

Report

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

LEARNINGS FROM A CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVE
IN NORTH-WESTERN KENYA



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Executive Summary

Early Warning Systems (EWS) have been used at local, national regional and global levels to better respond to disasters and conflict and inform intervention planning and implementation. The Free Pentecostal Church in Kenya has over the past eight years been running an Information Communication and Technology (ICT) based Early Warning System to inform their relief and development programming in Kenya. Over the years the effectiveness of this system to respond to conflict and gender based violence, has attracted attention from government and other peace building civil society organizations in the country especially in the areas where the system is operationalized, mainly in Mt. Elgon region, Turkana and West Pokot counties and Kisumu County. With a central control station, the system continues to be utilized for early warning information sharing and response across many other parts of the country where they run programs. The system presents a success story in the work of the church and FBOs in establishing and operationalizing EWS. The Swedish Pentecostal Organization (PMU), contracted TAABCO Research and Development Consultants to conduct a study of the system with a view to enhance understanding of possibilities and challenges in developing and operating an Early Warning System in different forms and contexts. This report summarizes the outcomes of this study.

The study established that success factors for any EWS are anchored on the functionality of the input component that comprises the field surveillance, collecting and sharing of early warning information; the control component that encompasses the processing and analysis of information being relayed from the field and transmission to response teams and the output component that is the response part of the system comprising multiple response teams charged with varied responsibilities that include immediate operations to prevent attacks and transformative initiatives that include facilitating dialogues and other forms of community conversations to prevent escalation of violence. FPFK EWS is built on this elaborate structure that also brings in government actors at the response level but also incorporate them in transformational community discussions.

Although the FPFK EWS remains work in progress and improvements are being made on it with every new project location and intervention, it presents a model from which many church and faith based and other actors in the field can learn from and replicate for prevention of conflict and break cycles of violence thus creating peaceful and secure communities to facilitate sustainable delivery of their relief and development programs.

Acknowledgement

TAABCO is grateful to the Early Warning System team at FPFK for their tremendous support during the planning and conduct of the study from which this report is prepared. We recognize with appreciation the support of FPFK staff led by the Social Ministry Coordinator in Nairobi and the various project leads based in the field that were very resourceful during the data collection phase. Lastly, we wish to thank PMU for liaising with the study team and providing necessary secondary data documents and for the overall organization of the whole study.

We are also thankful to the Research Assistants whose role in ensuring that required data was harnessed in time and is of good quality.

Thank You.

ACRONYMS

ACC	Assistant County Commissioner
CBO	Community Based Organization
CC	County Commissioner
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCC	Deputy County Commissioner
DHIS2	District Health Information Software 2
EW/ER	Early warning and Early Response
EWS	Early Warning System
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FPFK	Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HISP	Health Information System Programme
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organizations
KII	Key Informant Interview
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCS	Officer Commanding Police Station
PMU	Swedish Pentecostal Organization
TAABCO	Transforming, Analyzing, Accompanying and Building Change Organizations
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPPL	Turkana-Pokot Peace and Livelihoods Project
UN	United Nations
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Background to the study

This report presents a detailed study on the Early Warning Systems in Kenya for the Swedish Pentecostal Development Organization (PMU) with focus on local partner operating contexts that are characterized by environmental, social and security hazards. It aims at drawing lessons from the Early Warning System that is established and implemented by the Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK) with PMU being one of the key partners in the project. The project has registered significant achievements over the years and could thus provide lessons that can inform similar initiatives in similar or related contexts but also establish capacity needs in so far as establishing such a system is concerned for their partners. This knowledge and understanding on Early Warning Systems (EWS) is particularly important given that many of PMU partners are active in fragile states and contexts. There is thus a strong need to find ways to improve resilience and better respond to hazards that will occur for many partners from an informed perspective. Although peace and security are functions of the state, most fragile contexts are characterized by zones that have for years experienced violence and conflict with no lasting solutions from respective governments. In cases where there have been some interventions, these have often been militarized and perceived by sections of local communities as sided and aiding one side of the conflict, thus exacerbating such tensions. Churches and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) have also tended to be minimally involved in peace and security matters, leaving them to their respective governments despite their heavy investments in relief and development work in conflict prone and war-torn contexts. FPFK's EWS is therefore a unique initiative that is integrated into their relief and development work in Kenya and presents a model for learning on how churches and FBOs can work with state actors and local communities to prevent conflict and violence for sustainable development of the communities they serve.

1.2 PMU-Swedish Pentecostal Movement

PMU is the development wing of the Swedish Pentecostal Movement which has around 84,000 members at 477 local churches, making it one of Sweden's largest popular movements. Currently, PMU is part of the Pentecostal Alliance of Independent Churches, which consists of a national and an international section. Within the international section, in addition to PMU, there are other entities with responsibility for areas such as church work, theological training and communications. PMU is solely responsible for social development work and humanitarian assistance. PMU InterLife's goal is to act to promote the development of a vigorous and democratic civil society, in which people work in groups for their own interests or the interests of others, so that people who live in poverty will have increased opportunities to improve their living conditions. Its goal is to increase involvement in global issues in Sweden, and to contribute to just and sustainable global development together with all concerned parties. Their thematic areas of focus include Agriculture, Democracy, Education, Environment and climate change, Fight against corruption, Fight against impunity & reconciliation, Food security, Human rights, Humanitarian relief, Microfinance, Natural Resources, Peace & Security, Sexual and Gender-based violence, Women's participation.

In Africa, PMU continues to support interventions and partner with local FBOs in countries such as Kenya, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda etc. It is in this vein that they have partnered with FPFK in Kenya on various programmes such as the Early Warning System for the Pokot-Turkana conflict region. In this study, PMU seeks to learn from this EWS with the intention of replicating the same efforts with their other partners in different contexts across the globe.

1.3 The Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK)

The Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK) is an evangelical church registered in Kenya. It operates in 31 regions in Kenya and has 258 local churches and over 1,200 branches, with a combined membership of over 250,000. Nationally, FPFK is headed by a Board, which is the principal policy making body. A national secretariat headed by the General Secretary who is also the secretary to the National board is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the church at the national level. The regional councils are responsible for managing and coordinating the activities of the churches in the region level. FPFK subscribes to a holistic development of the person and community and in this vein, emphasis is on changing the mind and soul of people through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that they can affirm their dignity as God given and affirm a faith that enables them to see their lives from a hopeful and pro-active state rather than resigning to the vagaries of life. Through its networks and partnerships, FPFK facilitates an enabling environment for the community to exist peacefully and be empowered to attain inclusive development. It has over the years continued to implement projects in peacebuilding and conflict management in various parts of the country. The Turkana-Pokot Peace and Livelihoods (TPPL) project being implemented in West Pokot and Turkana Counties is one such intervention. The project aims at reaching out to the morans and militia groups in the two counties with the intention of offering alternative sources of livelihood such as irrigated farming for horticulture, breeding exotic goats for milk, milling, and local transport businesses. Past and recurrent conflict and violence has frustrated such initiatives, destroyed community livelihoods and even led to massive losses of human lives. It is on this backdrop that the FPFK installed and successfully implemented a unique Conflict Early warning and Early Response System to avert possible repeat of conflict and violence incidences in this region and other similar contexts in Kenya.

1.4 The Early Warning System

At the core of this study is the ICT based Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system developed and operated by FPFK Kenya. The system has been widely recognised as an increasingly successful initiative having been in operation for over 8 years now. It was first rolled out to address the then persistent violent conflicts in Mt Elgon and Muhoroni regions in Kenya. Upon recording tremendous successes in peace building and conflict management in these conflict areas, FPFK scaled its operations to parts of Nakuru in Rift Valley to help address cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) that were on the rise. Most recently, the system has been rolled up in Pokot-Turkana region to help realise the historically elusive peace between the two ethnic communities in Kenya. It is this successful continuous scale-up of the system by FPFK in different contexts for diverse interventions that made it an even more resourceful system to study.

The ICT based EWER system links the peace and conflict monitors in the conflict hotspot areas with the government security and disaster actors who are in this case an important part of the responders. Such responders include all units of police operating in the project area as well as at the national level to the Inspector General of Police; the humanitarian agencies such as the Red Cross, National Disaster Management Authority; the county governments departments for disaster, peace and conflict management; and the civil society actors such as the World Vision, among others. At the community level, we have Community Peace Representatives (CPRs) who are also part of this component of the EWER and who play a critical role through community engagement. They facilitate community conversations and reconciliation processes between warring groups and help prevail upon their own members to shun violence and adopt peaceful means of resolving grievances. This group of CPRs include local pastors, youth and women leaders, elders and other opinion leaders. They are a crucial link for transforming conflict within target communities. The monitors send the messages to the system's SMS code, which in turn sends the message received to the responders without divulging the identity of the monitors. The responders on the other hand move in to prevent the conflict just before the conflict takes place. This happens when the monitors observes indicators for the conflict such as secret meetings, group gatherings of warriors, sudden disappearance of men in the community among other indicators of conflict.

