

**POST-CONFLICT INSTITUTIONAL
DESIGN: PEACEBUILDING AND
DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA**

Edited by Abu Bakarr Bah

ZED

To my wife, Rugiatu Bah, and children (Manmadu, Ibrahim, and Aisha) for
the love, joy, and enrichment they bring to my work and life.

Post-conflict Institutional Design: Peacebuilding and Democracy in Africa was first
published in 2020 by Zed Books Ltd, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR, UK.

www.zedbooks.net

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Typeset in Plantin and Kievit by Swales & Willis Ltd, Exeter, Devon
Index by Molly Reinhoudt

Cover design by Burgess and Beech

Cover photo © David Rose/Panos Pictures

Printed and bound by CPI Group Ltd (UK), Croydon CR0 4YY

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-78699-790-6 hb

ISBN 978-1-78699-789-0 pdf

ISBN 978-1-78699-787-6 epub

ISBN 978-1-78699-788-3 mobi



6 | DEVOLUTION AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN KENYA

Aditi Malik

Introduction

Following the 2007–2008 post-election crisis in Kenya, in 2010, 67 percent of the country's voters voted in favor of a new constitution. By then demands for constitutional reform in Kenya were not novel; they had been placed before different administrations for several decades. Decentralization, for instance, was something that smaller ethnic communities had advocated for ever since independence. Following the restoration of multiparty competition and the initiation of political liberalization in the early 1990s, moreover, such demands had gained momentum.¹ However, successive Kenyan governments had blocked constitutional change, and for over forty years, ruling elites had maintained the status quo through a largely centralized and clientelistic state apparatus. As such, the mere passing of the new constitution was a significant event in Kenya's political history. This constitution ushered in a series of important reforms, which included implementing a new threshold for the presidency (changing the previous plurality requirement to a simple majority), enhancing the range of rights for women and minorities, requiring that all electoral coalitions register themselves three months before a presidential election, and creating regional governments in the form of forty-seven newly created counties.²

Today, Kenya's counties wield significant political, administrative, and fiscal powers. For one, they receive funds from the national government – in the form of unconditional grants – to use for developmental purposes. They also have their own assemblies as well as a county governor. The decision to create these counties, however, was not simply motivated by the objective of promoting development and providing opportunities for local-level political participation. In fact, according to Article 174 of the new constitution, devolution in Kenya was implemented to realize several different objectives, which included,

promoting democratic and accountable exercise of power, fostering national unity amidst diversity, enabling self-governance of the people towards their interrogation of the [s]tate, recognizing the right of communities to self-management and development ... ensuring equitable sharing of national and local resources, rationalizing further decentralization of [s]tate organs, and enhancing checks and balances.³

In the run-up to the 2013 elections, numerous stakeholders on the ground were of the opinion that devolution would also serve to prevent a recurrence of electoral violence in the country.⁴ Simply put, this expectation held that by devolving political authority to the local level, the new constitution would dampen the “winner-take-all” nature of Kenya's presidential elections and thereby contribute to the maintenance of peace.

This chapter assesses the effects that devolution has had on patterns of election-related conflict in Kenya. In doing so, it considers the relationship between post-conflict institutional design on the one hand and electoral violence – at both the national and sub-national levels – on the other. Recent studies of the Kenyan county system have shed light on the ways in which devolution has affected rent-seeking and patronage.⁵ However, research on the effects that the county system has had, and is likely to have, on incentives for, and patterns of electoral violence is still incipient.⁶ Drawing on evidence from three counties – all of which experienced conflict in association with their local elections in 2013 – this chapter makes the case that devolution has been a partial success in Kenya: while it has reduced elites' incentives to instrumentalize violence around presidential elections, the county system has simultaneously created high-stakes elections at the *local* level, around which such conflict could be organized in the future. Simply put, the project finds that increased ethnic competition *within* counties has generated several new drivers of election-time violence in the country. In making this argument, the research makes two key contributions. First, it proposes an original theory about how decentralization reforms can actually contribute to a continuation – albeit localized – rather than an elimination of conflict in post-violence developing democracies. Second, and with regard to Kenya, the research combines original quantitative event data with in-depth interviews and evidence from case studies to identify different pathways through which electoral violence occurred around the 2013 elections.

At its broadest level, this study seeks to contribute to theory-building. Consequently, rather than comparing violent and peaceful counties, the chapter deliberately focuses on three counties that experienced conflict in 2013. This approach makes it possible to tease out the causal mechanisms through which devolution gave rise to local-level violence while at the same time mitigating conflict around the 2013 presidential election.

The chapter is organized as follows. I begin by providing historical background about agitations for constitutional reform in Kenya, focusing particularly on the period since the re-instatement of multiparty competition. Next, I discuss the literature on the relationship between decentralization and violent conflict. The following section describes the key features of decentralization in Kenya and introduces the three cases that are at the heart of this study – namely, Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo – all of which experienced violent conflict in association with their county-level elections in 2013. The section also specifies the causal mechanisms that drove electoral violence in each of these places, and demonstrates how these processes were spawned by decentralization reforms. Finally, I comment on the implications of this study, and briefly discuss what future patterns of election-related conflict under Kenya's new constitution could look like. I suggest that the results so far are mixed: while devolution has dampened the drivers of election violence at the national level, by shifting the locus of electoral competition to the local level, it has created a new set of high-stakes elections around which such clashes are likely to occur in the future.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution

Following independence, the first generation of Kenyan politicians oversaw a series of steps that contributed to the creation of a centralized state.⁷ This early concentration of power at the center was maintained through successive presidents' clientelistic networks, which were often used to favor and reward co-ethnics.⁸ Nonetheless, and especially since the re-introduction of multiparty politics in the 1990s, local activists began to advocate that a new constitution be passed. The focus of these agitations was twofold: to reduce the power of the presidency and to implement decentralization reforms. However, and as a leading scholar on the subject has noted, until 2010, "power holders successfully blocked all attempts" to bring about constitutional change in Kenya.⁹ Among the many thwarted efforts, perhaps the biggest

disappointment was the rejection of the "Bomas" draft, which sought to rein in the powers of the president through several different mechanisms including separating powers, introducing checks and balances, and implementing devolution.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the version of the constitution – known as the "Wako" draft – which was eventually put to a referendum in 2005, was a significantly diluted version of the Bomas draft, and it "restored full executive powers to the president."¹¹ As such, it is not surprising that 58 percent of Kenya's voting population subsequently voted against the Wako draft.

In one sense, the fact that numerous attempts at constitutional reform were blocked by ruling Kenyan politicians tells a discouraging story about the entrenched nature of elite power in the country. At the same time, the rejection of the Wako draft was generally seen as a "positive step toward democratic consolidation in Kenya" and one that "raised hopes for the future."¹² Put simply, through their rejection of this draft, Kenyan voters made it clear that they would not be satisfied with cosmetic changes to the country's institutions. While this rejection was a necessary step on the road to achieving constitutional reform in Kenya, it was by no means sufficient. Rather, it was the post-election violence of 2007–2008, which brought Kenya to the brink of a civil war, that heightened the need for far-reaching institutional change. Specifically, the post-election crisis – the third case of widespread electoral conflict to have broken out in the country since the restoration of multiparty competition – made it amply clear that Kenya was, and had been, in a state of institutional decay for some time.¹³

To bring an end to the violence in 2008, several rounds of negotiations were held between Mwai Kibaki (the incumbent who had been declared the winner of the election) and Raila Odinga (the leading opposition candidate, who had alleged electoral fraud). One of the key results of these negotiations was the creation of the post of prime minister for Odinga. Subsequently, the terms of a power-sharing agreement between Kibaki and Odinga were formalized and a Grand Coalition government was crafted. The peace negotiations also mandated that the question of constitutional reform be revisited, and by November 2009, a new draft of Kenya's constitution was prepared. Following a few minor modifications, the draft was passed by the country's MPs and August 4, 2010 was set as the date for the constitutional referendum. As stated above, the constitution subsequently received support from a majority of the voting public.

