

## **The Resilience of Indigenous Justice: Xeer and the Challenges of Modernity in Mandera County, Kenya**

By

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the resilience of the indigenous justice system, Xeer, in Mandera County. It sought to understand how Xeer has adapted to the challenges posed by modernity while continuing to contribute to conflict resolution and social cohesion. The study examined how the Xeer indigenous justice system in Mandera County, Kenya, navigates and adapts to the challenges posed through modern legal frameworks and societal transformations by applying the Theory of Change (ToC) framework by Weiss (1995). This theory emphasizes the importance of understanding the processes leading to social transformation, allowing for a detailed exploration of how Xeer can evolve while retaining its cultural integrity. The literature review highlights the resilience of Xeer in conflict resolution, its cultural significance and the challenges posed by external legal systems and changing societal structures. Employing a descriptive survey research design, the study gathers diverse perspectives from a target population of n=93, including key stakeholders such as clan elders and civil society members, through a mixed-methods approach that included questionnaires and interviews. The study provides insights into integrating indigenous justice mechanisms like Xeer with formal legal frameworks to foster community cohesion and effective conflict management. The study found that the Xeer indigenous justice system effectively navigates modern legal challenges by integrating contemporary elements while maintaining its cultural essence, allowing for enhanced community cohesion and conflict resolution. The study concluded that the resilience of Xeer is critical in preserving social order and that its adaptation to modern frameworks can promote sustainable peace in Mandera County. Recommendations include fostering collaboration between Xeer practitioners and state legal institutions to enhance procedural transparency and legitimacy. Additionally, the study advocates for policymakers to recognize and support indigenous justice mechanisms like Xeer, ensuring they remain viable amidst evolving societal dynamics.

**Key Words:** Kenya, Conflict Resolution, Indigenous Justice, Mandera County, Modernity & Xeer.

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### **Introduction**

Indigenous justice systems are central to the socio-legal framework of many traditional societies, often operating in tandem with, or as alternatives to, formal state justice structures and noted by Elmi (2010). One such example is the Somali customary law system known as *Xeer*, which has endured across generations and geographical shifts, establishing itself as a pivotal component of social cohesion and dispute resolution among Somali communities (Haji, 2012). *Xeer* is a clan-based, consensus-driven approach that allows Somali communities to resolve conflicts through negotiations and compensatory measures rather than punitive sanctions as defined by Haji (2012). This customary law system emphasizes collective responsibility, reciprocity and reparation, elements that are often more culturally resonant and accessible to the communities it serves compared to formal judicial processes (Liete, 2007). Further, the resilience of *Xeer* has been tested by social, political and economic changes, raising questions about its adaptability to the demands of modernity.

The persistence of *Xeer* highlights a crucial intersection between indigenous conflict resolution and modern state governance. This intersection has been increasingly studied in the context of African societies, where customary justice mechanisms play vital roles in maintaining order, particularly in regions where state governance is weak or perceived as externally imposed (Mkangi, 1997). Indigenous mechanisms like *Xeer* have proven essential in maintaining peace among local clans, despite the proliferation of formal judicial structures. The mutual exclusivity often assumed between indigenous and formal systems is further challenged as more scholars argue for integrative frameworks that recognize indigenous justice as complementary rather than antagonistic to state law (Muigua, 2017). As globalized political structures continue to influence African societies, understanding *Xeer's* role and potential for coexistence with formal legal systems becomes a pressing academic and practical concern.

*Xeer* faces numerous challenges, particularly as modernization efforts in the Horn of Africa intensify as noted by Sahgal et al. (2019). Traditional roles within Somali communities are evolving due to factors such as urbanization, shifts in economic activities and changing gender roles, all of which alter the dynamics within *Xeer* and the authority of traditional leaders (Sahgal et al., 2019). Additionally, the spread of extremist ideologies, which exploit clan affiliations and historical grievances, has introduced a new dimension of conflict that *Xeer* is not always equipped to address. In Somalia and neighboring countries, formal legal interventions and international organizations increasingly attempt to address these complexities by promoting hybrid systems of justice. Yet, efforts to adapt *Xeer* to modern governance structures are frequently hindered by inadequate institutional support, political tensions and the potential erosion of traditional values that undergird *Xeer's* legitimacy and effectiveness.