The EWS project in West Pokot and Turkana counties involved mapping out key areas where the conflict is particularly volatile (hotspots). Most of these areas lie along the borderline of the two counties which also is the border for the Pokot and Turkana ethnic communities. Each area has two conflict early warning monitors whose work complements and strengthens the work of the security agencies, non-state actors in the region, and peace actors among others. The system is particularly significant in safeguarding the monitor's identity, restoring trust between the community and the security agencies, and enhancing timely response to conflicts before their escalation to destructive violence. It is aimed at supporting both horizontal and vertical interactions between the security agencies in Turkana and West Pokot counties, as well as among the junior and senior security officers; between the members of the community, and the peace actors within and between the two communities. Furthermore, the system is designed to further provide analysis on trends across various aspects of the peace building process to inform short and long term initiatives insights for security actors, community peace actors, peace champions and county government representatives.

1.5 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The study's main **purpose** was to enhance understanding of possibilities and challenges in developing and operating an Early Warning System in different forms and contexts. It is meant to broaden PMU's and its partners understanding in exploring this area further and improving their work in the humanitarian development nexus. The specific objectives of the study included: deeper understanding of how a well-functioning EWS is organized, and the challenges and opportunities with developing EWS with local churches, especially connected to ethnic tensions and finally to document lessons learnt for better replication of a successful EWS in other contexts.

1.6 Study Contribution

The study focus was around two parts with the first intended contribution being on best practices that can be drawn from experiences from FPFK' EWS in Kenya. The other intended contribution was on the feasibility of establishing such a system in which case, lessons were sought for on variations of approaches in working with EWS especially for religious actors or FBOs. Specifically, the study is to establish the challenges and opportunities for religious actors or FBOs in developing a working EWS in different local contexts including aspects of: ethnicity, localization, and digitalization. Insights on replication were thus to be drawn for both conflict sensitive contexts and other broader scope on violence such as Gender Based Violence.

1.7 Study Structure

This study is divided into 6 chapters with Chapter one outlining the background of the whole study including the purpose, scope and study contribution. Chapter 2 details the available literature on Early Warning Systems and outlines the conceptual framework. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology for the study. In Chapter 4, the study looks at the whole process of establishing the EWS as was adopted by FPFK Kenya. The study outlines its Findings and Discussions in Chapter 5 and lastly Chapter 6 offers the Recommendations and Conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

2.1 Defining Early Warning Systems

According to Alexander Austin (2004), an Early Warning System is defined as any: 'any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing, regardless of topic, whether they are quantitative, qualitative or a blend of both.' As for the early response, Austin (2004) defines it as: 'any initiative that occurs in the latent stages of a perceived potential armed conflict with the aim at reduction, resolution or transformation.' Definitions have developed over the years to incorporate themes such as: a) wars and armed conflict; b) state failure; c) genocide and politics; d) other gross human rights violations; and e) humanitarian emergencies caused by natural disasters.

There is consensus in literature on the four components of EWS namely: risk knowledge, monitoring, communication and response capability. This study adopts the line of thought that risk knowledge is a systematic data collection and analysis of vulnerabilities – physical, social, economic, and environmental – that merge in risk scenarios subject to changes in the short and long term (Marchezini et al., 2017); Monitoring implies the capacities for collecting dynamic data and information and for analysing them on the basis of prior knowledge to take decisions; Communication is the process of sharing data, information and knowledge about the risks and warning situations and finally response capability to be the preparedness capacity to know how to act and is often rooted in resources, skills and networks that stakeholders have.

Bearing in mind that there have been other approaches to early warning systems, this study is guided by the “first mile” approach that advocates for more participation in each of the four interrelated components of EWS. For this approach to be more successful, system planners must comprehend the different types and degrees of vulnerability and capability of people. This implies that anyone planning to establish an EWS must consider who the actors are and examine the interconnection of social dimensions and demographic characteristics, occupation, religion, culture, language, gender relations, sexuality, ethnicity, race, age, persons with disabilities, refugees, livelihoods and environmental change over time.” (Mustafa et al., 2015, p. 2). At the centre of this approach is participation by the people in designing and operationalization of the EWS.

As stated in the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction [UNISDR] (2015), there is need to focus on “meaningful participation of relevant stakeholders at appropriate levels”. Furthermore, for this participation to be effective, it's crucial to ensure there is representativeness of various groups of stakeholders, within a transparent decision-making process that provides access to knowledge for all groups involved or affected (Jacobi and Franco, 2011). It is thus necessary to carefully consider different concerns of stakeholders. It is on this backdrop that this study draws its conceptual framework.

2.2 Conceptual Framework for the study

The conceptual framework for this study is adopted from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) which outlines the four pillars of EWS as (1) risk knowledge, (2) risk monitoring and warning, (3) risk information dissemination and communication, and (4) the response capacity of communities and the authorities to respond to the risk information. Approaches, methods, data collected and analysis are described herein, according to each of the four pillars.

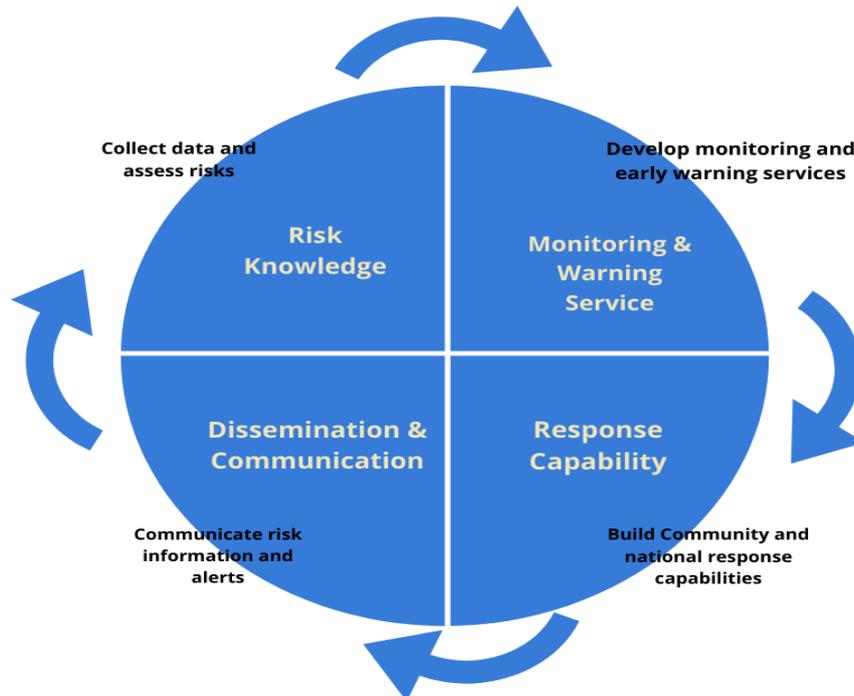


Figure 1: Framework adapted from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Strategy

Conceptual framework adopted from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction framework on the four pillars of EWS.

CHAPTER THREE:

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

The EWS study team employed a mix of purposive and snowballing sampling techniques in selecting individuals to be interviewed. The choice of these techniques was informed by a number of various factors. The study focused on users of a specific Early Warning System, the FPFK EWS, located in specific locations of Kenya, thus the need to purposively select a sample from these users. Respondents were selected based on their specific roles in the design, development and operationalization of the system, hence the justification for use of purposive sampling. In the application of the snowballing technique, some respondents were selected based on referral from some of those earlier interviewed. In such cases, referrals were made to fill in knowledge gaps and provide clarifications where those referring considered such interviewees more informed than they themselves on certain specific subject matters. Structured question guides were developed for each category of respondents based on their role in the Early Warning and Early Response operationalization. Information from respondents was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) based on appropriateness of each participant and role played in the EWER system.

