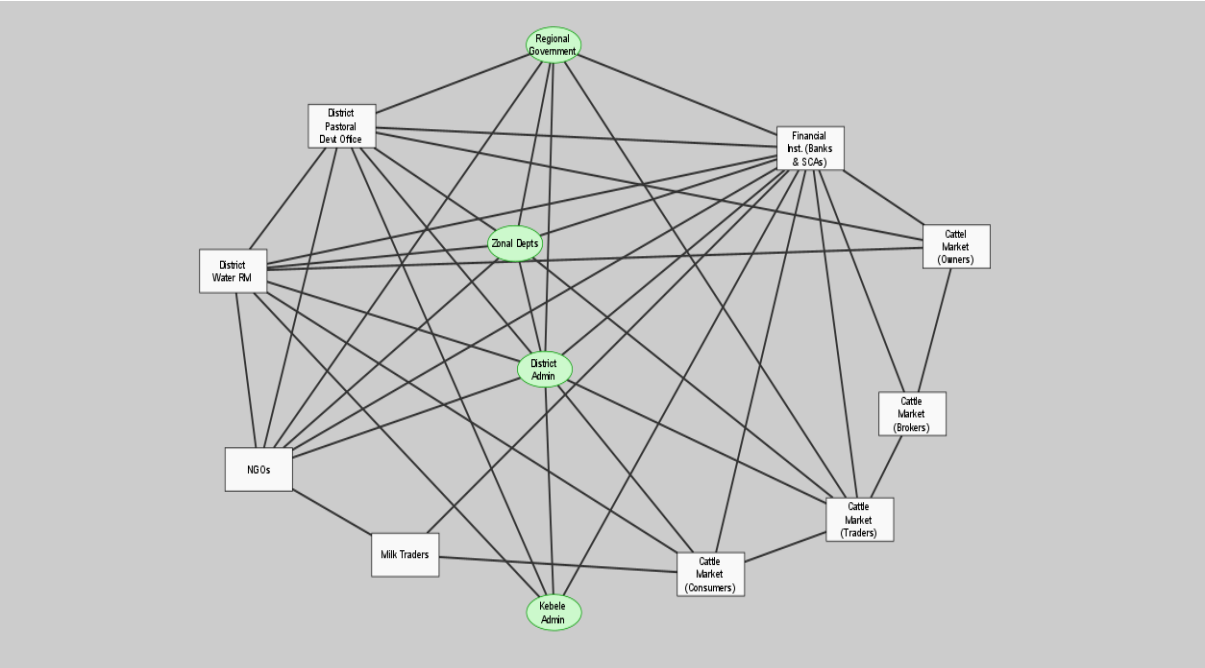
Knowledge Brokers

NGOs, zonal sectoral offices, *kebele* administrations, and religious institutions were largely found to play the role of knowledge brokers in social cohesion across the cluster. Notwithstanding their role as key actors on their own, zonal sectoral offices such as the peace and security office and zonal police commission, and the *kebele* administration act largely as knowledge brokers. This arises from the administrative architecture of the Ethiopian state which renders the federal, regional, and district administrations as the basic planning units on all matters of administration and development. Similarly, notwithstanding its other roles, the *kebele* level of administration functions primarily as a link between communities and the district administrations in matters of development planning and execution.

In addition, NGOs and CSOs function as knowledge brokers in the network of social cohesion actors through their work in knowledge production (peace and conflict research) and their engagement in policy advocacy for peace-building, both of which are ultimately intended to strengthen social cohesion. Nonetheless, they do not have strong relations with the local traditional actors such as the *Gada* leaders and the local government structures such as the *woreda* and *kebele* administration sectors. This arises mainly due to the lack of a central organ that is responsible for coordinating all actors towards working for common goals in terms of supporting communities in improving their social cohesion.

3.2.2. LIVELIHOOD ACTORS

Figure 3: Livelihood Actors' Social Network in the Moyale Cluster



Central Nodes

The Borana zonal administration and its line department offices, such as the pastoral development office, the water office, the disaster and risk reduction office, the animal health office, and the trade and investment office, are the central nodes among government agencies working on livelihoods.

For Marsabit County, the County Budget and Economic Forum[31] provides means for consultation by the county government on preparation of fiscal plans and budget reviews, and to advice on matters relating to budgeting, and economy and financial management at the county level.

Likewise, as can be observed from the social network in Figure 3, NGOs are also central nodes, having connections with most actors in the livelihoods domain. Although lacking in organization, ICBTs were also found to be among the central nodes in the network of livelihood actors in the Moyale cluster.

