

# UNDERLYING SOCIAL CONFLICTS DRIVE HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA

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## BACKGROUND

- Connected through committee chair to Mpala Research Centre
- Local communities had reported increased rates of crop-raiding by baboons
- County is biodiversity hotspot
- It is also the home of many small-scale farmers, operating on < 1 acre



## OBJECTIVES



To understand patterns of crop-raiding by baboons in the villages of Naibor and Juakali.



To identify key factors that influence human-wildlife conflict in said villages.

## INTRODUCTION

The term 'human-wildlife conflict' is understood as competition between humans and wildlife over resources or space. Social factors can be more important in driving conflict than wildlife damage incurred.

HWC has significant costs, both financial and mental/physical. The poor are disproportionately affected by HWC because they depend heavily on the natural ecosystems which conservationists seek to protect. HWC is prevalent in all areas of the world, and Kenya is no exception.

## METHODS



Camera trapping



Participant Observation



Semi-Structured Interviews



## RESULTS



Themes of 'trust' and 'power' dominated SSIs. Farmers lamented over the "wealth" of conservancy owners.



Despite reaping no benefits from wildlife, participants still believe that wildlife has value.



Unsustainable water use was rampant in the area, further complicated already complex relationships between humans and wildlife.



No crop-raiding events were captured over a period of six months. However, human presence on farms was consistent.

## IMPLICATIONS

- By using a **CSA model** or a similar approach, farmers may begin to feel as if there are benefits in conserving wildlife for themselves.
- Finding more **climate-conscious water use schemes** as a point of harmonization for conflicting groups, rather than a point of conflict.
- Going forward, the **compensation scheme** for wildlife damage **must be addressed**, whether altered or completely overhauled.