3.2 Scope of the study

At the centre of this study was the Early Warning System established to help reduce cases of conflict between members of the Pokot and Turkana Communities where the PMU funded TPPL project is implemented. The two communities specifically occupy West Pokot and Turkana Counties of Kenya. However, the study was extended to EWS systems in Mt. Elgon region, Muhoroni and Nakuru, which were slightly different contexts utilizing the system for other but related themes. It is important to note here that the control centre that manages all early warning information is central even though it serves all the different contexts within the country. Finally, the study was extended to EWS efforts in Burundi, focusing on an intervention by a local PMU implementing partner, to inform the feasibility aspect of the entire study. Data was collected between 17th Dec 2020 and 14th Jan 2021.

Table : Scope of the study

Country	Region	Communities
Kenya	West Pokot/Turkana counties, Mt. Elgon, Nakuru & Muhoroni Region	Pokot, Turkana, Sabaot, Luo, Nandi, Luhya
Burundi	Nationwide	Hutu, Tutsi, Batwa

Source: Table created by lead consultant

3.3 Data Sources

The respondents included security actors, community members and project staff. A combination of qualitative collection methods were used that included desk reviews, Focus Group Discussions observations and Key Informant Interviews.

- **Desk Review** - Documents from implementing partners that related to the project were reviewed to offer understanding of the project design, goals and objectives, approaches and methods. The review also helped to generate the information on the implementation of the project, progress made so far and the contexts in which the EWS is operated both in Kenya and Burundi. The key documents reviewed included field visit reports and project progress reports

- **Key Informant Interviews** - 10 key informant interviews (KII) were conducted for security actors, strategic community members and project staff. The KIIs were used to elicit overview information about the EWS system and conflict context analysis. 5 of these KIIs were done remotely while the rest were carried out physically during the field visit.
- **Focus Group Discussions** - 4 focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted to elicit views of the participants on operations, implementation progress and involvement at all levels in the EWS system in the main conflict region under study. All of the four were done physically during the field visit.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

The EWS study team used mainly qualitative data analysis techniques. Harnessing data, which was largely qualitative, was analysed through content and pattern analysis. Ethnographic summaries of salient views or opinions of the respondents and participants were also made. In this regard, content and pattern analysis was carried out on the qualitative data collected from the field and triangulated with that captured from secondary data sources. Simple Microsoft Word tables were used to categorize various responses based on emerging themes while making reference to the study questions outlined in the TORs. The “Do No Harm” Framework was used to interrogate conflict sensitivity aspects of the Early Warning System based on its design and responses from interviewees. Subsequently the information gathered was interpreted and reported in view of the study purpose and objectives.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This study was carried out with great ethical considerations. Participants for data collection were provided with information about the purpose, risks, and benefits of the study to enable them decide on whether to participate or not. Furthermore, the data shared by the respondents was kept confidential. At no point, were the names of any respondent or other identifying information used in the data analysis, presentation of findings and report of the study. On completion of the field study, data was kept in a manner that adheres to ethical principles. The study tried as much as possible to exclude household identifiers and references and rather focused on the characteristics that support or refute the general issue at hand.

3.6 Limitations

The study was subject to some limitations and biases. These included selection bias for non-random sampling and respondent recall and desirability biases, restricted generalizability of findings due to relatively small sample sizes and time and respondent availability constraints that limited inclusion of certain key stakeholders especially with regard to the feasibility part of the study. In the wake of the recent outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease (Covid 19) restrictions on travel and physical meetings among other prevention and control protocols, meant that the study team was limited in movement in certain cases and had to rely on online interviews and physical telephone calls with respondents which were occasionally affected due to network connectivity drops. These limitations were however mitigated considerably through use of multiple layers of data triangulation by combining information from documents reviewed and interviews from multiple sources to ensure reliability, accuracy and validity of results.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Early Warning System Establishment Process

4.1 Introduction

The FPFK operated EWS system under study has been recognised as one of the most resourceful ICT based mechanisms, implemented by a faith based organisation, that have been essential in actually delivering admirable results across a couple of themes in different contexts. This chapter provides a detailed insight into how the system was established, shedding light to the various steps involved. Generally, the whole system is made of three crucial components namely: The input component (peace monitors), the control component (automated analysis & system administrators physical analysis) and finally the output component (Responders).

4.2 The EWS Computer Software

This study noted that the entire software was inspired by health management software named District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2). This is an open source, web-based health management information system (HMIS) platform developed and run by the University of Oslo. The core DHIS2 software development is managed by the Health Information Systems Program (HISP) at the University of Oslo (UiO). HISP is a global network comprised of 11 in-country and regional organizations, providing day-in, day-out direct support to ministries and local implementers of DHIS2. Essentially, the software serves as a data warehouse with more than 60 native applications which pull or push data stored in the warehouse to perform different functions such as data quality checks or making scorecards. It was on this backdrop that the developer customized to come up with this EWS under study. When customizing the DHIS2 to fit EWS needs, a couple of objectives were sought after, namely:

- User friendly graphical interface; a more user-friendly EWER system interface was to be established that can allow users with little knowledge on ICT to use the system effectively.
- Cloud Computing; Cloud computing was required to enable data safety and backup. It also enables the system to be available at all time hence dealing with Security cases and other cases effectively.
- Mobile Phone for data input; to enable field agents to send information to the system using their mobile phone
- Big Data; the system should be in position to tackle large volumes of data concerning security cases and other cases at the same time.
- Data Analytics; the system should be able to systematically compute the security cases and other cases effectively so that the FPFK team can use it to take appropriate action.

Bearing in mind that the DHIS2 system is an online/Internet based system, it became apparent that developers had to find a way to incorporate an offline functionality that would enable field monitors to send incidents to the system irrespective of internet connection; this bearing in mind that some rural areas have no access to internet. Then next step was to then test the new platform by sending the coded incidents from mobile phone to the DHIS2 system, analysing the coded received incident and send back to the responders. This phase was crucial to ensure that data sent and received by the system were actual messages intended to be relayed in the right format to the right authority factoring in diverse indicators as programmed.

The full information cycle is summarised in the figure below:

The Information Cycle

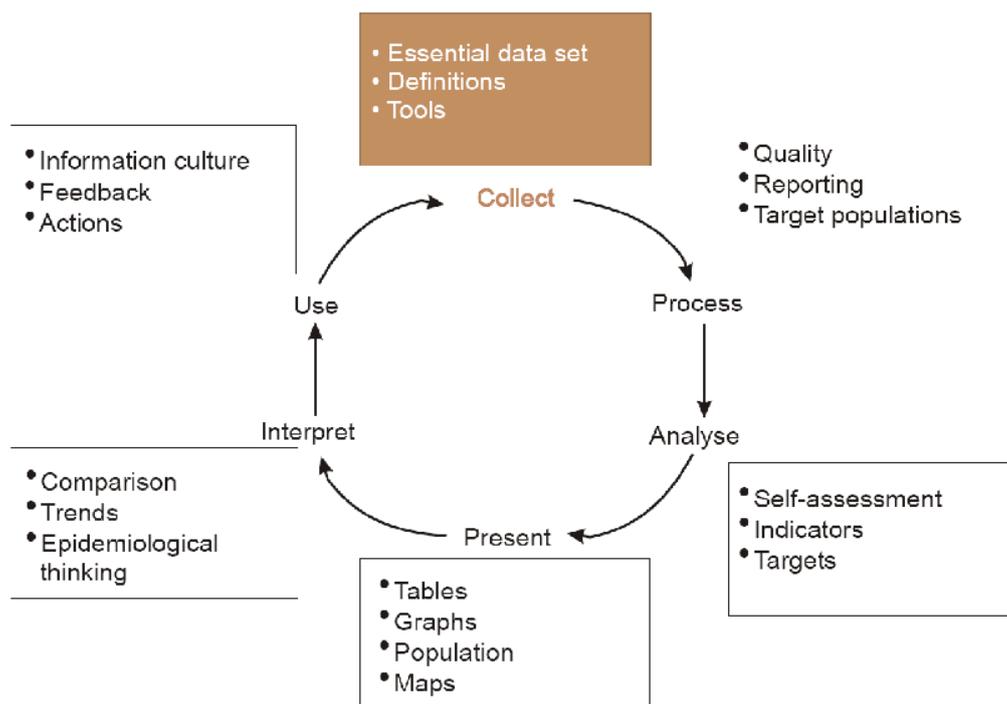


Figure 2: Full information cycle of how FPFK ICT platform operates

The information cycle involves first the collection stage where peace monitors in the field send a short message to a dedicated messaging code upon observing the situation on the ground. The FPFK have an arrangement with local mobile operator, Safaricom, that allows monitors to send the messages for free. Upon receipt of the messages from monitors, the text message is subjected to processing. During this stage, both automated analysis and human analysis comes to play. The processing stage involves analysing the content to identify the level to which it belongs. There are levels coded in GREEN (1), BLUE (2) and RED (3). This coding is based on the indicators determined through contextual analysis. For instance a message could fall in the Green level if it notifies that there have been “secret meetings”, one in level Blue is a step up in the danger and need for action as it could notify, for instance, that there are ‘disappearances of youths’ in a certain area which could indicate a possible attack. Thirdly, Red could indicate that ‘cattle have been lost’ or a ‘village has been raided’ and urgent action is needed. Furthermore, there is level ZERO which indicates that everything is okay and people are living in peace and going about their daily business without disruption. An automated analysis involves level identification and if it needs urgent response, such as those of level BLUE and RED, the system sends the message directly to the responders’ for actions. To complement automated analysis, FPFK has set up a team of staff who receive notifications whenever monitors send a message to the system. Bearing in mind that there are always two monitors in a particular hotspot area, this team of analysts then call the other monitor to corroborate and confirm what the first monitor had reported before relaying to the respective response teams for necessary response action.