Peripheral Actors

Community networks, milk traders, and livestock owners were largely identified to exist on the periphery of livelihoods networks in the cluster. Relationships between the community-led livelihoods support networks and the other main actors in the livelihoods network were largely weak, and actors across community networks were often categorized as peripheral actors. However, some of the

[31] The forum is comprised of the Governor as its chairperson, County Executive Committee members, and representatives of professionals, the business community, women, PWDs, the elderly and faith-based organizations, as appointed by the Governor.

community networks such as *dabare*, *hariyya,* and *busa gonofa* have a strong relationship with the influential *Gada* system, in general, and with the *Gada* elders, in particular. Some *afoshas* also have a degree of relationship with religious institutions. The *busa gonofa* network maintains a particularly strong relation with *Gada* authorities, but it is not well linked to government agencies and CSOs. Overall, none of the community networks referred to government agencies or CSOs as having strong links with their networks.

Similarly, livestock owners were found to be peripheral actors across the cattle market value chain network. While there could be a variety of complex and interrelated factors that have rendered the livestock owners as peripheral actors, information from key informant interviews indicates that this situation can partly be attributed to lack of efficient livestock markets, weak financial systems, and information asymmetries arising from weak information systems. Although there are numerous pastoral livestock cooperatives, these cooperatives have not been able to empower livestock owners as they have remained largely dormant.

Knowledge Brokers

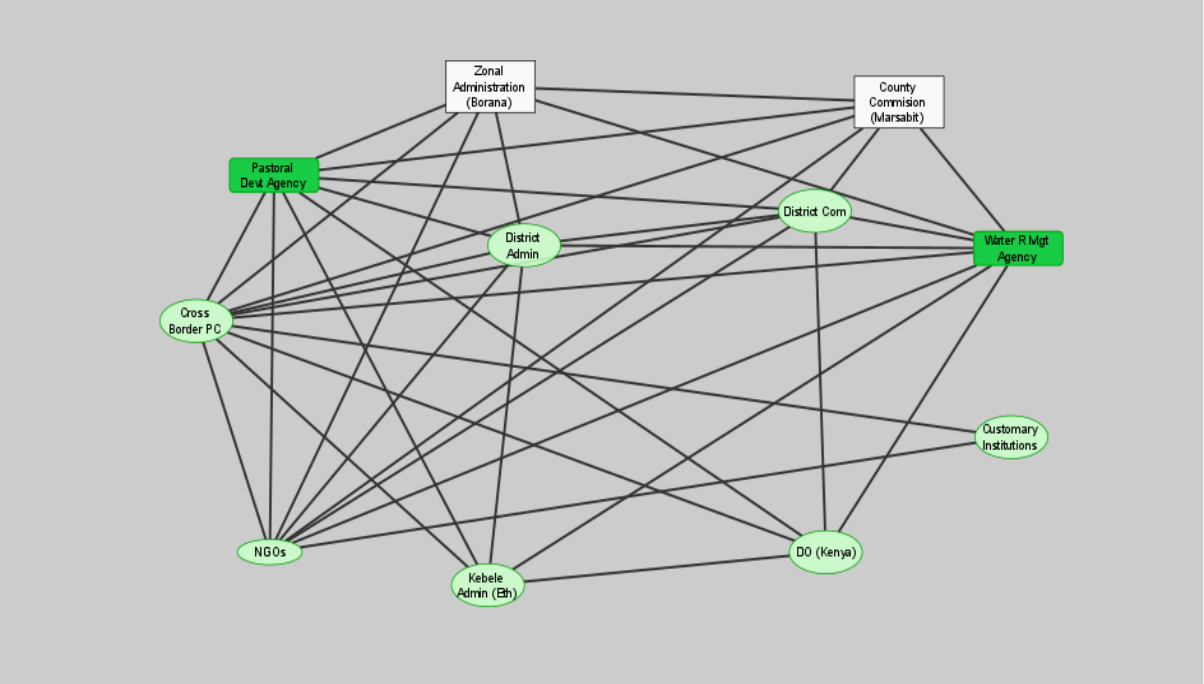
Zonal sectoral offices engaged in livelihood activities such as pastoral development and trade and investment offices, *kebele* administrations, and cattle traders were largely found to play the role of knowledge brokers. As described above, notwithstanding their role as key actors on their own, zonal sectoral offices and the *kebele* administration act largely as knowledge brokers.