Thus, the resilience of *Xeer* represents both a challenge and an opportunity for modern justice reform in East Africa. A deeper understanding of *Xeer* and similar indigenous systems could yield valuable insights into sustainable, culturally grounded approaches to

justice that engage rather than bypass local traditions. Scholars and policymakers advocate for frameworks that bridge traditional and formal legal systems, recognizing the role indigenous justice mechanisms can play in addressing conflicts unique to the socio-political contexts of Somali and other African societies (Haji & Mohamed, 2017). This study explores the resilience of *Xeer* amidst modernizing influences, examining how indigenous justice systems not only survive but adapt within rapidly transforming social landscapes.

### **Assumption**

The resilience of the *Xeer* justice system hinges on its adaptability to modern legal frameworks and socio-political changes while maintaining its foundational role in local conflict resolution and community cohesion.

### **Statement of Problem**

The *Xeer* indigenous justice system exemplifies resilience, serving as a crucial conflict resolution mechanism even as modern legal structures evolve. Rooted in tradition, *Xeer* provides a culturally relevant framework that aligns with the community's values and social norms, enabling it to address conflicts in ways formal justice systems may overlook. As globalization and modernization influence Kenyan society, indigenous justice systems like *Xeer* are not only surviving but are becoming increasingly important in fostering peace and stability. Anderson and McKnight (2014) emphasize that local systems often succeed where formal institutions falter, especially in marginalized or rural communities where trust in government-led processes is limited. Elmi (2010) also highlights the significance of traditional mechanisms, showing that *Xeer* balances restorative and preventive justice approaches that resonate strongly within communities, which may feel alienated by the punitive focus of state laws. This resilience highlights the relevance of indigenous systems in enhancing local conflict resolution and social cohesion despite the influence of modernity. Irrespective of the highlighted significance of *Xeer* and other indigenous mechanisms, there is limited research on how such systems can fully integrate with Kenya's modern legal frameworks or adapt to evolving societal dynamics. Anderson and McKnight (2014) have largely focused on the effectiveness and traditional values of *Xeer*, yet they overlook practical strategies for harmonizing these practices within Kenya's current legal framework. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the adaptive measures needed for *Xeer* to function alongside formal judicial systems effectively. This study is urgent, as the failure to adapt and harmonize indigenous and formal systems could exacerbate conflict, erode trust in governance and lead to the loss of valuable indigenous knowledge. Without examining how *Xeer* can coalesce with modern structures, the stability and cohesion of communities relying on this system could be at risk, potentially resulting in escalated conflicts that could hinder regional development and peace efforts.

### **Objective**

To examine how the *Xeer* indigenous justice system in Mandera County, Kenya, navigates and adapts to the challenges posed by modern legal frameworks and societal transformations.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Theory of Change (ToC) posited a framework to understand and map out the processes required to bring about social transformation by linking activities, outcomes and long-term goals. ToC emphasized the importance of understanding how and why a desired change is

expected to happen according to Weiss (1995) and suggests that social programs should not only focus on end goals but also on the processes involved in achieving them, thereby providing a clear, evidence-based pathway to change. This theory proposes that programs be broken down into specific, measurable steps, allowing for the assessment of each phase's impact on reaching the final goal. ToC gained traction in various fields, particularly in community development and conflict resolution, where complex social dynamics require multi-faceted, adaptable solutions.