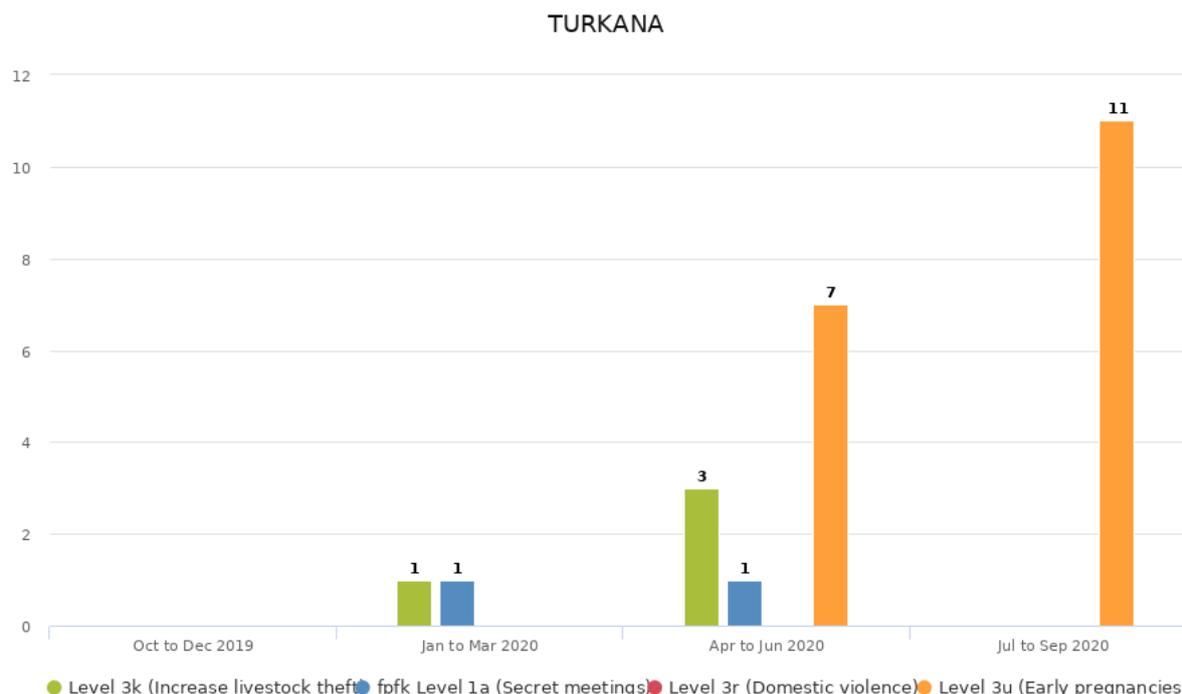


Figure 3: FPFK sample tabulation by the EWS

Concurrently, the system is configured in such a way that it documents statistics on indicators and how they are reported in the different places of operation. This information is then presented in the form of tables and charts to be easily accessed at any needed time, such as is presented above in Figure 3. This is designed to enable identify trends on the indicators and interpret what they mean. The insights generated from these graphs, maps, tables and even charts help inform policy decisions aimed at enhancing long-term peace in the conflict region. It helps enhance the information sharing culture that is necessary to move beyond just reporting alerts towards building sustainable peace.

4.3 Key contextual processes

- **Analysing the Conflict Situations**

The conflict situation analysis and diagnosis was very important because it helped the project to have a profound understanding of the nature of conflicts in both Pokot and Turkana, and the related dynamics. It was also vital in identifying the various actors involved in the Pokot-Turkana Conflict.

- **Identifying Hotspots**

The process identifying of hot spot area was achieved through physical field study visits. The team carried out field visits during which they organised FGDs and KIIs to ensure that they mapped out the most likely hotspots as much as was possible. These field studies helped narrow down on the areas of interest for streamlined efforts under strained budgets.

- **Process of Creating Peace Network**

Peace networks were created which included state and non-state actors working in the region. Through FGDs and KIIs, the FPFK team came up with a list of actors such as Mercy Corp, World Vision, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), NCIC, Red Cross, and Youth Bunge. State peace and security actors included District Peace Committees, National Police Reservists, Chiefs, County Government representatives, National Police Service, Village elders, and National Intelligence Service (NIS). These structures work with community groups that comprised religious leaders, women leaders, youth leaders and elders who came to later form the Community Peace Representatives (CPRs) following a process of engagement with communities. During field visits, representatives from these organisations or rather

actors were informed of the intended purpose of the EWS project upon which many of them agreed to participate; therefore forming the peace network.

- **Establishing the Indicators**

The study established that indicators continue to be a very crucial part of the EWS upon which its success is founded. The FPFK project team therefore carried out various research meetings in the form of FGDs to establish and understand some of the Indicators of impending conflict or peace. Respondents were drawn from both communities. The meetings were separated based on gender, age and involvement in the conflict. There were thus FGDs with groups of women, warriors and school children. The respondents were mobilized from different hot spot areas by the research team with the aid of local chiefs. This enabled mapping of several indicators that were later circulated to monitors through trainings on how to report on them. The indicator identification process revealed that it was crucial to understand the local context, including traditions in order to come up with a comprehensive list of indicators.

Different components of the EWS at a glance:

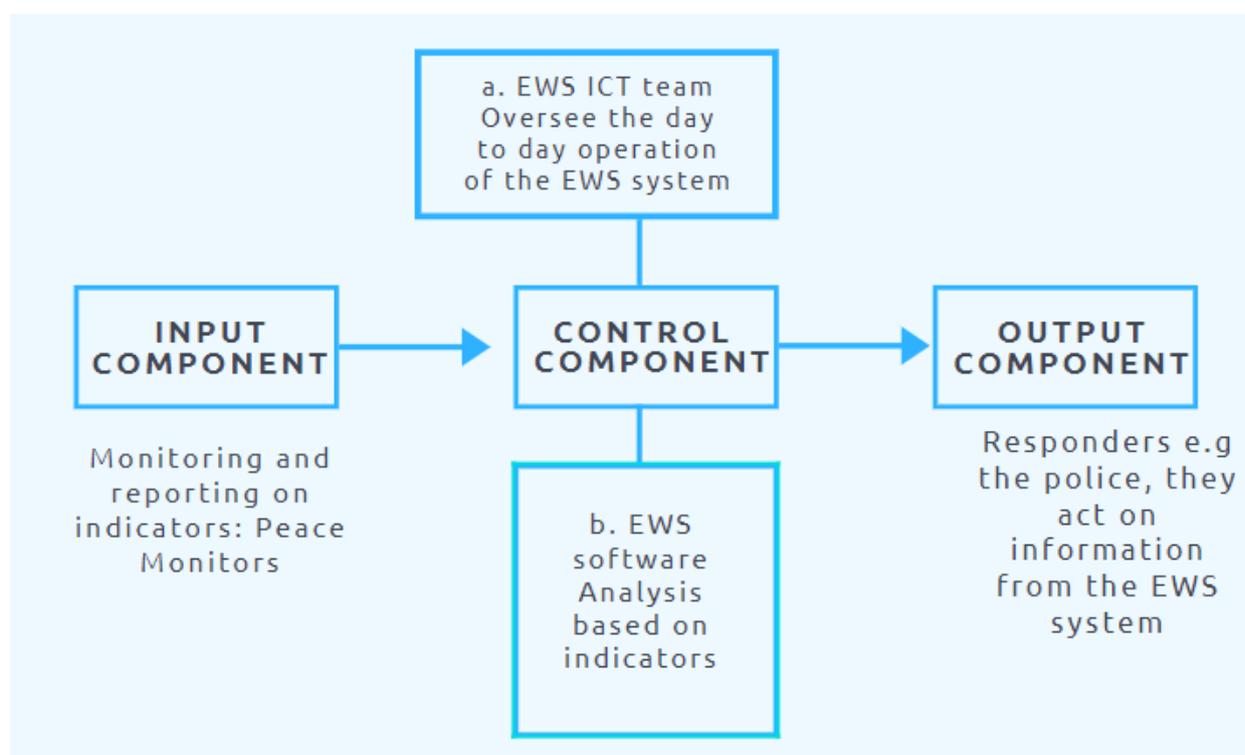


Figure 4: The complete structure of EWS components as operated by FPFK

4.4 The Input Component: Identifying Peace Monitors and CPRs

Identification of field agent and CPRs was done anonymously for purposes of their safety. The process mostly relied on local chiefs who mobilized and called for peace meetings for all the potential CPRs and field agents. During these meetings, the study field visit team would secretly note down the ability of each individual based on the laid down requirements for each group. The individuals who met the requirements were therefore identified from the lists of all those who attended the peace meetings, and while taking into consideration the gender aspect for representation, both men and women were given a fair chance in the process. Separate trainings were then organized for both the field agents and CPRs at neutral venues suiting both the Pokot and Turkana. The field agents were to play the role of the system input by collecting relevant information from their respective areas of residence and send that information to the EWER system. On the other hand, the CPRs were tasked with making follow ups on reported incidents to ensure they were effectively responded to. Furthermore, the CPRs were to

contribute to peace building efforts by preaching peace, counselling victims and facilitate trauma healing and reconciliation as a way to prevent retaliations during conflicts. The CPRs play another crucial role where, in the event that responders such as regional security leaders are transferred, they would welcome the incoming team of responders and brief them on how the EWS works. This is particularly important considering that most state security actors are transferred from time to time and briefing newly posted ones is necessary to bring them on board and secure their support and commitment to the course.

4.5 Control Component: Data processing and relaying for action

The Control Component of the EWS is data processing centre and relies on both automated and physical data processing parts. Coded information is relayed into the ICT platform based on the nature of report being given and is processed in view of these codes and relayed to the respective responders. Data analysts also analyse information and make follow ups with respective sources, especially where the information is of high security concern and carries certain sensitivities. Confirmation and clarification of such information is crucial before it is acted upon even though it may require urgent attention and response.

4.6 Output Component: Identification of Responders

The first step in the identification of responders was to make physical visits to all potential responders with the aim of sensitizing them on the objective that the Project intended to achieve and also seek their consent to be part of the response team. This process was made successful by use of local chiefs to do the mobilization and organize for appointments. The sensitization process was achieved through brief discussions with the responders and issuance of briefing notes as hand-outs. The responders comprised of both state and non-state actors. Within the EWS system, the responders are the recipients of the output information of the system. Responders were mandated by the system to respond to the issues raised by the system regarding the victims and indicators of the violent conflicts in the target areas. This was crucial to first ensure that the responsible government agencies have correct and timely information on the possibilities of the occurrence of conflicts within a particular area in Turkana South and Pokot Central generated by the EWS system, second to support the key state and non-state actors to act on a timely basis to avert or prevent the possible occurrence of violent conflicts and lastly to necessitate proper and time-bound accountability on the violent conflict's prevention and response within the target communities

CHAPTER FIVE:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the report presents the main findings from the study. The first part looks at findings from the “Best Practice” analysis that focused on the FPFK EWS and the second part looks at the possibility of replicating and adapting the lessons learned from best practice to other related PMU partner work contexts, that is, the feasibility of EWS in other contexts.

5.1 Best practice

5.1.1 FPFK EWS Success factors

The FPFK EWS has been in operation for the last 8 years since it was first set up and has gone through improvements to get to its current state which is considered by stakeholders a successful model that presents great lessons for learning and replication. The study established that a number of factors have been responsible for this success, while also identifying a few gaps for which the study team makes recommendations for addressing and thereby enhancing further the system. Below are the main success factors:

- **Thorough context analysis**

While conflict contexts tend to have similarities, each one of them also have certain unique characteristics, that may not be clearly articulated by reports shared about them through conventional sources like the media or even what is written or said about them by local people, since even they are always aligned to conflict sides. FPFK have incorporated a conflict early warning and gender based violence indicator identification through an elaborate context analysis process which they conduct for every community where they work. They carry out participatory community workshops where they strive to bring in, to the extent possible, all the necessary conflict and GBV actors including prevention structures and systematically analyse each respective context to identify actors, relationships, conflict and GBV factors and indicators. Interviews with FPFK teams in the field and in the coordination offices revealed a deep understanding of the contexts in which they operate and the EWS is designed and operated based on this understanding.

Thorough and proper context analysis has enabled FPFK to dig deeper into the real root causes of conflict in the areas they operate. Indeed what are generally known as root causes have been established in many places as secondary causes, for instance in the Turkana-Pokot conflict, boundary disputes are a major root cause of conflict, yet for years the focus has remained on cattle rustling and many actors have responded to the conflict through interventions to address cattle rustling without regard for boundary disputes. This process has led to an action where this issue has now been taken up and presented to the Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) that is responsible for administration of boundaries in Kenya. This understanding has informed the development of early warning information and reporting which has subsequently contributed to making the existing EWS responsive and effective in averting possible conflicts which tend to erupt along community border areas.

- **Selection and training of peace monitors and community peace representatives**

Like any effective conflict Early Warning and Early Response system, the FPFK EWS is built on three critical components- the input component that comprises the collection and submission of early warning information by peace monitors, the control component which carries out data analysis, and in this case both automated and physical human analysis, and the output component that is the response part of the system which includes both community level and state security response.

The strength and effectiveness of the input component, which for the case of FPFK comprises the peace monitors and community peace representatives (CPRs) is the foundation upon which a

successful EWS is built. With this understanding, the FPFK EWS places emphasis on this component and thus the selection and deployment of peace monitors and community peace representatives is a carefully thought through process that involves vetting of these community-based volunteers to ascertain their suitability. Considering that peace monitors are expected to remain anonymous to assure their own security and safety, it is critical that the selected team remains intact, since the exit of any one of them in the community presents a likelihood of exposing the remaining ones. Thus before a team is deployed as peace monitors in a specific community a thorough process of vetting and training is conducted for them. The study established a pattern of response from this category of respondents that confirmed they were people who had experienced the worst effects of violence and who were committed to do the best they could to prevent such occurrences. In one FGD, when asked if they could report a situation where their own family members were involved in planning an attack, one member responded'

“While it is painful to report, I also consider that if I do not do that, I put the lives of many of us in the community at risk, and by failing to report, I also expose the family member to future risks since some have died even as they wage the attacks. I know that by withholding such information, I am just planting a bigger problem in the community.”

Another member of the group also added,

“What my friend has told you is very true. We have reported cases before that have involved very close family members, so we are telling you what is currently happening. No one in the community gets to know who has shared the report because we are kept anonymous and this has greatly brought down conflicts in our communities.”

This narrative was repeated across all interviews with peace monitors from diverse locations. The selection of these peace monitors is not an event but rather a process that assures the commitment and self-drive of those selected to serve this role in the early warning system.

Closely associated with the selection and training of peace monitors, is the role of women. The study revealed that women, are a very critical part of early warning information gathering. They have very good understanding of early warning indicators as they are actively involved in preparing warriors for war, despite the fact that they are also the ones who eventually become the most affected as they lose husbands and sons in the same wars. They are often used as weapon keepers for they are least suspected during security swoops or attacks from enemies. The FPFK EWS has therefore actively brought women on board as peace monitors and ambassadors within the communities.

The peace monitors, whose role is to report on conflict early warning information, remain anonymous and even though they may interact with the rest of the community peace representatives and the larger community, their role as peace monitors remains confidential. Planners of attacks and counter attacks realize that their plans have been reported to the responders and have no idea who could have shared the information. This has helped reduce incidences as people struggle to establish who reports and how their plans get to the security teams and other response units.