For Marsabit County, there is a local Chamber of Commerce that serves as a link between the business community and the national government, especially when it comes to cross-border trade. The Chamber of Commerce is also affiliated with the Kenyan Livestock Marketing Council (KLMC), an umbrella organization for livestock producers and traders in the arid and semi-arid areas of Kenya that supports livestock marketing. While there are pastoral cooperative societies that were meant to support trade in livestock and livestock products in the Borana zone, study participants indicated that they are not functioning well and remain dormant in most cases. On the other hand, there is a visibly active yet scattered group of milk traders, the majority of whom are women in localities in the Borana zone.

Additionally, cattle brokers were identified by study participants as knowledge brokers with effective connections between the pastoralists who supply livestock to the market and the consumers. The brokers engage in market information manipulation, bargaining prices for traders, price setting, and doing what is beneficial to them and the traders they represent. Generally, study participants expressed a concern that this practice of brokers is harming pastoral communities who receive a smaller proportion of the market value of their livestock sales. The actors in informal cross border livestock trade are from all communities, but only a few of them are from pastoral groups.

3.2.3. NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTORS

Figure 4: NRM actors' social network in the Moyale cluster



Central Nodes

The main central nodes in the NRM network of actors are cross-border committees. The cross-border committees involve representatives of both state and customary institutions, and they operate by blending formal (state) and informal (indigenous) rules and mechanisms in a hybrid structure. Although they have no official status, some are taking on roles as authorities in NRM, and are becoming the structures through which some communities are negotiating or claiming rights to access grazing land and water sources. Cross-border committees were also perceived as providing a useful platform for better organized and more efficient resource management. There was widespread agreement among interviewees that the cross-border committees could potentially improve institutional arrangements around NRM.

The Borana zonal and district level government structures, such as the pastoral development office, the natural resources, and environmental protection and water resource management agencies, are also central nodes. They represent the main agencies mandated with the primary tasks of NRM. As shown in the network map, they interact with a diverse group of actors including government agencies, customary institutions, and NGOs.

Peripheral Actors

Customary institutions were found to occupy a peripheral position in the network of NRM actors, as depicted in Figure 4. At the local level, customary systems have long allowed pastoralists to move into a new grazing settlement after having secured the consent of the *Abbaa Dheedaa* or his local

representatives. However, in many cases, pastoral association (PA)-based local government structures were reported to restrict access to communal grazing areas outside their administrative areas.

> In many cases governments have failed to recognize the existence of customary institutional arrangements. In other cases, such arrangements have been sidelined and undermined. Though there are some instances of cooperation between PAs and *Gada* authorities, when two local institutions claim authority over the same resource domain, it creates a situation in which various actors are able to appeal to the institution that best serves their interests. In this regard, a key informant at Yabello told the research team that things are changing due to interference from local government and NGOs in the name of rangeland management and *miciree cutuu* (bush cutting removing dangerous weeds that reduce productivity). As the study participant further observed, *"In the past we used to manage our environmental resources. Today everybody tells us that they know everything. The government and the NGOs force us to organize ourselves, though not successfully. It is this way that drought continued and famine followed."*[32]

Overall, the evidence highlighted above indicates that the prevalence of NRM practices where access to grazing and water have been granted by government officials, rather than through the mediation of customary institutions, marginalizes the latter to the periphery.

Knowledge Brokers

NGOs are the main knowledge brokers in the NRM domain. With the support of CARE Kenya, for example, the cross-border committee of Iristeno in Marsabit County and Gadaduma in the Borana zone has established a dry-season common reserve (*kallo*) close to the border. Since the establishment of the cross-border committee of Borduras in Marsabit County and Hardura in the Borana zone, the use of water sources by both communities has been synchronized, with both now using the same pond until it is depleted and only then moving on to another one, making it easier to monitor water availability and reducing water use. A number of NGOs, including CARE International, ACTED, and VSF-Germany, funded by ECHO, have also established cross-border committees as part of ongoing work on strengthening resilience to drought.