The theory by Weiss (1995) provided a valuable lens through which to examine the *Xeer*, which rely on deeply rooted societal norms and traditional practices to maintain social order. By applying ToC to *Xeer*, this study explored on how traditional justice mechanisms adapt and integrate within modern legal frameworks. The theory was particularly suited to this study, as it helped delineate the processes through which *Xeer* could evolve without losing its cultural essence, thus bridging the gap between indigenous and formal systems. Through ToC's process-oriented approach, this study examined specific changes required within *Xeer*, from enhancing procedural transparency to encouraging cooperation with state institutions, ensuring the system remained effective amidst modern societal challenges.

In Mandera County, applying ToC to *Xeer* enabled a clearer understanding of the potential benefits and barriers to such adaptations. By outlining the necessary steps and intermediate outcomes for integrating *Xeer* within Kenya's formal justice system, ToC facilitated a structured approach to achieving long-term stability and cohesion within the community. If changes were effectively implemented, the integration could support sustainable peace and enhance the legitimacy of local justice processes. Without this structured approach, efforts to modernize *Xeer* might overlook critical factors, risking the system's effectiveness and community support, which is why applying ToC in this context was essential for informed, strategic planning in advancing indigenous justice within a contemporary framework.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Indigenous Justice Systems and Conflict Resolution**

The resilience of indigenous justice systems, particularly *Xeer* among Somali communities, plays a crucial role in conflict resolution in areas like Mandera County, Kenya. *Xeer* is a traditional legal system based on clan relationships and customary law, which emphasizes mediation and consensus-building rather than punitive measures (Lederach, 1997; Lieta, 2007). According to Anderson and McKnight (2014), *Xeer* has been instrumental in addressing inter-clan conflicts, offering a culturally relevant framework that resonates with local populations. This system allows communities to maintain social cohesion by prioritizing restorative justice, which often leads to more sustainable peace, than state-imposed legal frameworks.

Furthermore, the work of Haji (2012) illustrates how *Xeer* adapts to modern challenges by incorporating contemporary elements, such as formal recognition from local authorities. This adaptability demonstrates the system's resilience in the face of external pressures, including state interventions and global legal norms. As conflicts evolve due to socio-political dynamics and environmental challenges, indigenous justice mechanisms like *Xeer* remain pivotal in managing disputes effectively and harmoniously within the community.

### **The Role of Culture in Conflict Management**

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The critical role of culture in shaping conflict management practices have been emphasized by Baya (2009) who argues that understanding local cultural contexts is vital for effective conflict resolution, as cultural norms dictate acceptable behaviors and solutions. In the case of Mandera County, the *Xeer* system is embedded in the Somali cultural fabric, which influences its acceptance and efficacy. Folarin (2015) further elaborates on how cultural values, such as respect for elders and the importance of clan affiliations, bolster the legitimacy of *Xeer* in dispute resolution processes. This cultural grounding enables *Xeer* to resonate with community members, fostering trust and compliance.

The relevance of this cultural perspective cannot be overstated, especially as modernity introduces new conflicts and challenges. By recognizing and respecting cultural frameworks, interventions aimed at peacebuilding can align with existing social structures, thereby enhancing their effectiveness. Failure to integrate cultural considerations into conflict resolution strategies may lead to resistance from communities and exacerbate tensions (Miugua, 2015). Thus, the literature underscores the importance of culturally sensitive approaches in managing contemporary conflicts.

### **Challenges and Future Directions**

Despite its strengths, the *Xeer* system faces significant challenges in the context of modernity, with Dowd and Raleigh (2013) who highlight the increasing influence of state laws and external legal frameworks that often clash with traditional systems. This tension can undermine the authority of *Xeer*, leading to fragmentation of conflict resolution processes. Moreover, as urbanization and globalization intensify, the traditional clan structures that support *Xeer* may weaken, threatening its viability (Kimana, 2015). The risk of losing this indigenous justice mechanism poses a significant threat to community cohesion and conflict management in Mandera.