The Community Peace Representatives (CPRs) comprise respected community members and leaders such as pastors, elders, respected women and youth leaders. This structure plays a critical role in ensuring the culture of peace and tolerance prevails in the communities. They pass on peace messages through public platforms and in churches and are often called upon to address people during peace rallies and other similar events. Since they are respected, the people listen to them and respect their opinions on various issues in the community. They support in reconciliation processes and also brief newly posted government security officers in the communities on ongoing initiatives so as to bring them on board and secure their commitment and support to the processes. They also play an advocacy role that goes beyond their immediate community contacts to county and national government leaderships. Like the monitors, the CPRs are well versed with the early warning indicators and raise the red alert when they show up or take immediate steps to avert conflict as may be necessary and possible within their capacities.

- **Integration of EWS with ongoing development programming**

An Early Warning System must have an objective it seeks to achieve, a motivation for its very establishment. Broadly speaking any EWS seeks to prevent violence or conflict which by so doing creates a conducive environment for growth and development processes to thrive. Conflict and violence-prone contexts such as those in which FPFK operates, are characterised by a breakdown of systems and structures that support development, with communities losing livelihoods as conflicting sides seek to weaken one another. Extended cycles of conflict and violence elicit untold suffering and traumas that compromise people's sense of initiative and an acceptance of status quo as the normal way of life- the abnormal becomes the normal. The communities in the areas visited during the study attest to celebrations after successful cattle raids oblivious of some of the raiders who may have been killed and never returned is a confirmation of this view.

It is against this background that FPFK integrates its EWS with development programming. Such development programmes provide alternatives to livelihoods which replace cattle raids. Community conversations during the implementation of these programmes provide platforms for challenging conflict and violence as ways of life. The design of these programmes is made in such a way that it addresses root causes of conflict and violence. For instance, conflicts over water sources are addressed through sinking boreholes to provide water for animals and domestic use so that one side of the conflict actors does not have to cross over to the other side in search of such a need. The church through its development programming, has mobilized scores of young men, previously involved in cattle rustling, and provided them with skills for farming and income generating activities. Women too, who have played active roles in motivating the young men to go to war and even prepared food for them, are also being mobilized and supported to take up alternative sources of livelihoods. This category of people has become great assets in the community and form an important part of the EWS as community peace representatives and ambassadors. Muhoroni is one of the communities where FPFK works. Located in Kisumu County, and bordering Nandi and Kericho counties, the area has had a history of cattle raiding among the different ethnic groups but due to the operationalization of the EWS, the number of cattle reported stolen has dropped drastically over the last three years from an average of thirty (30) to just one (1) per month, with most months reporting zero thefts.

Cross-community projects provide opportunities for dialogue across conflict lines while planning and implementing these projects. With such projects, management committees that comprise members from both sides of the conflict divide, ensure that the communities focus on the greater good. Such initiatives give strength to the EWS as perceptions of biases in targeting during response are addressed amicably.

- **Engagement and collaboration with state security agencies**

It is the responsibility of every government to provide safety and security of its citizens and their property through their security structures. However in conflict and violence prone communities, sometimes state security actors may be limited to effectively act due to incapacity to access the necessary information upon which they can act. While response capacities exist within every community, such as through elders and religious leaders, there are certain levels that call for state security intervention, especially those that require some level of force and ammunition. FPFK have not only brought the security agencies into the system for forceful response and whenever use of ammunition is called for, but collaborate with them in community dialogues that promote law and order as a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Collaboration with government agencies has enhanced trust and confidence in the work of FPFK and in their EWS especially in the reliability of the early warning information being reported. This collaboration has helped even improve further, the quality of reporting and the reliability of the early warning information. Periodic review meetings that bring together FPFK staff and all other stakeholders of the EWS enable learning and identification of gaps in the system and remedial measures. This has been largely responsible for the progressive improvement in the impact of the system as evidenced in the drop in cases of conflict and violence in target communities. This collaboration also provides a foundation for advocacy in placing the government in its duty bearer role of ensuring peace and security for all its citizens. Being part of the system, it is easy for the state officers involved to see the value and continue operationalizing the system and even replicating it in other parts of the country. Although this is yet to be fully achieved from the FPFK EWS, the attitude and appreciation government officers have

towards the system is an indication that it is an initiative they would recommend for replication and/or scaling up for other similar contexts.

- **Use of digital tools and early warning information management**

The FPFK EWS is an Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) based system that relies heavily on digital tools for information sharing. With a control centre located centrally, all early warning information is relayed by field peace monitors from all work locations and processed for further submission to respective response teams. The field peace monitors use simple mobile cell phones to type and submit information that is received and processed at a central server. Coding is provided with each piece of information to identify its category and urgency for action. This is then reflected at the central server and using both artificial and human intelligence, this information is processed and forwarded to the response teams. At the server or control room, the technical officer processing this information may call to verify certain details or seek more information as may deem necessary before channelling it on. The system is designed in such a way that when relayed, several response teams instantly receive the information. This has aided the speed at which response is made given that the need for explanation from one person to or with the other is limited at this stage. The old analogue reporting was to have monitors walk to local chiefs' offices to report, a process that took too long and often exposed the monitors to risks of lynching as perpetrators got to know who was responsible for sharing the information. The ICT based system ensures anonymity of the sources of early warning information, with communities only learning of response when it happens. Thus with the digital tools, information sharing and response happen in real time and enables quick aversion of possible conflicts and violence among and between conflicting community groups.

- **The role of the church and pastors**

One of the major responsibilities of the church and the pastors, in particular, is to bring healing to broken communities. Often areas of worship are considered safe spaces for victims of violence as they flee after their homes become insecure due to violence. Pastors however, are also part of the communities in conflict and often belong to one or another of these communities. In conflict contexts, it is not enough for pastors to be neutral but should be seen as such by all sides if they have to be trusted in highly charged environments where their words and actions are being monitored from all quarters. Pastors form part of the community response mechanism in the FPFK EWS and have been trained alongside others on how to discharge this role. Biblical reflections are offered in the training of pastors and they are allowed to spur on one another across ethnic and other conflict divides in their effort to remain neutral responders to conflict and violence.

Pastors also play a critical role in recommending those that are brought into the platform of Community Peace Representatives and in continuous engagement with communities on peace education. They are considered a structure for sustaining peace through peace messaging beyond the EWS and social ministry interventions. This is a high expectation on pastors that call for their neutral and practise of love beyond ethnic and other identity boundaries. The Social Ministry department of the FPFK engages with pastors on the EWS against this background and understanding and so far, they have remained an important part of the system.

- **Trauma healing as integral part of the EWS**

Conflict, and especially intractable conflict, leaves untold destruction and suffering of affected communities. When exposed to years of conflict, local people develop different forms and types of trauma that are evident in their ways of life and interpretation of what happens around them. They tend to accept what would naturally be considered abnormal as normal. This in turn destroys their inherent human capacities compromising their very survival techniques. The FPFK EWS is cognisant of this fact and through the pastors, has incorporated a trauma healing response in the locations where they work. The need for trauma healing however remains huge and may be overwhelming for the few pastors against the diverse locations of FPFK program delivery. Interviews with some of the pastors also revealed that they are equally affected by the trauma since they are also caught up in the conflicts and

suffer loss just like the rest of the community members. Yet community expectations on them remain high and they have to still bring the much needed hope to these communities despite their very own emotional and psycho-social needs. They are a case of the “wounded healers” who continue to suffer silently even as they go about the business of healing others. Despite this challenge, the pastors’ role in helping transform local people’s traumas has been critical in limiting polarization of communities in the wake of violent conflicts and has contributed to a slowing down of retaliatory attacks. In one community, the community Peace Representatives called for opening up of more churches in some locations based on what they had experienced with areas where FPFK had established churches. One lady said,

“We think FPFK should also bring the church in our community because, we have observed that where there is their church, people’s attitudes towards one another have greatly changed and there is more love even for those from the other community. I think this is because of the teachings that go on in the churches...”

5.1.2 Challenges faced in the development and operationalization of EWS and remedial measures.

Whereas the FPFK EWS has been a great success and model for many to learn from, it has not been without challenges. The system remains work in progress with improvements being made on it every other time as new lessons are learned from its operationalization. The study established the following challenges with the EWS and how the FPFK are addressing them.