3.3. Conflict Sensitivity and Cross-border Dynamics

The findings of this study suggest that cohesion among the Borana, Gabra, Konso, and Burji communities has been growing substantially over the last few years. However, cycles of inter-community conflicts between the Borana and Garri over swathes of land (along with traditional water wells) across Hudet, Gof, and Le'e areas, and unresolved claims and counterclaims over the

[32] Personal interview, key informant, Yabello, Ethiopia, 19 September 2022.

administrative rights of the border town of Moyale have led to a substantial depletion of social cohesion. Consequently, the Ethiopian border town of Moyale has been sub-divided into two districts with fully-fledged overlapping administrative structures based in the same town for the past couple of decades. These are the Moyale district of the Somali regional state, overwhelmingly inhabited by the Somali Garri, and the Moyale district of the Oromia regional state, largely populated by the Borana, an Oromo group. In principle, one district belongs to the Ethiopian Somali region and the other to the Oromia region, but they are geographically situated in the same town of Moyale. Each district has a mayor, a police force, a court, a prison, a local administrative unit, a customs office, and its own inland revenue office

As a result, the hostility between the two communities and their alliances among inhabitants of the border town of Moyale was identified as a key conflict sensitive issue in the cluster. Morover, Moyale also serves as a border town between Ethiopia and Kenya. The town on the Kenyan side of the border is also called Moyale but it is locally called 'Gambo.' The same Borana and Garri communities also inhabit both sides of the border indicating that, as has been the case in the past, conflict between the communities on one side of the border might trigger conflict on the other side of the border.

Even within the indicated constraints in relation to conflict sensitivity, cross-border interactions involving informal traders, mutual support among cross-border kin, and cross-border schooling of children across the cluster take place on a daily basis. For instance, in Moyale, many hundreds of school children cross every day to attend Kenyan schools. On this note, a study participant opined thus:

> *"Yes, we have social networks with our community in Kenya. There is a government border between Kenya and Ethiopia, but we have no border. For example, if you go to Kenya in a car with an Ethiopian license plate, no one will ask you unless the Ethiopian government recognizes you."*[33]

In relation to this, the administration, peace, and security head of Dillo district expressed his appreciation of the culture of trust that currently exists among community members who live in Dillo and along the border of Kenya (Borana and Gabra)[34]. He stressed the ongoing efforts of peace committees in the town in seeking to ensure long-term peace. At present, according to this informant, by attending the *"marketplace in Dillo district on the Ethiopian side, the community living in Dukena [a neighboring community in Dukana district of Kenya] are spared from traveling a long distance farther into the center of Kenya."* Whereas individual quarrels sometimes lead to tribal conflicts, the social networks have a role in correcting misinformation. In this regard, the study participant appreciated the role of the traditional communication system *daiimtuu,* where every traveler across any

[33] Personal interview, woman, Moyale, Ethiopia, September 2022.
[34] Personal interview, peace and security head, Dillo, Ethiopia, September 2022.

village has the responsibility to stop and provide information on whatever issues the villagers may ask from the area he/she is coming from.

A key informant in Moyale also stated that all the three community groups are involved in trading across the border between Ethiopia and Kenya. Likewise, a security officer at Dukena sub-county in Marsabit County stated, *"Every Monday we [the community on the Kenyan side] come to this market in Dillo, and every Sunday the community of Dillo goes to the market in Obokee [a Kenyan town]."*[35] He added that there is a peace meeting among the administrators of both side (Dukkena and Dillo) to ensure that interactions are smooth and peaceful[36].

Another local community leader known by the title *Abbaa dheeda* (father/leader of the range) who also happens to be a member of the cross-border committee in Dillo also stated:

> *"We live our daily lives by raising livestock, and we pastoralists/cattle herders do not have a permanent settlement. When it rains, we migrate in search of water for our cattle, and there is no border that we do not cross in search of animal pasture. During times of disaster [livelihood shocks] here in Dillo, one rises early in the morning and escapes to Kenya until the disaster [the trouble] passes. And when trouble visits the Dukana community (Kenya), they also run to us to escape the trouble."*[37]

When asked to identify the key actors in strengthening cross-border community interactions across the Moyale cluster, there were common references by study participants to cross-border peace committees. These committees, it was stated, were established by the government and often supported by NGOs to support inter-community networking across borders. These committees were reported as having the potential to serve as connectors for a peace-building agenda among cross-border communities and their respective cultural institutions across the cluster.

[35] Personal interview, security head, Dukena, Kenya, September 2022.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Personal interview, Abbaa dheeda Dillo, Ethiopia, September 2022.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study showed that most of the main actors across the CBCR Activity's three domains, including government agencies, NGOs, traditional governance institutions, and the private sector, have a mix of involvement in at least two or even all three domains. For example, government agencies and NGOs were found to be among the main actors across all the three functional domains. Likewise, traditional governance institutions and cross-border peace committees were found to be main actors in both the social cohesion and NRM domains. Community social support groups and the private sector were identified as main actors across both livelihoods and social cohesion domains.