The urgency of studying *Xeer's* resilience in the face of modern challenges becomes evident in this context. Without a thorough understanding of how indigenous justice systems can evolve and adapt, there is a danger of losing valuable conflict resolution mechanisms that are deeply rooted in local cultures. The proposed study aims to bridge this gap by examining the contemporary relevance of *Xeer* and exploring ways to integrate it with modern legal frameworks. By doing so, it seeks to provide actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners working in conflict-affected regions like Mandera County, ensuring that indigenous systems continue to play a vital role in fostering peace and social stability.

### **Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey research design, which, as outlined by Kothari and Garg (2014), effectively captures existing conditions and facilitates the identification of relationships within a population. This approach was particularly relevant for investigating the dynamics of the *Xeer* system in Mandera County, as it not only collected factual data but also revealed underlying principles essential for understanding the indigenous justice system's role in promoting peace. By highlighting the relationship between the application of *Xeer* and its impact on conflict resolution, the study aimed to enhance knowledge in this area and offer solutions to significant community challenges.

Mandera Central Constituency served as the focal study area due to its status as a conflict epicenter where clan disputes are prevalent, making it crucial for understanding the practical applications of *Xeer*. The target population included a diverse group of stakeholders: Clan Elders, County Administrators, members of Civil Society Organizations, District Peace



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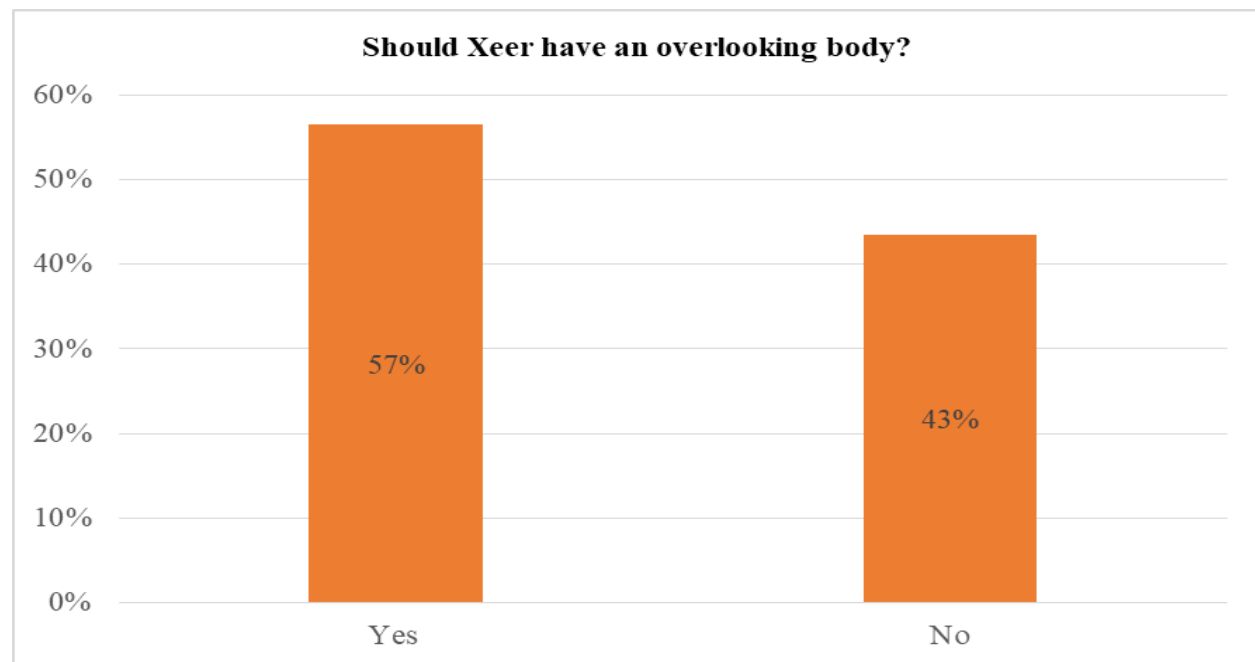
Committees and local residents who have engaged with the *Xeer* system. This diversity was essential for capturing various perspectives on the efficacy and challenges of the indigenous justice system. A carefully calculated sample size of 93 participants was determined, drawing from a total target population of 118, ensuring the representation of those with direct experience or knowledge of *Xeer*.