For several different reasons, Kenya's new constitution has come to be understood as a vital corrective to previous watered-down proposals. Moreover, its peaceful passing has been seen as an encouraging signal as to "the increasing institutionalization of political power" in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁴ Yet, existing research on the *effects* that the new constitution has had – on patronage, executive power, and the quality of elections – suggests that Kenya has seen little meaningful change with regard to these important matters.¹⁵ Along similar lines, this research finds that the effect of decentralization – on elites' incentives for violence – has been only partially successful. Positively, there are important reasons to expect that election-related conflict in Kenya will be more diffuse going forward, as the new constitution has lowered the stakes of presidential elections. At the same time, however, it does not appear that constitutional reform has rendered the option of driving violence to win votes entirely obsolete. On the contrary, evidence from 2013 suggests that devolution has intensified intra-county ethnic competition and has thereby merely altered the kinds of elections – from national to local – around which the use of conflict makes electoral sense. To understand why this is the case, a closer examination of the theoretical relationship between decentralization and violent conflict, as well as its specific manifestation in the selected Kenyan counties, is necessary. The forthcoming sections of this chapter address these important questions.

Decentralization and Violent Conflicts: What Is the Link?

In the scholarship on constitutional design, devolution is frequently prescribed as a way to manage violent conflict. Decentralization proponents claim that there are several different means through which devolving power to sub-national units can serve to contain violence.¹⁶ First, devolution is understood to bring the government closer to the people and thus improve the distribution of public goods and services at the local level. In addition, decentralization creates opportunities for local-level representatives, who are more in tune with the challenges in their areas, to take up political office and improve sub-national outcomes. When achieved, these improved outcomes are believed to thwart local-level grievances that could be mobilized for violent ends. Finally, decentralization allows citizens – including "territorially concentrated minority groups [– to] control ... their own political, social, and economic affairs."¹⁷

At the same time, however, recent research has uncovered that decentralization is not a magic bullet and that, under certain conditions, it can actually lead to a continuation of, or even an increase in, violent conflict. The most powerful reason uncovered for this association is related to the rise of regional parties. Simply put, when decentralization brings about a proliferation of regional parties – which advocate for narrow regional policies – then rather than stemming conflict, such reforms have been found to exacerbate violence.¹⁸ Admittedly, however, and especially in places like Kenya, where political parties are typically formed on the basis of ethno-regional criteria, the mechanisms and pathways through which devolution could serve to increase political violence are likely to be different. Some potential mechanisms that could bring about this outcome include creating new high-stakes elections, "reinforcing regionally-based identities, producing legislation that discriminates against certain ethnic or religious groups in a country, supplying groups at the regional level of government with the resources [and reasons over which] to engage in ... conflict," carving out new ethnic minorities, shifting the composition of electoral fault-lines, encouraging the construction of new electoral alliances, and rendering pre-existing regional cleavage structures electorally relevant and manipulable.¹⁹

Forthcoming sections of this chapter will demonstrate how different combinations, constellations, and sequences of these mechanisms affected the timing and targets of electoral violence in Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo around Kenya's 2013 elections. For the moment, however, the purpose of this chapter is to draw attention to the fact that the long-reigning theoretical expectation, which held that the introduction of decentralization is a useful way to reduce violent conflict, has come under significant scrutiny in recent scholarship. Indeed, the fact that the implementation of sub-national governance provides only a partial solution for ebbing violent conflict has already been observed in cases such as Nigeria and India.²⁰ In places like Indonesia, furthermore, research has shown that decentralization has created new arenas for the organization of election-related violence.²¹ Building on these insights, this chapter teases out the varying effects that devolution has had on national and local-level competition in Kenya. It shows that by providing unprecedented access to developmental funds, decentralization reforms have contributed to new patterns of local-level election-time violence in the country while

at the same time decreasing the risks of widespread electoral violence occurring in relation to presidential elections.

Devolution and Electoral Violence in Kenya

Compared to 2007–2008 as well as the elections of the 1990s, Kenya's 2013 presidential election concluded relatively peacefully. At the same time, however, to say that the 2013 elections were entirely peaceful would be inaccurate. According to recent scholarship on the topic, violent events that occur six months before and three months after an election can be classified as being electoral in nature.²² In association with the 2013 Kenyan elections, and in late 2012 and early 2013 alone, 477 individuals were killed and another 118,000 were displaced in incidents of communal conflict.²³ Much of this violence, moreover, was tied to competition over newly created county-level positions.

This research focuses on three counties – Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo – which experienced conflict in relation to the 2013 elections. These sites are appropriate for a theory-building exercise such as this one for several reasons. To begin with, Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo are among the ten poorest counties in all of Kenya.²⁴ As such, the comparative component of this research is based on a selection of like, and therefore comparable, cases. Furthermore, and as with other forms of violence – including civil wars – recent research on electoral violence has shown that poverty is a major driver of such conflict.²⁵ Consequently, the selection of Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo makes it possible to investigate the link between poverty and electoral violence under Kenya's new constitution. Third, the selected counties are diverse and ethnically heterogeneous, and in keeping with previous patterns of electoral violence in Kenya, election-related conflict in each of these places manifested itself along ethnic lines. Finally, the three sites are well-suited for a comparative analysis because, despite their shared characteristics and initial conditions, the violence that broke out here displayed important differences in terms of its dynamics. Two key differences are particularly noteworthy. First, and as summarized in Table 6.1, the timing of the conflicts varied considerably: Tana River fell prey to pre-vote violence, Marsabit experienced clashes after the conclusion of its county-level elections, and Isiolo witnessed both pre- and post-vote clashes. Second, distinct causal pathways contributed to election-related clashes in each of these sites. Thus, the selection of

these three cases allows for a comprehensive probe into the questions of *why*, *how*, and *when* decentralization reforms can contribute to election-time violence in developing democracies.

Before this research can delve into a detailed discussion of the violence that occurred in Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo, however, it is vital to shed some light on the key attributes of Kenya's county system. It is to this task that the remainder of this section is dedicated. Devolution, which created forty-seven new counties in Kenya, was one of the central reforms that emerged out of the new 2010 constitution. The axes of devolution in the country, moreover, are threefold: administrative, political, and fiscal. For the purposes of better understanding incidents of election violence around the 2013 elections, it is crucial to pay attention to this composite set of powers that county representatives now enjoy. This is because it is these enhanced responsibilities that have rendered the county-level elections to be high-stakes contests. Consequently, it is the county-level elections around which it makes sense for politicians to organize conflict. As the forthcoming discussion will illustrate, it is also around these local contests that voters can be mobilized to participate in violence.