- **Authenticity and reliability of some of the early warning information**

There have been isolated cases where information shared from the field was not authentic. During an interview with one of the responders, it was shared how early warning information was shared about an attack planning meeting was taking place at a spot not far from where he was. He quickly mobilized his response team to the place but on arriving there, it was confirmed that while indeed a meeting was going on, it had nothing to do with what was reported. Another challenge with authentication and reliability of early warning information has to do with some sources. Some of the traditional early warning signs have been manipulated leading to misinformation. While elders have been respected over the years and their information relied on, there are emerging trends where some of the elders today are guided by selfish aims in sharing information. A case was shared where some elders ask for animals to be slaughtered so that they can observe the intestines as has traditionally been done to ascertain an impending attack only to discover later that the information later shared was not reliable.

To address this challenge, FPFK EWS is designed with multiple sources of information and analysts at the control centre cross check with other sources in the area, especially for extremely sensitive early warning information. Training of peace monitors has also been designed to address or minimize this challenge. During such training, peace monitors are advised to work in pairs or groups so that if one hears of anything at a particular spot and is not close to it, he or she would alert the other colleague to verify before it is relayed to the control centre for sharing with response teams.

- **Literacy levels of some of the peace monitors**

Conflicts affect learning and most conflict prone areas are also characterized by low literacy levels. Some of the early warning information shared from the field is poorly typed due to this challenge and cannot be interpreted due to literacy challenges of some of the peace monitors. The peace monitors are expected to remain anonymous and so cannot reach out to other members of the community to type information for them on their cell phones as this would expose them. Some call counterparts in neighbouring communities to report on their behalf but this in itself can easily compromise the precision of the information being shared as these others are far from the scenes.

To address this challenge, information received that is not clear to the data analysts, is followed by physical phone calls to the peace monitors to seek clarification.

- **Network coverage versus timely sharing of early warning information and response.**

Some of the areas where FPFK operates are poorly served by the mobile telephone operator, Safaricom, with whom, FPFK have a contract. There are locations that are served by other networks and some that have no signal at all from all current mobile telephone networks. This means that peace monitors who face this challenge have to move away from the information spots to locations where they can find signal. This sometimes takes long for information to be relayed resulting in late responses. Such delays hinder effective aversion of possible threats and acts of aggression.

To alleviate this challenge, FPFK are considering diversifying their mobile telephone operators. Other options such as use of satellite phones exist but they are expensive and may even pose a bigger challenge for the field teams with low literacy levels.

- **Motivation and sustenance of commitment from volunteer peace monitors**

Sustaining the commitment and interest of peace monitors poses a challenge to any EWS, and FPFK are not an exception. Monetary payment is not sustainable and could also lead to undue competition for these roles which may divide groups even further. It is also just not the best form of reward as those paid seek more and more pay as years go by. The focus also tends to shift from the value of role to benefit that accrues through such monetary payments, and thus weakens adversely this critical part of the EWS.

The study established that early warning information in some areas had for some time not been relayed from the peace monitors in some areas. In one FGD with peace monitors, it was revealed that the long break in communication with office staff and control centre teams had demotivated the peace monitors and thus the lapse in submission of early warning information. While this was out of the control of the staff, as it had been occasioned by the outbreak of COVID 19 which led to limited movement and a slowdown in program operations, at the community level, this was not understood as such.

The FPFK EWS has sought to address this challenge by ensuring they have in place, a vetting mechanism that ensures only self-driven people who appreciate their role as contributing to a conducive environment for growth and development are brought on board as volunteers. Indeed most of the peace monitors articulated how they are motivated by changing the history of their communities that has been characterised by loss of human lives and destruction of property, leaving traumatized families in the past. Poverty and underdevelopment of these communities compared to thriving neighbouring ones was clearly linked to years of conflict and violence which is now changing through the work they do. This understanding of the connection between poverty and conflict, coupled with personal experiences of loss from past conflicts and violence came out as major sources for motivation on the part of the peace monitors. FPFK also holds periodic review meetings to spur on the volunteers and provide space for sharing of experience from one another across locations which further motivates them.

- **Ensuring and sustaining neutrality of reports from the field and response from locally based authorities, including pastors.**

An effective EWS should go beyond just being neutral in so far as early warning information gathered and response are both unbiased. This should also be perceived by local people from across conflict divides as being neutral. Any wrong victimization of a section based on biased reporting or failure to respond to an incidence because of alignment to the aggressor side can be devastating and a serious demotivation for participation in the system. Often there is a risk of local peace monitors and local response teams such as the local chiefs and pastors to be compromised, because they are linked to conflict sides and a part of the local cultural beliefs and practices. Cultural factors may also limit reporting, especially for GBV due to the likely stigma associated with such reporting. In Kenya, pastoral communities where FPFK runs most of their programmes have deep seated cultural beliefs and practices that are continually being addressed and which have sustained this status quo. Remoteness of most of these communities and their closed nature has made it difficult for authorities to effectively address these issues. FPFK through its church structure, has greatly penetrated these communities, making it easier to run programs there and integrate them in to the EWS. As has been reported earlier

in this report, there have been isolated cases of biased or failed reporting from some of the field locations.

Local administrators, who are part of the response team and who are locals drawn from the communities have however pose a challenge in effective response since their allegiance is divided between government and their own ethnic communities. Thus whereas many of them have discharged their duties well, there have been considerable incidences where their seniors within the administration have found them to be an impediment to the process, as they alert attack planners within their communities. FPFK continues to address this challenge through continuous engagement with the peace monitors and local responders and has also drawn great lessons for scaling the system in other areas of their operation.

5.1.3 Risk factors in EWS and remedial measures

The study revealed three main risk factors in the establishment and operationalization of EWS

- **Risk of exposure of reporters**

The anonymity of peace monitors/field surveillance teams who report early warning information remains an issue that cannot be compromised if an Early Warning System has to deliver on its objectives. Exposure of this category of people can easily lead targeting and physical lynching from planners and executors of violence. This targeting and lynching can also go beyond them as individuals to include their families and allies within the community. This could eventually escalate into another bad conflict and hence lengthen the cycle of violence.

To mitigate this risk, every effort to ensure the anonymity of local peace monitors and surveillance teams should be made and provided for within the design, planning and operationalization of the EWS.

- **Risk of misinformation**

Early Warning and Early Response systems rely on early warning information which is the input component. The analysis and response is based on what comes from the field. It is therefore important that this information is authentic and verifiable. Misinformation leads to poor response and a lack of trust and confidence in the system that would also imply demotivation from other sources to share what is captured from their locations and thus a grounding of the system. Misinformation could also happen at the analysis stage. Data analysis at the control centre thus equally needs to be held in utmost professionalism and relay capacity enhanced to facilitate quick response to avert possible situations of conflict and violence. A basic principle on information for EWS is that it should be simple and easy to use.

- **Risk of system collapse**

ICT based EWS such as is run by FPFK is based on technology that uses electronic equipment for processing, storage and transmission of information. This indeed, is the “brain” of the system. Like any other electronic gadgets, such equipment could crash due to over-load or other factors or even be destroyed or stolen by enemies of the system. Such an occurrence would imply total disconnection and a disruption in early warning information communication and response. To mitigate such risk, it is important to have a back-up plan and consider storing alternative server in remote location like FPFK have done. Furthermore, the EWS system operated by the FPFK can both work online and offline, making it accessible anywhere whether with internet access or not. Like any other online based system, the FPFK EWS is vulnerable to malware or any other form of malicious software attacks but so far it has proved a fairly reliable platform for information storage, processing and dissemination.

5.2 Feasibility

The feasibility part of the study sought to draw lessons about variations of approaches working with EWS especially for religious actors and FBOs with specific emphasis on the challenges and opportunities for these actors to develop a working EWS in different local contexts. For this part of the study, the study team incorporated an interview with a representative from the Pentecostal Church in

Burundi (CEPBU), one of PMU partners in the region. CEPBU has a national coverage with structures running down to local communities. The Church is currently implementing relief and development projects and has just recently introduced a peace project to respond to recurrent conflict and violence with the aim of creating a peace culture in schools, communities and families. Salient differences between the context in Burundi and Kenya is that whereas Kenya has several ethnic identities, more than forty, Burundi has only three ethnic groups. A fusion of resources and political intolerance are similar factors for most conflicts in both countries as tensions tend to heighten around electioneering periods. The expectations on the church in both countries are the same, including providing hope and alternative spaces of safety during violent clashes between groups. Like in the case of FPFK in Kenya, CEPBU pastors are working closely with government in responding to conflict and violence. For CEPBU however, they are in the initial stages of developing an EWER system given that their Peace project is just a few months old by the time of the study. Currently the pastors work with community peace groups which have been created to monitor and report incidences to local authorities for response and lead initiatives at addressing poverty which is considered a major cause of intergroup conflict in the country. A strong partnership exists between the Church and authorities in Burundi and information flows both ways in an endeavor to avert intercommunity conflicts and create safer communities for development to thrive.