Data collection involved a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. Primary data was gathered through structured questionnaires administered to literate participants and oral interviews conducted with those unable to read or preferring verbal communication. Focus group discussions were also utilized to foster community engagement and gather collective insights. The instruments underwent pretesting to ensure reliability and validity, with adjustments made based on feedback from a pilot study. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process, with informed consent obtained from participants and confidentiality assured to encourage honest and open dialogue. The comprehensive methodology thus aimed to ensure the study's findings were robust, relevant and reflective of the complex realities surrounding indigenous justice in Mandera County.

### **Presentation and Discussion of Findings**

The study's findings on the *Xeer* system in Mandera County reveals its foundational role in conflict resolution and peace-building among Somali communities. The *Xeer* system operates based on customary laws and community consensus, emphasizing reconciliation and the restoration of harmony. Unlike formal legal structures, which may impose rigid frameworks, the *Xeer* system thrives on the flexibility and adaptability of its practices to meet the specific cultural and social dynamics of the community. As one key informant articulated, "*The Xeer system at its core resolved conflicts while fostering reconciliation within the community*" (KII 4; Kutulo South - 13th November, 2023). This adaptability enables the *Xeer* system to navigate the complexities of intercommunal tensions in Mandera, which stem from resource disputes, political rivalries and ethnic diversity.

Mandera County has historically experienced persistent conflicts, primarily due to competition over limited resources exacerbated by environmental challenges like droughts. The competition over land and water resources creates a fertile ground for disputes among pastoralist communities, highlighting the need for a conflict resolution mechanism that resonates with local customs. Political dynamics further complicate these conflicts, as historical marginalization and competition for political representation fuel tensions within the region. The *Xeer* system's grassroots approach provides a platform for dialogue among disputing parties, promoting understanding and mitigating tensions. As noted in the findings, "*The ability of elders and community leaders to uphold the values inherent in the Xeer system is a significant factor influencing the outcomes of conflict resolution*" (KII 10; Olla - 22nd November, 2023). This indicates that the integration of local customs into conflict resolution processes can foster community cohesion and stability. However, while the *Xeer* system demonstrates considerable efficacy in addressing conflicts, the study also reveals a divergence in community perceptions regarding the need for an overseeing body to address dissatisfaction with its rulings as demonstrated in figure 1.



**Figure 1: Xeer to Have or Not Have Overlooking Body**

**Source:** Field data, 2023

Survey results indicated that 57% of respondents supported establishing an oversight mechanism, while 43% opposed it, reflecting a nuanced debate on the balance between maintaining the system's autonomy and addressing concerns about accountability. This division underscores the complexities of integrating formal oversight within traditional systems, which are typically grounded in community consensus and cultural practices. Understanding the rationales behind these differing perspectives is essential for developing a nuanced approach to peacebuilding that respects traditional practices while enhancing accountability.

The findings also highlight the significance of elders and community leaders in the application of the *Xeer* system. These respected figures play a crucial role in mediating conflicts, leveraging their wisdom and deep understanding of cultural nuances to guide the resolution process. Their involvement is pivotal for ensuring that decisions reflect the community's values and traditions, thereby enhancing the credibility of the outcomes. The research emphasizes that the sustainability of the *Xeer* system hinges on empowering these leaders and integrating their insights into contemporary conflict resolution strategies. As one informant noted, "*The communal nature of the Xeer system not only ensures that the resolution outcomes are widely accepted but also contributes to the cultivation of a collective ethos*" (KII 6; Rhamu - 15th November, 2023). This perspective highlights the importance of fostering a sense of collective responsibility among community members, promoting social harmony and resilience.