Each of Kenya's forty-seven counties houses a county assembly. Members of the county assemblies (MCAs) are elected at the ward

TABLE 6.1 Variations in Timing and Causal Pathways of Electoral Violence

Case	Timing of Violence	Mechanism(s) and Purpose of Violence
Tana River	Pre-election violence	Pre-existing ethnic cleavages rendered electorally salient and manipulable → creation of new cross-ethnic alliance; violence used to overthrow long-standing power-holders
Marsabit	Post-election violence	Change in composition of electoral fault-lines → creation of new multi-ethnic alliance that ousted long-time power-holders; violence as a reaction to this reshuffling
Isiolo	Pre and post-election violence	Pre-existing ethnic cleavages rendered electorally salient and manipulable → contributed to pre- and post-election violence Competition for development projects along new electoral fault-lines → contributed to post-election violence

level and there are 1450 wards across the country. In addition, each county elects a women's representative and a senator who represents the interests of the county in the Senate, which is the upper house of Kenya's parliament. Finally, through a gubernatorial election, county residents elect a governor, who is the most powerful office-holder at the county level. Elected through a popular vote, which takes place on the same day as the general election, county governors are in charge of the overall management of county affairs. They enjoy a broad set of powers, which range from overseeing county development to heading the county executive committee. Stated plainly, the governor is the chief executive of the county. Given this important position, and as one respondent summarized, "the county governor [is now] the closest president that the people ... have."²⁶ Power that was once concentrated in the office of the president, in other words, has been devolved to county governors. From the perspective of voters, then, just as having a co-ethnic president was once understood to be crucial for securing the welfare of one's community, having a co-ethnic governor is now considered fundamental for accessing the Kenyan state.

While there has long been a pattern of ethnic voting in Kenya, albeit for defensive reasons, this research holds that the 2010 constitution has amplified the stakes around the ethnic identities of *local* political representatives, especially county governors.²⁷ This is not merely because clientelism continues to be a salient political force in Kenya – thereby generating expectations of ethnic patronage in many parts of the country – but even more so because of the considerable fiscal powers that governors now enjoy under the new constitutional dispensation. Put concretely, Article 16 of the new constitution established a body known as the Commission of Revenue Allocation (CRA), which was tasked with determining the distribution of "revenue raised by the national government [at two levels] – between the national and county governments [and] among the county governments."²⁸ As shown in Table 6.2, the CRA formula for revenue allocation provides all forty-seven counties with an equal share of 25 percent of the national revenue and splits another 2 percent based on counties' fiscal responsibilities. The remaining county-level allocations are determined on the basis of land area, population, and poverty. Consequently, there is considerable variation in the amount of money distributed to county governments, with larger, more populous, and poorer counties receiving more funds than their smaller and richer counterparts. In short, devolution has not

TABLE 6.2 CRA Formula for Revenue Allocation²⁹

Criterion	Weighting (%)
Population	45
Poverty Index	20
Land Area	8
Basic Equal Share	25
Fiscal Responsibility	2

only increased competition over resources between counties but it has also heightened local rivalries to control these funds *within* counties.

Apart from determining county-level allocations, when devolution first came to pass, the CRA also had to establish how revenues would be shared between the national and county governments. Initially, it was decided that the county governments would receive 15 percent of the national revenue in the form of unconditional grants and that these grants would be used specifically for developmental purposes, such as building and maintaining local roads and providing health-care and pre-primary education.³⁰ However, county governors opposed this number for being too low and demanded that 45 percent of the national budget be reserved for them.³¹ Eventually, the National Assembly (the lower house of Kenya's parliament) came to a compromise and for the last few years, county governments have received over 200 billion Shillings per annum, which is well over the 15 percent allocation that they were initially promised.³² In 2015–2016, for instance, Kenya's forty-seven counties received 259 billion Shillings (approximately 2.44 billion dollars) in unconditional grants, which exceeded 30 percent of the national revenue for that fiscal year.³³ Given the significant amount of funding that is being channeled to county governments, voters, for their part, are keen to ensure that one of their "own" wins crucial county positions, such as the governorship.³⁴ Rather than eliminating the potential for electoral violence, then, by generating a new set of high-stakes elections around which citizens hope to access state resources, devolution has increased ethnic competition *within* counties. Stated concretely, the county system has done little to alter the *nature* of election violence in the country. Existing studies of election-related conflict have repeatedly shown that such violence takes place along ethnic and communal lines

in Kenya.³⁵ Since its implementation, decentralization has failed to dampen the salience of ethnicity in the country. Instead, the heightened stakes of county-level elections have made pre-existing ethnic divisions electorally relevant in several parts of Kenya and as a result, new pockets of violence have emerged. Three such sites – Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo – where devolution produced conditions favorable to violence around the 2013 elections are analyzed below.

Tana River: New Alliances, Pre-Election Clashes, and Changing Power Relations

In the run-up to the 2013 elections, the Coastal county of Tana River came to attract significant attention due to deadly communal clashes that broke out there. To many, the violence suggested that Kenya could be headed down the path to another conflict-ridden election.³⁶ These fears were not without foundation: with the exception of the 2002 presidential contest, every such election in Kenya had been accompanied by widespread violence, which had cost thousands of lives each time. However, Tana River's violence was unique for two key reasons. First, although the region had succumbed to communal clashes between its pastoral (Orma and Wardei) and agricultural (Pokomo) communities before, such violence had not been electoral per se. Indeed, in the two elections around which the Coast had fallen prey to violence – 1997 and 2007 – conflict had been concentrated in the districts of Likoni and Kwale, and in Mombasa district, respectively.³⁷ Second, located in a region that was predisposed to vote for the opposition alliance known as the Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD), from an electoral incentives perspective, the outbreak of violence in Tana River made little sense. After all, because they do not offer much promise in terms of gaining swing votes, places that are electoral strongholds of one particular party or alliance are generally understood to be poor choices for instrumentalizing conflict.³⁸ In order to account for the violence in Tana River in 2012–2013, then, one has to look beyond these conventional explanations of electoral conflict.

This research holds that Tana River's violence should be understood as a consequence of new competitive dynamics introduced by the implementation of devolution. Over time, political power in this area had come to be concentrated in the hands of the agricultural Pokomos: both in 2002 and in 2007, for instance, two out of three parliamentary

seats in the district had fallen to the Pokomo community. As such, and for some time, there had been a growing sense of marginalization among the Orma, which had only increased when a land adjudication program, through which Pokomo farmers began to obtain title deeds, was introduced in December 2000.³⁹ In this context, the creation of new county-level positions offered Orma elites a distinctive opportunity to reverse prevailing power relations. In addition, given the county's severe underdevelopment – the CRA had ranked Tana River as Kenya's fifth poorest county in 2011 – and the promise of funds from the national government, devolution generated a powerful set of incentives for Orma politicians to wield violence for electoral ends. Specifically, in 2013–2014, Kenya's national government allocated 200 billion Shillings to the counties, and Tana River's allocation for that year was 2.9 billion Shillings.⁴⁰ For a county that had long been left out of the central government's developmental projects, this was no small amount. In the run-up to the election, therefore, the prospect of a significant fiscal disbursement re-oriented the main axis of political competition in Tana River from the national to the local level. In short, decentralization set the stage for electoral conflict in the county: Orma elites were now keener than ever to prevent their rival Pokomos from ascending to political office. Furthermore, given the pre-existing divide between the two communities, instrumentalizing clashes was a viable strategy for Orma politicians to do so.