Government agencies were found to be a regular central node across all the three functional domains, along with a non-constant mix of actors from NGOs, traditional governance institutions, and the private sector. Councils of elders and the *Gada* institution were found to constitute central nodes in both the social cohesion and NRM domains. In particular, councils of elders (of dominant communities) and leaders of the *Gada* were found to maintain strong cross-border connections with most of the main actors including government agencies, civil society groups and/or NGOs, religious leaders, and women's and youth groups across both the social cohesion and NRM domains on both sides of the cluster. Their role as central nodes, combined with their strong cross-border connections to other social cohesion and NRM actors, implies that they are uniquely influential actors that should be taken seriously in designing and implementing social cohesion and NRM interventions.

Whereas NGOs were found to be among the central nodes in the livelihoods domain, their role in the social cohesion and NRM domains was found to be that of knowledge brokers. They were found to engage in facilitating linkages between actors and communities through activities such as research (knowledge production and dissemination), policy advocacy, and facilitating the establishment of cross-border committees. On the other hand, community mutual support networks and youth and women's organizations were found to be peripheral actors across both social cohesion and livelihood networks in the cluster.

Despite their widely noted tacit yet critical cross-cutting roles in supporting both livelihoods and social cohesion, community-led actor networks had weak relationships with other actors in both domains. For example, although they have a strong relationship with the influential *Gada* system and religious institutions, no government agency or NGO – except CARE Ethiopia which was reported to have been collaborating with *busa gonofa* – was found to have visible links with these community networks. This can be partly attributed to low levels of externally available knowledge/understanding by formal actors, in general, and to NGOs, in particular, regarding the *modus operandi* and level of influence that such intricate traditional pastoral institutional systems can have on the effectiveness of interventions.

Furthermore, there is a closely knit and internally cohesive informal community network supported by a regular information sharing mechanism known as *da'imtu* among most of the Ethiopia-Kenya cross-border communities. However, coordination and information sharing within and between actors from government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector was found to be mostly weak, especially on the Ethiopian side of the cluster. Among NGOs, the divergence of legal provisions between Ethiopia and Kenya and internal policies and operational strategies of the NGOs themselves have, so far, been the main roadblocks to cross-border coordination among actors and their initiatives across the three domains.

Additionally, the study shows that despite the hostilities and frequent conflicts among the Borana and Garri communities around Moyale town, interactions among community-led networks such as the *busaa gonofa* and ICBT – often conducted under the shadow of cross-border kin visits – were taking place on an almost regular basis. Both ICBT and *busa gonofa* were widely acknowledged as having a substantial role in supporting community livelihood and social cohesion across the cluster.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the following measures in light of its findings and conclusions:

1. The CBCR Activity and related stakeholders should work on enhancing effective coordination among the main actors in the Moyale cluster. This should be done through network-building initiatives to create operational synergies among functionally interconnected actors across the social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM domains.
2. Given the uniquely influential role of the institutions of councils of elders and the *Gada* governance system in both the social cohesion and NRM domains, stakeholders should work to strengthen these indigenous institutions. This can be done through providing technical and logistics support such as capacity building programs and supporting the establishment and/or scaling up of regular inter-community dialogue platforms among leaders of traditional institutions.

3. Stakeholders should initiate research-based advocacy programs for legal and policy reforms to facilitate improved cross-border interactions for actors and communities, with a particular focus on cross-border harmonization of regulations on trade and NGO operations. In this regard, supporting the establishment of business associations and a local Chamber of Commerce (lacking on the Ethiopian side) could supplement advocacy initiatives.
4. Given the multiplicity of actors and social networks and the different power centers and power relations from both customary and modern (government) institutions, the study recommends that NGOs and other development actors should promote and practice a

polycentric governance approach. This refers to a system of governance wherein several autonomous, but mutually interdependent, actors take each other into account and explore alternative pathways of cooperation without a disproportionate domination coming from any of them.

5. Further studies should be undertaken to assess the actual and potential contributions of the actor networks and their central nodes, knowledge brokers, and peripheral actors across the three domains. The studies should particularly focus on uncovering the workings and reciprocal influences of the intricate system of cross-border traditional community networks and external programs for intervention by government agencies and NGOs in supporting or hindering social cohesion, livelihoods, and NRM in the cluster. This will be with the view of using the outputs as inputs for improving future program design and implementation.