Furthermore, the study reveals that the *Xeer* system's flexibility allows it to address a wide range of disputes, from resource allocation to interpersonal conflicts. This adaptability not only enhances the system's effectiveness but also aligns with the community's evolving needs amidst changing social structures and external influences. The findings suggest that maintaining the core principles of the *Xeer* system while allowing for adaptability can provide a robust framework for conflict resolution in the face of contemporary challenges.

The researchers observed that “*the Xeer system plays a crucial role in promoting a sense of collective responsibility among community members,*” further emphasizing the system's role in fostering social cohesion (KII 6; Rhamu - 15th November, 2023).

On the effectiveness of the *Xeer* system as a peace-building strategy the study highlighted the significant role this traditional conflict resolution mechanism plays in fostering community cohesion and resolving disputes. Rooted in Somali culture, the *Xeer* system is characterized by its decentralized structure, which allows for local elders and community leaders to actively engage in the resolution process. This grassroots approach not only respects cultural sensitivities but also tailors conflict resolution strategies to the unique dynamics of Mandera. As articulated in the study, “*The flexibility of the Xeer system is a notable attribute, displaying the capacity to adapt dynamically to various disputes*” (KII 2; El Wak South - 9th November, 2023). This flexibility enables the system to maintain its relevance in contemporary conflict landscapes, demonstrating its effectiveness in addressing the diverse needs of the community.

One of the primary findings of the research indicates that the *Xeer* system effectively facilitates conflict resolution by engaging individuals who are deeply embedded in the local context. The study illustrates how this approach leads to successful outcomes by fostering an understanding of the social fabric within Mandera. Through relying on the wisdom and mediation skills of local elders, the *Xeer* system can address disputes in a culturally appropriate manner, thus enhancing its legitimacy and acceptance among community members. The research supports previous findings from similar pastoralist contexts, underscoring the importance of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace and reconciliation (Kagaha, 2009; United Nations Development Programme, 2005).

Furthermore, the study reveals the *Xeer* system's profound impact on community cohesion. It acts as a mediator that bridges gaps between opposing factions, facilitating constructive dialogue and mutual understanding. An informant noted, “*The Xeer system instils a sense of collective responsibility among community members,*” emphasizing how it promotes a communal ethos that transcends individual interests (KII 3; Guticha - 10th November, 2023). This sense of shared responsibility not only strengthens community bonds but also reinforces the idea that maintaining social harmony is a collective endeavor, making the *Xeer* system a vital component of Mandera's social fabric.