For violence to be effective, however – that is, for it to pay electoral dividends – the Orma could not act alone. Although precise proportions are not available, it is estimated that the Orma comprise approximately 28 percent of Tana River's population while the strength of the Pokomo lies at approximately 40 percent.⁴¹ Thus, to secure prized county offices – such as that of the governor – and to build a winning coalition, the Orma needed an ally.⁴² They found a natural fit in the pastoral Wardei community, whose members speak the same language (Orma) and follow the same religion (Islam). The Wardei were similar to the Orma in another important respect: successive Pokomo MPs had failed to effectively represent the interests of this community as well. Stated plainly, then, devolution in Tana River first and foremost created conditions that favored the organization of violence by rendering the long-standing fault-line between the region's agricultural and pastoral communities electorally salient. This attribute, in turn, encouraged the creation of a new alliance

between the pastoral groups, who were keen to gain access to the state. With these crucial conditions in place, and with the aim of preventing the Pokomo from casting their votes, conflict was ignited by pastoral (largely Orma) politicians who drew on narratives and fears of marginalization to mobilize the Orma and Wardei against the Pokomo.

It was in this broader context that the first deadly clash in Tana River occurred in Kilelengwani village on August 14, 2012. The violence took the form of an attack by the Orma on the Pokomo. In subsequent days and weeks, similar clashes – sometimes Orma on Pokomo and sometimes the reverse – spread to other villages in Tana River including Kau, Riketa, Semikaro, Chamwanamuma, Darga, Laini, and Shirikisho. Event data reveals that the first wave of violence, which lasted until September 9, 2012 resulted in the loss of 123 lives and injured fifty-eight others.⁴³ On December 21, a second phase of violence shook Tana River, beginning in Kipao village, where over thirty-nine individuals were killed and another twenty were injured. Pokomo raiders were believed to be behind this attack. Not long after, communal clashes broke out in Nduru and Kibusu villages on January 9 and 10, 2013, respectively. It is estimated that this second wave of violence resulted in the deaths of sixty-two individuals and severely injured twenty-four others. Early on, then, the clashes in Tana River ensured that they would be a notable blot on Kenya's 2013 electoral record.

But did the violence work? Did the Orma and Wardei succeed in their efforts to overpower and prevent Pokomo elites from capturing political office? The results of the March 4 elections indicate that the answer to these questions is an affirmative one. As shown in Table 6.3, the Orma and Wardei communities succeeded in securing key county-level offices in Tana River, including the treasured governorship, which fell to Tuneya Hussein Dado (an Orma).

In addition, their co-ethnic candidates won the three MP seats from Garsen, Galole, and Bura constituencies. Beyond the election results, qualitative information gathered for this project also lends credence to the ideas that the violence in Tana River was (1) electorally motivated and (2) bore the desired results for the pastoral communities. Over the course of fieldwork, several interviewees noted the patently electoral nature of Tana River's violence. One respondent, for instance, accounted for the clashes as follows:

TABLE 6.3 2013 Tana River County Election Results

Name	Position	Ethnic Group	Political Party	Coalition
Tuneya Hussein Dado	Governor	Orma	Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya (WDM-K)	CORD
Ali Abdi Bule	Senator	Wardei	Federal Party of Kenya (FPK)	CORD
Halima Ware Duri	Women's Representative	Orma	Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya (WDM-K)	CORD
Ibrahim Ahmed Sane	MP (Garsen Constituency)	Wardei	United Republican Party (URP)	Jubilee
Hassan Abdi Dukicha	MP (Galole Constituency)	Wardei	United Democratic Forum Party (UDF)	Amani
Ali Wario	MP (Bura Constituency)	Orma	The National Alliance (TNA)	Jubilee

The violence was clearly linked to the election. No one can say that it was just a coincidence. You see, development programs in Kenya haven't really been designed to benefit nomadic communities like the Orma. So ... [the clashes were] all about making sure that the pastoral communities could come to power [at the county level].⁴⁴

Another interviewee explained that the county system had made it paramount to ensure that co-ethnic politicians could be voted into *local office*:

There was politics behind it [the violence] ... especially, [with] the county governments, which were coming ... Also, the windfall economically that was expected [for the counties]. It [the violence] was political in the sense that even the former MPs were the ones even funding and organizing the militias to attack each other. So that "we disperse of these people out of this area so that my community when the elections come, we take the seats." That was the incentive [for violence that devolution created].⁴⁵

Finally, a third interviewee held that the violence in Tana River had been deliberately instrumentalized to alter "who [i.e. which ethnic group(s) got to] take up governance in the county."⁴⁶

These sentiments were not restricted to interview subjects alone and early on, President Kibaki's government also took a stand on the

violence. Following the first wave of conflict, in September 2012, the MP from Galole constituency, Dhadho Godhana (a Pokomo), who was also serving as Assistant Minister of Livestock at the time, was charged with inciting the clashes in Tana River. Godhana was an aspirant for the governorship in Tana River.⁴⁷ Once the allegations against him emerged, Kibaki relieved Godhana of his ministerial position. For his part, however, Godhana held that his political rival, Internal Security Minister Yusuf Haji – who was backing Hussein Dado's bid for governor – had been behind the violence.⁴⁸ In the third week of January 2013, Godhana was cleared of the incitement charges against him.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, when combined with the interview data presented above, these allegations and counter-allegations strongly suggest that (1) the violence in Tana River was planned (and involved a handful of elites) and (2) the new county system – and the delegation of fiscal powers to county governments – had created powerful incentives to use violence as an electoral instrument.

In terms of who the beneficiaries of the violence were, respondents interviewed for this project repeatedly identified the Orma and Wardei as such. To put it in the words of one interlocutor for example, by creating “a ... sense of unity among the pastoralist groups,” Orma elites were able to successfully deploy election-related conflict as a means to “remove the agricultural Pokomos from power.”⁵⁰ Consequently, “the Pokomos were decimated ... The clashes ensured that they could not vote for their preferred candidate[s] because many of them were displaced from their homes.”⁵¹ Although concrete information on the distribution of funds in the county is not available, recent evidence also suggests that, as one might expect, pastoral elites have favored their own in composing the county government.⁵²

Taken together, then, as is true of other episodes of pre-election conflict in Kenya – including the clashes witnessed around the 1992 and 1997 presidential contests – the 2012–2013 violence in Tana River proved to be effective as it depressed voter turnout among the targeted community (i.e. the Pokomos) and thereby helped those who wielded violence to ascend to political office. At the same time, however, it is important to note that what distinguishes Tana River from previous episodes of pre-election conflict in Kenya is that these clashes were actually spawned by devolution reforms. In other words, they took place in association with local, rather than national, elections. As such, the evidence reveals that while holding at bay elites' incentives

for organizing election-related violence around the presidential election, devolution created new conditions – and generated attendant mechanisms – that resulted in two separate waves of conflict around the 2013 county elections in Tana River.