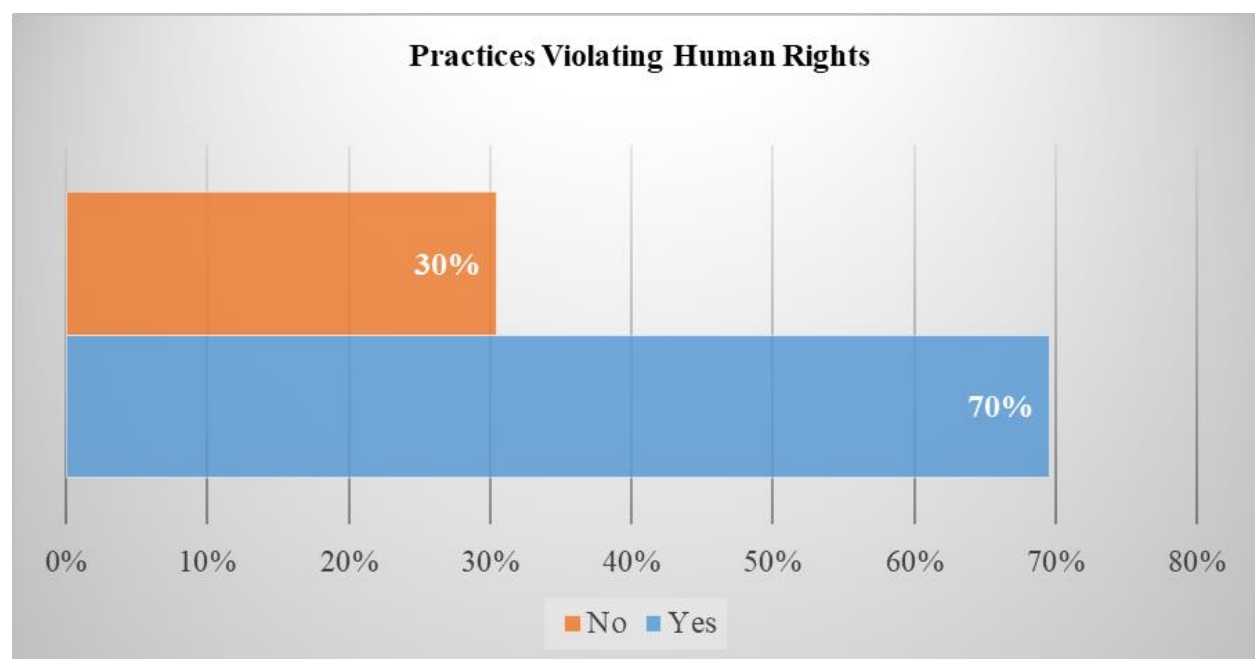
The study also highlights the essential role of elders and community leaders in implementing the *Xeer* system. These figures are not only mediators but also custodians of cultural knowledge and practices. Their experience and trustworthiness enable them to navigate conflicts effectively while fostering cooperation among disputing parties. As noted in an interview, “*It is important to invest in the leadership capacities of elders, recognizing them as central to the successful implementation of the Xeer system*” (KII 7; Wargadud - 16th November, 2023). This sentiment emphasizes the need for strategic investments in the leadership development of elders to ensure the *Xeer* system's continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing community needs.

Moreover, the study explored how the Mandera community perceives the *Xeer* system within the context of contemporary challenges. This exploration sheds light on the intersection of traditional values and modern realities, highlighting the adaptability of the *Xeer* system in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by the community. An informant expressed that, “*The Xeer system needs to be accepted by policymakers, practitioners and community leaders interested in peace-building,*” (KII 8; Marothile - 17th November, 2023), indicating the importance of aligning traditional mechanisms with contemporary peace-



building efforts. This perspective suggests that successful peace-building initiatives should incorporate cultural contexts, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and sustainability.

On the challenges faced in the application and adoption of the *Xeer* system as a peacebuilding strategy in Mandera County the study reveals significant obstacles that hinder its effectiveness. Despite the *Xeer* system's reputation for its decentralized and inclusive nature, it struggles to adapt to the unique socio-political context of Mandera. Among the critical challenges identified are gender inequality, lack of formal recognition by state institutions and tensions with formal legal frameworks. These factors collectively undermine the capacity of the *Xeer* system to function effectively as a peacebuilding tool, limiting its reach and diminishing its potential to resolve conflicts within the community. Figure 2, illustrates on the practices violating human rights.



**Figure 2: Practices Violating Human Rights**

**Source:** Field data, 2023

A key finding highlighted in the survey results was the community's perception of traditional practices like *diya*, which assigns monetary value to human life. The data indicated that 70% of respondents believed that such practices violate human rights. This reflects a significant concern regarding the compatibility of traditional customs with modern human rights standards. The study underscores the need to reconcile traditional practices with human rights norms, highlighting the dual challenge of maintaining cultural heritage while protecting individual rights. As one informant noted, "*Understanding and mitigating these external influences is crucial for preserving the integrity and effectiveness of the Xeer system as a local peace-building strategy.*" This statement illustrates the importance of context-specific solutions that respect both cultural traditions and contemporary human rights.

External factors, particularly Mandera's geopolitical location, emerged as a significant challenge affecting the application of the *Xeer* system. The study elucidated how external pressures, such as conflicts and ideologies from neighboring regions, complicate the implementation of local traditions. The informant's insight emphasized that "understanding

and addressing these external influences is crucial for preserving the integrity of the *Xeer* system." This calls for a strategic approach that recognizes the complex interplay between local customs and global dynamics, thereby ensuring that the *Xeer* system remains relevant in the face of changing circumstances.

Power imbalances within the community were identified as another formidable challenge to the equitable application of the *Xeer* system. The study revealed how existing power structures could distort the impartiality of conflict resolution processes, compromising the core principles of justice and fairness inherent in the *Xeer* system. One informant stated that "*addressing power imbalances within the community is essential for ensuring the Xeer system operates in a manner that reflects the principles of inclusivity and fairness.*" This highlights the need for efforts to promote a more egalitarian distribution of influence and authority, which could involve community-wide dialogues and capacity-building initiatives aimed at fostering broader representation in decision-making processes.

Resistance to change was also a critical barrier identified in the study. The deep cultural roots of the *Xeer* system in Somali traditions generated skepticism among segments of the community, particularly those accustomed to alternative conflict resolution mechanisms. The research emphasized that overcoming this resistance requires nuanced communication strategies that address concerns and misconceptions about the *Xeer* system. An informant noted, "*Overcoming resistance to the Xeer system requires nuanced approaches to communication and education that addressed the concerns and misconceptions held by certain quarters of the community.*" This points to the necessity of community engagement and educational initiatives aimed at promoting understanding and acceptance of the *Xeer* system within the broader framework of conflict resolution.

The study finally examined the intersection of the *Xeer* system with contemporary challenges, such as shifting social structures and economic pressures. The findings highlighted the need for a delicate balance between preserving the cultural integrity of the *Xeer* system and adapting to modern realities. An informant indicated that "*understanding the impact of contemporary challenges is crucial for developing strategies that allow the Xeer system to adapt without compromising its core principles.*" This insight emphasizes that strategic interventions should aim to enhance the *Xeer* system's relevance while safeguarding its traditional values, ensuring that it remains a viable and respected conflict resolution mechanism within Mandera County's evolving context..

## **Conclusion**

The study on the *Xeer* system's effectiveness as a peacebuilding strategy in Mandera County concludes that, despite its cultural relevance and community-oriented approach, the system faces significant challenges in adapting to the region's evolving socio-cultural dynamics and external influences. While the *Xeer* system has the potential to resolve conflicts and foster community cohesion, its implementation is hindered by existing power disparities and resistance to change among certain community members, which threaten its equitable application. The findings underscore the importance of understanding the resilience of the *Xeer* system and the need for enhanced communication and educational strategies to address cultural skepticism. Additionally, the study emphasizes that for the *Xeer* system to remain effective and sustainable, it must evolve by integrating new elements while retaining its core principles, thus offering valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners and community leaders looking to leverage this traditional conflict resolution method in a complex and dynamic environment.

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### **Recommendations**

The study provides several key recommendations based on its findings, highlighting the need for a multifaceted approach to enhance the effectiveness of the *Xeer* system as a culturally relevant conflict resolution mechanism in Mandera County. First, there should be an investment in leadership capacities to bolster the sustainability of the *Xeer* system, requiring collaboration between the government, local communities and relevant NGOs to maximize its potential. Second, it is essential to strike a balance between the flexibility of the *Xeer* system and the preservation of its core principles, necessitating education and awareness initiatives to foster community understanding and support for its application. Last, targeted educational programs should be implemented to address resistance to the *Xeer* system, employing communication strategies that mitigate cultural skepticism and opposition to traditional practices, while also considering the economic dimensions and external influences affecting conflict resolution. These recommendations advocate for a coordinated effort among county and national government agencies, community-based organizations and civil society to ensure that the *Xeer* system is effectively integrated into the contemporary socio-cultural landscape.

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