Marsabit: Electoral Fault-Lines, Swing Votes, and Post-Election Violence

Another site that experienced electoral violence in association with its 2013 local elections was Marsabit. This county, which is located in the arid and semi-desert northeastern area of Kenya, has a long history of violent conflict. Indeed, due to its proximity to neighboring Somalia, Marsabit is understood to be a particularly unstable part of Kenya. This instability has repeatedly come to the fore through violent cattle raids, communal clashes, and banditry. In short, “violence is far from being something of the past in Marsabit.”⁵³

Beyond witnessing the kinds of conflicts identified above, Marsabit has also experienced electoral violence. In October 1997, for instance, two months before the presidential election, the Catholic Diocese of Marsabit reported that “200 people had been killed, 6000 displaced, [and] over 25000 heads of cattle, 21000 goats, 1000 camels, and 127 donkeys [had] been stolen” in the preceding month of September.⁵⁴ While resource-related conflict of this nature was not new to Marsabit at the time, its timing just ahead of the presidential election strongly suggested that the clashes had been electorally motivated. More recent scholarship has identified yet another reason – climate change – due to which Marsabit is at a high risk of experiencing violent conflict in the future.⁵⁵

As is the case with Tana River, Marsabit is poor and largely underdeveloped. In fact, according to the CRA, the county is the fourth poorest in all of Kenya, and is only outranked by Wajir, Mandera, and Turkana counties. The majority of the local population here is comprised of pastoral communities, which include the Gabra, Borana, Rendille, Turkana, Ariaal, and Samburu. The main non-pastoral groups in the region are the Burji, who engage in agriculture and trade, and the Somalis, who are traders. Although reliable sub-national data on the size and proportion of these groups is not available, the Borana are known to be a powerful demographic force in Marsabit.⁵⁶

Existing studies on inter-ethnic dynamics in this area have shown that since 2000, the relationship between two communities – namely,

the Borana and the Gabra – has declined considerably.⁵⁷ Increased political competition has apparently contributed to this deterioration: of the four constituencies in Marsabit, one (Moyale) is dominated by the Borana, while another (North Horr) is dominated by the Gabra.⁵⁸ Prior to the implementation of devolution, there was a fairly consistent pattern of representation: since 1992, Moyale and Saku constituencies have only had Borana MPs while only Gabra politicians have risen to parliament from North Horr. The fourth constituency in Marsabit – Laisamis – was represented by Rendille politicians from 1992 onwards until Joseph Lekuton (a Maasai) won the seat in 2007, and subsequently retained it in 2013. At the constituency level, therefore, and for a considerable period of time, local patterns of power-holding in Marsabit were quite stable, and favored the Borana. Although several other communities were arguably disadvantaged by these conditions, election-related conflict in the region was fairly rare.⁵⁹ This is because, prior to the 2013 elections, political power was concentrated in the presidency, and none of the communities in Marsabit (including the Borana) had much to gain from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin presidents who controlled the national purse-strings.

The arrival of devolution, however, changed things quite drastically. First, the county system offered these marginalized groups a unique opportunity to take control of their own affairs. Put differently, as in Tana River, devolution created a set of high-stakes local elections in Marsabit. In 2013–2014, for instance, Marsabit received 3.6 billion Shillings as its county allocation from the national government.⁶⁰ Second, and within this context of increased fiscal capacity and decentralized elections, ethnic competition within Marsabit county intensified. As a result, the fault-line between the Borana and Gabra took on a whole new meaning. Rather than being limited to cattle raids and periodic communal clashes, the county elections provided these communities with a chance to defeat their rivals and capture political power for the long term. In other words, devolution heightened the stakes for ensuring that co-ethnic politicians ascended to political office. As one respondent explained:

What is happening in Moyale [constituency] or in Marsabit for that matter, it's all that ... "My people, my community is not in the county government. When the county government is coming, for example, let us arrange ourselves and align ourselves so that

we can go into leadership." Basically, that is what [it is]: when the community fears that "our people" are going to be out [of power], they are not going to be in the county government, they tend to align themselves differently.⁶¹

In the wake of these revised expectations, a new multi-ethnic alliance was born in Marsabit. This coalition pitted the Rendille, Gabra, and Burji (ReGaBu) against the Borana. Stated differently, while the fault-line between the Borana and Gabra did not disappear, its composition did change somewhat, as several ethnic groups in Marsabit came together *against* the Borana. It is also important to note that this alliance did not come about overnight. On the contrary, efforts to bring the ReGaBu together were documented as early as July 2012.⁶²

The logic behind this coalition was rooted entirely in the effects of the new county system. Stated plainly, the ReGaBu alliance followed directly from the fact that with the creation of Marsabit county, "no one single community [was in a position to] garner enough votes on [its] own" to win the local elections.⁶³ Thus, for both the Borana and the Gabra, the support of smaller groups became pivotal. As it turned out, both communities settled on the agricultural Burji as their best bet, whose members were subsequently "vigorously courted."⁶⁴

For their part, national-level politicians also understood that local elections in Marsabit were high stakes, and that these contests could have an impact on the presidential election. More concretely, presidential candidates quickly realized "that votes for a governor from their party [would] likely ... translate into votes for themselves."⁶⁵ Consequently, rather than the presidential election taking precedence over the county contest, the entire logic of election campaigning in Marsabit turned on prioritizing local needs and considerations. Within this context, some national elites even went so far as to "court key power brokers," including elders, who could help convince their communities to support particular candidates and parties in the county election.⁶⁶

Ultimately, as in Tana River, the elections in Marsabit produced some unexpected results. For the most part, the ReGaBu alliance held together, and as shown in Table 6.4, although this coalition did not succeed in pulling off a clean sweep – because previous patterns around the parliamentary elections held up – it did manage to ensure that the governor's post did not fall to the Borana.

TABLE 6.4 2013 Marsabit County Election Results

Name	Position	Ethnic Group	Political Party	Coalition
Ukur Yatani Kanancho	Governor	Gabra	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	CORD
Godana Hargura	Senator	Rendille	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	CORD
Nasra Ibrahim Ibren	Women's Representative	Somali	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	CORD
Roba Sharu Duba	MP (Moyale Constituency)	Borana	United Democratic Forum Party (UDFP)	Amani
Francis Chachu Ganya	MP (North Horr Constituency)	Gabra	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	CORD
Ali Rasso Dido	MP (Saku Constituency)	Borana	United Republican Party (URP)	Jubilee
Joseph Lekuton	MP (Laisamis Constituency)	Maasai	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	CORD

These surprising results led to a spate of post-election clashes in Marsabit, as different communities' fears about the lack of ethnic inclusion in county government were mobilized for violent ends.⁶⁷ In other words, rather than violence being used to influence electoral outcomes (as was the case in Tana River), in Marsabit communal clashes broke out following, and as a reaction to, the election results. The first set of clashes occurred on September 14, 2013, and lasted for more than a week. Over 100 people perished in this round of violence. According to survivors' accounts, the clashes appeared to have been deliberately instrumentalized by Borana elites who were unwilling to accept the victory of the ReGaBu.⁶⁸ In early December, a second wave of violence broke out in the villages of Odha and Holale near Moyale town. This time, the clashes erupted after Borana militiamen attacked three vehicles traveling on the A2 highway. From Odha and Holale, conflict spread to Butiye and Sessi villages, where retaliatory attacks on Boranas took place. At the end of these clashes, another twenty people in Marsabit county had been killed. Not long afterwards, in mid-December 2013, charges for inciting violence were leveled against Borana elites Roba Sharu Duba, the MP from Moyale constituency, and Golicha Galgalo Guyo, the representative from Butiye ward (also

in Moyale).⁶⁹ A second set of charges against the two men followed in April 2014.⁷⁰ Six months later, in October 2014, all charges were dropped.⁷¹ Nonetheless, the fact that legal proceedings were initiated at all is noteworthy, because it suggests that as in Tana River, there was an understanding that the clashes in Marsabit were also politically motivated.

In the end, the violence in Marsabit did not change local electoral outcomes. Based on the timing of the clashes – which came several months after the election – the only way the results could have been altered through violence is if the ReGaBu had been forced to negotiate over their victory. However, this did not happen. Moreover, and after some internal challenges, the Marsabit council of elders once again endorsed Ukur Yatani Kanancho (the current governor and a Gabra) as their preferred candidate for the gubernatorial seat.⁷² Based on a 2013 agreement, the elders were also expected to endorse a Rendille for the position of senator, a Burji as deputy governor, and a Garre as the women's representative.⁷³ Despite these efforts, which aimed at retaining key county-level positions in Marsabit among the ReGaBu, Mohamud Mohamed Ali (a Borana) emerged as the winning gubernatorial candidate in Marsabit in 2017. In short, this time, the fortunes from 2013 were reversed at the local level.

Isiolo: Electoral Fault-Lines, Resource Competition, and Political Violence

The third and final case at the heart of this study is Isiolo, which is located in Kenya's former Eastern province. Like Tana River and Marsabit, Isiolo ranks among the country's poorest counties, holding the eighth position according to the CRA. Sub-national data suggests that anywhere between 63 and 76 percent of Isiolo's population lives below the poverty line.⁷⁴ As such, it is not surprising that for the 2013–2014 fiscal year, Isiolo's county allocation from the national government was a sizeable 2.4 billion Shillings.⁷⁵

Most of the ethnic communities in Isiolo are pastoralists, including the Borana, Samburu, Turkana, and Somalis. However, the area is also home to a sizeable Meru minority, who are historical allies of the Kikuyus, and who work as farmers and traders. Like Marsabit, communal violence in Isiolo is not an altogether new phenomenon. In the 1990s, for instance, Isiolo witnessed clashes between the Borana and the Somalis, which were understood to have stemmed from competition

over accessing grazing land. Violence was also reported in Isiolo in 1997 in association with the presidential election of that year.⁷⁶ A third major spate of conflict in the district (now county) broke out between January and March 2000, with a subsequent wave in May of that year. This time, the violence in Isiolo pitted the Borana and Samburu on one side against the Somalis on the other. The precise death toll from the conflicts of 2000 is still debated, but estimates put the numbers at 40 to 100 casualties.⁷⁷ On the face of it and like the violence of the 1990s, these clashes involved “fighting over pasture land [and] cattle rustling.”⁷⁸ However, closer analysis has revealed that electoral machinations contributed to the violence. Specifically, scholars have held that the arrival and registration of Somalis as voters had influenced local voting patterns in Isiolo.⁷⁹ Furthermore, it has been argued that the reinstatement of multiparty competition had heightened ethnic rivalries in the region, as “local politicians want[ed] to expel the Merus who [were] associated with the opposition.”⁸⁰

Despite its brushes with election-related conflict in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Isiolo did not experience conflict during Kenya’s 2007–2008 post-election violence. Since then, however, and especially since 2011, the county has become a site of escalating communal violence.⁸¹ In fact, between November 2011 and February 2012, conflict in Isiolo, Marsabit, and Mandera counties claimed the lives of “at least 120 people” and displaced another 77,000 from their homes.⁸² The clashes in Isiolo, in particular, took place between November 2011 and January 2012. This violence cost at least twenty people their lives and resulted in the displacement of 10,000 others.⁸³ As one influential report has noted, “the fighting pitted the Turkana community against the Somali[s] who had support from the Borana community.”⁸⁴ Thus, at least on the face of it, the 2011–2012 violence in Isiolo resembled previous events of pastoral conflict in the region. The fighting apparently even started out “as a dispute over grazing land and cattle rustling.”⁸⁵

The November 2011 to February 2012 violence was followed by a second set of clashes, which began in late March and continued into April 2012. Over the course of this wave of violence, it is estimated that at least 500 Turkana families from Isiolo town were displaced from their homes.⁸⁶ Although initially attributed to clashes over land and cattle, over time, it became clear that “the fighting was about county politics [as well as] the coming general elections.”⁸⁷

Isiolo county is composed of two parliamentary constituencies: Isiolo North and Isiolo South. In both constituencies, but especially in Isiolo North, the Borana are the demographically dominant group.⁸⁸ As a result, they have held a major electoral advantage, as evidenced by the fact that Boranas have produced “nine out of the eleven MPs [who have been] elected” since the formation of the constituency in 1966.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, since the 2007 election, when the Borana MP candidate managed to secure a narrow victory over the second-place finisher (a Turkana), the community has become increasingly concerned about its political future in Isiolo.⁹⁰

These anxieties only appear to have heightened since the introduction of devolution. At times, as in the clashes of November 2011 to January 2012, it has appeared that the Boranas have tried to support the Somalis, presumably in an attempt to garner Somali votes. At other times, however, Boranas and Somalis were pitted against one another and engaged in violent conflict. Around the 2013 election, for instance, when some of the clashes targeted Isiolo’s Somalis, the violence was explained in terms of pre-planned attempts to “drive [Somalis] away from the county so that they could not register as voters.”⁹¹ To be sure, Borana versus Somali conflicts in Isiolo continued intermittently into 2017. Although the most recent incidents appeared to be related to a fight over resources, with the county elections quickly approaching, the Isiolo council of elders “warned locals to be wary of politicians” who could exploit them for electoral ends.⁹² Altogether, then, there is a considerable body of evidence, which suggests that the new county system has contributed to increasing violence among pastoral communities (particularly between the Boranas and Somalis) in Isiolo.

Simultaneously, conflicts between local herder groups and the farming Meru community in Isiolo have been on the rise. To quote one report,

In late October 2015 deadly clashes pitted Somali, Boran[a] and Samburu herders against Meru farmers along the ... county border resulting in six deaths. A few days later, riots erupted in Isiolo town following the death of a Meru *boda-boda* (motorbike-taxi) operator; [the] Boran[a], Somali and Turkana then looted Meru shops and blocked the Isiolo–Nanyuki highway.⁹³

To account for these conflicts, some analysts have held that devolution has increased the legibility of minority communities (in

Isiolo's case, the Meru) who the other groups are keen to freeze out of power.⁹⁴

The 2013 election results from Isiolo lend some credence to such claims. With the exception of the MP seat from Isiolo North, which fell to a Turkana candidate (Joseph Samal Lomwa), all of the main county positions (governor, senator, and women's representative) as well as the parliamentary seat for Isiolo South fell to Borana candidates, albeit from varied clans. These results are striking not only because they illustrate the fact that the Merus were kept out of power, but also because they show that the Borana failed to capture the MP seat from Isiolo North, a position that they had long dominated. Thus, although it cannot be conclusively established, the evidence from Isiolo strongly suggests that the new county system has served to reinforce pre-existing cleavage structures both within the pastoral community and between pastoralists and farmers. Moreover, these heightened divisions appear to have given rise to some important changes in electoral fortunes.

While the new electoral salience of old ethnic cleavages can help us to account for pre-vote conflicts in Isiolo, a complete explanation of these clashes as well as the more recent and escalating herder-farmer violence necessitates an acknowledgment of the crucial place that the county occupies within the Kenya Vision 2030 program. This initiative, launched by former President Kibaki in June 2008, aims to transform Kenya into an industrializing, middle-income country by the year 2030. At the heart of this program are several national and regional development projects, one of which is LAPSSET (Lamu Port, South Sudan, and Ethiopia Transport). LAPSSET seeks to create a "transport corridor between Kenya and Uganda and ... better integrate Ethiopia and South Sudan into East Africa."⁹⁵ Isiolo will be a key node within this corridor, and it is one of the sites where construction for important infrastructure projects has already begun. So far, Isiolo's airstrip has been transformed into an international airport, which was officially opened by President Uhuru Kenyatta on January 20, 2017.⁹⁶ According to reported figures, the total estimated cost of LAPSSET is \$23 billion (roughly 2 trillion Kenyan Shillings).⁹⁷ Within this context, then, the intensifying ethnic clashes in Isiolo are not only attributable to the new high-stakes elections created by devolution, but these patterns are also related to increasing competition between different sub-national groups to control the county's development projects. As such, it is not surprising that in a 2016 list of counties released by Kenya's National Cohesion and

Integration Commission (NCIC), Isiolo figured as one of thirty-three sites that was likely to experience violence around the 2017 elections.⁹⁸

Conclusion

Following the post-election crisis of 2007–2008, Kenya promulgated a new constitution in 2010, which ushered in a series of important institutional changes in the country. Central among these reforms was the introduction of devolution. At the time of its implementation, there was considerable optimism that by reducing the concentration of power in the presidency, devolution would serve to diminish elites' incentives for orchestrating electoral violence.

Through a controlled comparison of three Kenyan counties – Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo – all of which experienced violence in association with their 2013 local contests, this research has shown that at least in Kenya's first "post-conflict" elections, these hopes were not realized. To be sure, devolution is perceived to have brought many benefits to Kenyans including easier access to officials, increased public participation, and improved health services, roads, and local employment opportunities.⁹⁹ Furthermore, according to a 2016 survey, more than three-quarters of the Kenyan population supports devolution.¹⁰⁰ With regard to the potential for violence, however, while it is reasonable to expect that clashes on the scale of those seen in 2007–2008 are unlikely to repeat themselves, by increasing ethnic competition within counties, devolution has only provided a partial solution for curbing election-time conflict. Specifically, the chapter has illustrated that the country's county system has created a new set of high-stakes contests around which such violence is likely to occur. This is because by devolving political, administrative, and especially *fiscal* powers to the forty-seven newly created counties, decentralization reforms in Kenya have actually heightened the stakes of electoral competition at the local level. In particular, the fact that counties now receive unconditional grants for developmental purposes from the central government has had at least three crucial consequences for the dynamics of political competition.

First, and with reference to county elections in 2013, the availability of these funds rendered pre-existing ethnic divisions electorally relevant and manipulable in many parts of the country. In Tana River, for example, a long-standing divide between the pastoral Orma and agricultural Pokomo took on new electoral meaning in the run-up to the

elections, and local politicians used this divide to organize violence in a bid to capture prized county-level positions. Similarly, in Isiolo, devolution and the associated promise of accessing devolved fiscal resources amplified divisions between different pastoral groups. Second, and within Isiolo county once again, competition over a large development and infrastructure project heightened rivalries between pastoral communities on the one hand and the agricultural Meru group on the other. Evidence from the ground suggests that some of the violence in this region was deployed in a concerted attempt to freeze Merus out of county offices. Third, devolution caused a shift in prevailing fault-lines in some parts of Kenya. Subsequently, new electoral coalitions were cobbled together ahead of the elections in 2013, which threatened and sometimes succeeded in ousting long-time power-holders from their political positions. In Marsabit, for instance, the creation of the ReGaBu alliance prevented the Borana from capturing any of the county-level offices. This turn of events led to a spate of communal clashes in the aftermath of the local election there. Given the ethnic heterogeneity of many Kenyan counties, the challenge for the country going forward will be to streamline devolution so as to prevent unequal access to power and resources – problems that have typically accompanied national-level elections – from setting in more permanently around sub-national (i.e. county-level) contests.

In conclusion, this study has proposed an original theory, and offered new evidence from Kenya, on how devolution reforms can generate rather than stymie elites' incentives for organizing election-related conflict. With reference to the three Kenyan cases at the heart of this research, the study has shown that various causal mechanisms contributed to the culmination of such violence around the 2013 elections, with clashes occurring both before and after county-level contests. The timing of some of these conflicts is important, as they challenge the prevailing wisdom, which classifies violent events that occur six months before and three months after an election as being electoral in nature. As shown in the cases of Tana River and Isiolo, however, some communal clashes took place more than six months before local county elections were held and they still appeared to have served an electoral purpose. Similarly, some of the violence in Marsabit and Isiolo occurred after the closure of the three-month post-election window.

A vital implication that emerges from this research, then, is that institutional changes such as devolution can actually serve to widen the period over which elites face incentives to organize election-related

conflict. For example, violent clashes that broke out in Baringo and Laikipia counties several months prior to local-level elections gave some analysts pause about whether the Rift Valley would descend into chaos yet again.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, in 2017, as the election results started to trickle in, counties such as Garissa succumbed to conflict over the gubernatorial race.¹⁰² Thus, unlike the presidential contest, even though procedural concerns were generally not raised in relation to Kenya's county-level elections in 2017, in several closely fought sites, election-related conflict did take place.¹⁰³ Paying closer attention to the dynamics of county-level competition will be an important task for advancing future research on the drivers of electoral violence in Kenya. From a policy perspective, furthermore, findings from Kenya could help to guide practitioners about how to structure and implement devolution in developing democracies so as to prevent not only national-level electoral violence but also more localized clashes from occurring in the future.

Notes

- 1 Nelson Kasfir, "Agency across Changing Sites."
- 2 Kramon and Posner, "Kenya's New Constitution," 89.
- 3 Nyanjom, "Devolution in Kenya's New Constitution," 11.
- 4 Elder et al., "Elections and Violent Conflict in Kenya," 12; and anonymous interview (professor of political science), interview by author, Nairobi, Kenya, December 12, 2013.
- 5 Cornell and D'Arcy, "Plus ça Change?"; and D'Arcy and Cornell, "Devolution and Corruption in Kenya."
- 6 Abdille and Abdi, "Kenya"; International Crisis Group, "Kenya's Coast"; Mohamud and Mosley, "Insecurity in Northern Kenya"; and Sharamo, "The Politics of Pastoral Violence."
- 7 Kasfir, "Agency across Changing Sites"; Shilaho, "Third Time Lucky?"
- 8 Kasfir, "Agency across Changing Sites"; Branch et al., *Our Turn to Eat*.
- 9 Kasfir, "Agency across Changing Sites," 56.
- 10 Whitaker and Giersch, "Voting on a Constitution," 6.
- 11 Ibid., 6; Cornell and D'Arcy, "Plus ça Change?," 175; Kasfir, "Agency across Changing Sites," 56.
- 12 Whitaker and Giersch, "Voting on a Constitution," 1.
- 13 Mueller, "Dying to Win."
- 14 Kramon and Posner, "Kenya's New Constitution," 90.
- 15 Cornell and D'Arcy, "Plus ça Change?"; D'Arcy and Cornell, "Devolution and Corruption in Kenya"; Hassan, "Continuity Despite Change"; Mutiga, "Kenya"; and Long et al., "Choosing Peace over Democracy."
- 16 For a comprehensive discussion of these reasons, refer to Brancati, *Peace by Design*.
- 17 Ibid., 8.
- 18 Brancati, "Decentralization"; and Brancati, *Peace by Design*.
- 19 Brancati, "Decentralization," 652.
- 20 See, for example, Jinadu, "Federalism, the Consociational State, and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria"; Kendhammer, "Talking Ethnic but Hearing Multi-Ethnic"; Deshpande, "Assembly Elections"; and Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*.

- 21 van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia*.
- 22 Straus and Taylor, "Democratization and Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990-2008," 19-20.
- 23 Human Rights Watch, "High Stakes," 1.
- 24 Republic of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), "Kenya County Fact Sheets."
- 25 Collier, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*; Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War"; and Clevon, "Elites, Youth and Informal Networks."
- 26 Anonymous interview (professor of political science), interview by author, Nairobi, Kenya, December 12, 2013.
- 27 Bratton and Kimenyi, "Voting in Kenya."
- 28 Republic of Kenya, *Constitution of Kenya*, Article 216, 2010.
- 29 Republic of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), "Revenue Allocation Formula." Also see Cheeseman et al., "Decentralization in Kenya," 15.
- 30 Kimenyi, "Devolution and Resource Sharing in Kenya."
- 31 Shilaho, "Third Time Lucky?," 162.
- 32 For details, see Cheeseman et al., "Decentralization in Kenya," 14-15.
- 33 Ongiri, "Counties to Get Sh48bn More in New Budget Deal."
- 34 Anonymous interview (Republican Congress, i.e. RC, politician), interview by author, Mombasa, Kenya, September 27, 2013.
- 35 Kahl, *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World*; Klopp, "Ethnic Clashes' and Winning Elections."
- 36 BBC, "Kenya Tana Delta Massacres Raise Election Violence Fear"; also see Africa Report, "Kenya's Tana Delta Burning."
- 37 Note that with the implementation of the new county system, the district is now a defunct administrative unit in Kenya.
- 38 Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*.

- 39 Martin, "Conflicts between Pastoralists and Farmers in Tana River District," 174.
- 40 Republic of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), "County Budgets 2013-2014." On file with the author.
- 41 Author's calculations based on 2009 Kenya census data.
- 42 County elections in Kenya use a plurality threshold.
- 43 The author collected this event data for a related project. The dataset will be publicly available once all projects whose research it supports have been submitted for peer review. For more details on the dataset, see Malik, "Constitutional Reform and New Patterns of Electoral Violence," 346-347.
- 44 Anonymous interview (religious leader), interview by author, Mombasa, Kenya, October 4, 2013.
- 45 Anonymous interview (RC politician), interview by author, Mombasa, Kenya, September 27, 2013.
- 46 Anonymous interview (professor of history), interview by author, Nairobi, Kenya, January 29, 2013.
- 47 Human Rights Watch, "Kenya."
- 48 Ibid. Also see Ndonga, "Dhadho Godhana Sacked over Tana Killings."
- 49 Mung'ahu, "MP Godhana Cleared of Incitement Charges."
- 50 Anonymous interview (TNA politician), interview by author, Nairobi, Kenya, October 17, 2013.
- 51 Anonymous interview (civil society leader), interview by author, Mombasa, Kenya, September 25, 2013.
- 52 Mwawasi, "Tana River Governor Accused of Hiring Relatives in Plum County Jobs."
- 53 Witsenburg and Adano, "Of Rain and Raids," 519.
- 54 Kagwanja, "Politics of Marionettes," 88.
- 55 Witsenburg and Adano, "Of Rain and Raids."

- 56 Scott-Villiers et al., "Roots and Routes of Political Violence in Kenya's Civil and Political Society"; Obuya, "Politics a Key Factor in the Perennial Marsabit Conflict."
- 57 Witsenburg, "Ethnic Tensions in Harsh Environments"; and Carrier and Kochore, "Navigating Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in Northern Kenya."
- 58 Carrier and Kochore, "Navigating Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in Northern Kenya," 141.
- 59 In fact, in the event dataset employed by this research, the only cases of violence in the region that can be classified as electoral are the aforementioned raids of September 1997.
- 60 Republic of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), "County Budgets 2013-2014." On file with the author.
- 61 Anonymous interview (RC politician), interview by author, Mombasa, Kenya, September 27, 2013.
- 62 Nzioka, "High Stakes in Contest for Governor Seat."
- 63 Carrier and Kochore, "Navigating Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in Northern Kenya," 143.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Ibid., 144.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Nyabira and Ayele, "The State of Political Inclusion of Ethnic Communities under Kenya's Devolved System."
- 68 Obuya, "Politics a Key Factor in the Perennial Marsabit Conflict."
- 69 Daily Nation, "MP Charged over Marsabit Clashes."
- 70 Agoya, "Moyale MP Roba Duba Charged Afresh over Incitement."
- 71 Mungiti, "Court Acquits Moyale MP Roba Duba of Incitement Charge."
- 72 Barasa and Bett, "Elders to Choose between Ukur Yatani and US-based Adano for Marsabit Governor's Seat"; Barasa, "Ukur Yatani Finally Gets Elders' Blessings to Seek Re-Elections as Marsabit Governor."
- 73 Barasa and Bett, "Elders to Choose between Ukur Yatani and US-based Adano for Marsabit Governor's Seat."
- 74 Abdille and Abdi, "Kenya"; Sharamo, "The Politics of Pastoral Violence."
- 75 Republic of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), "County Budgets 2013-2014." On file with the author.
- 76 Kagwanja, "Politics of Marionettes."
- 77 Kimenyi and Ndung'u, "Sporadic Ethnic Violence"; Hornsby, *Kenya*, 657.
- 78 Kimenyi and Ndung'u, "Sporadic Ethnic Violence," 137.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Boye and Kaarhus, "Competing Claims and Contested Boundaries."
- 82 Human Rights Watch, "High Stakes," 4.
- 83 Ibid., 38.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 IRIN, "Several Thousand Displaced after Fresh Clashes in Isiolo."
- 87 Human Rights Watch, "High Stakes," 38.
- 88 Sharamo, "The Politics of Pastoral Violence," 6.
- 89 Carrier and Kochore, "Navigating Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in Northern Kenya," 140.
- 90 Sharamo, "The Politics of Pastoral Violence," 6.
- 91 Carrier and Kochore, "Navigating Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in Northern Kenya," 140.
- 92 Jebet, "Borana and Somali Herders in Isiolo Told to End Conflict"; Jebet, "Isiolo Elders Caution Politicians on Divisive Talk in Campaigns."
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- 94 Ibid.
- 95 Ibid.
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100 Ibid.

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