5.2.1 Lessons learned

The Church and Faith based Organizations often have a holistic responsibility in the areas they operate. They are perceived by local people that go beyond their immediate congregational members as providers of solutions to all the challenges they face. This is not just an expectation from the community but actually the vocation of the Church and of the FBOs as all draw from the teachings of the holy books. For the Church and Christian FBOs, it is the Bible that informs their work and the teachings of Jesus Christ that confirm this vocation. Effective Church and FBO programming therefore calls for flexibility and ability to adjust to prevailing needs of the people in a holistic manner. In contexts of conflict, those affected run to them to seek refuge. This overwhelming demand on the Church and the FBOs calls for them to actively engage in processes and interventions that prevent occurrence and escalation of violence, including establishing and/or being part of existing conflict early warning systems.

The study established the following lessons for feasibility:

- **Contextualization and adaptation of EWS**

The Horn of Africa has, and continues to experience many conflicts that are similar in nature. They mainly present strong ethnic or clan identities and center around resource distribution and boundary disputes. The political class has on the other manipulated these identities and divisions to weep up emotions and create narratives that make communities perceive others as their worst enemies responsible for their incapacity to access these resources, power and influence. Often this is unfounded and aimed at selfish gains of the political class but the results have been bloody conflicts that have led to massive displacements and loss of lives and property.

Whereas these similarities exist, there are also very unique underlying factors for conflict for each specific context. Conflict early warning indicators also vary from one region to another, even within the same country, as was confirmed from the FPFK EWS study itself. Thus whereas the basic principles for EWS establishment that is anchored on the three components-input, control and output remain, effective application of EWS calls for thorough context analysis and eventual adaptation to prevailing local realities. This explains the success of the FPFK EWS success in successive locations. Contextualization also calls for continuous analysis as conflicts are dynamic and contexts change every other period depending on prevailing circumstances.

- **The critical role of state security actors for both conflict and GBV**

Security is a function of every state. Unfortunately some states have failed the citizens and been involved in supporting conflict sides. The power of perceptions normally comes out strongly on this factor. Sometimes it is not really the intention of the state to wage war against one side of a conflict but intelligence information being gathered and reported may reflect one side of the conflict as the

aggressors and the other side as the victims. In such a situation, the state may act on what it gets without knowing that the information it is working on is skewed. The lowest level of security information gathering is the community based local administrators for the case of Kenya and indeed, many of the countries in the horn of Africa. However as has been discussed earlier in this report, some of these administrators may be inclined to their ethnic sides and participate in misinformation that leads to poor response. It is therefore critical that an EWS is established in such a way that the church and the FBOs work closely with state security teams to authenticate information gathered and reported and the response. This is also critical in situations where the needed response is of the nature of armed security operation.

Collaboration with government authorities ensures that the necessary and authentic information is gathered and relayed in good time for the security actors to work on and avert possible worsening of a situation. This includes conflict, GBV, drug abuse and based on the findings, it can also be useful for averting incidences of female genital mutilation (FGM) which is a high risk practice still prevalent in many cultures despite local and international statutes that prohibit it. With well-trained monitors on the ground, such information can be relayed to relevant responders and thwarted on time.

- **Conflict sensitivity in EWS design and operationalization**

It is important that peace monitors and community peace representatives understand and appreciate the consequences of their reports. It is also important that they are aware that the overall goal of their work is to create peaceful and cohesive communities conducive for mutual support towards development and growth. This too, applies to the staff and both community and state response teams. Decisions and actions of all these actors sometimes compromise this very goal, even though they may be well-intentioned. This gap can be filled through training in conflict sensitive programming and the Do No Harm approach to create this understanding. It is therefore critical that those involved in the EWS operationalization are sensitized on conflict sensitive reporting and programming.

- **Capacity building for religious leaders and community peace representatives**

The study revealed that gaps in knowledge and skills necessary for religious leaders and FBO staff in peacebuilding and conflict mitigation and trauma informed resilience and reconciliation can affect the success of interventions and the operationalization of the EWS, especially given that they form an important part of the local response mechanism. Pastors are often considered as holding knowledge to address every challenge that comes their way. This is far from the truth and although most of them receive extensive training in theological colleges, local conflict contexts present unique challenges that call for continuous training and exposure to new knowledge. On job training for FBO staff too is equally helpful through workshops in relevant capacity areas. Peace monitors and community peace representatives also need to be sensitized on relevant aspects through training and exposure or learning visits with other contexts.

- **Response capacities should aim for conflict transformation**

An Early Warning and Early Response system should aim to go beyond prevention to transformation. To ensure that this happens, the system should have an inbuilt mechanism for broader community conversations on the issues that it seeks to address. This presents a critical area for the Church to engage. Together with other local peace and GBV prevention structures, pastors can initiate and facilitate community dialogues to begin addressing structural causes of conflict and violence and bring in state security actors from time to time. Anchoring these dialogues on national policy provisions beefs up their relevance and support from state institutions.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

6.1 Recommendations

The study established that the FPFK EWS can be enhanced further with additional improvements and minor adjustments summarised in the recommendations below. These recommendations also speak to other churches and faith based organizations seeking to implement an early warning system for enhanced service delivery in conflict and post-conflict environments and GBV prone contexts.

6.1.1 Motivation of peace monitors and community peace representatives

It is important that a vetting process that ensures only committed volunteers are identified and recruited as peace monitors and community peace representatives. Such people should be guided by the desire to serve and contribute voluntarily to the creation of peaceful and cohesive communities. While this has largely been achieved, this vetting process needs to be broadened and given time. Staff should interact with proposed volunteers adequately beyond formal workshops and recommendations from pastors to establish their suitability.

The current level of motivation of these volunteers also need to be more creative to include more non-monetary benefits such as extra learning opportunities including refresher workshops, exchanges with other peace monitors from other locations, engaging them in social events such as team building activities and issuance of recognition awards in ways that does not expose their roles to local communities. Voluntarism should however been applied with caution. In cases where for instance, peace monitors have to spend to access locations in order for them to provide authentic information, there is need to have an understanding on what should be compensated for such expenses. This particularly becomes critical during heightened tensions and rampant violence between groups such as is experienced during elections in many countries in Africa. In such incidences, early warning information requires that monitors are enabled to move around in their surveillance work and this needs to be factored in project plans and communicated well with the respective teams so that it does not discourage the spirit of volunteerism which is more sustainable while at the same time, it does not kill their morale to work because they lack the tools to discharge such duties.

6.1.2 Capacity building in Conflict sensitive programming/Do No Harm and reconciliation

There is need to build capacity of staff and volunteers including pastors and other church leaders in conflict sensitive programming. This is important to inform their actions and decisions while engaging communities in conflict. While effort is made currently by these teams to observe conflict-sensitivity, it is based on individual attitude and behaviour and work experience. Training on the Do No Harm approach will provide a systematic analysis of how interventions interact with conflict and how resources being given to the community through relief and development work, and the actions of staff could inadvertently fuel tensions and even create new ones that never existed. Further, a systematic analysis and understanding of how each of the members of the Community Peace Representatives' behaviour, attitudes and actions can affect local conflict context will help them discharge their duties in ways that enhance peace and cohesion more as opposed to driving wedges in already tense situations, which often happen inadvertently. This understanding will greatly enhance the operationalization of the EWS and improve programming in the target communities.

Pastors play a critical role in reconciling warring groups. Unfortunately, often they are left to use their intuition and experience to carry out this delicate process. Whereas character, experience and people skills are important for effective facilitation of reconciliation processes, reconciliation requires special skills that come with training and practice. Pastors will need to go through training in reconciliation and empowered with knowledge and skills in dealing with difficult situations and other aspects of reconciliation that could expose them to risk of drain and mental breakdowns. The assumption that pastors are strong and can cope with any situation is not true and many communities, guided by this

belief have heaped so much on the pastors than they can carry. This limits capacity of pastors in difficult contexts such as conflict prone ones to effectively discharge their roles.

6.1.3 Trauma healing interventions

Early warning information gathering and reporting brings peace monitors to real time experience of conflict and violence. Exposure through scenes of planning and execution as they seek to capture and share early warning information exposes them to traumatic experiences throughout the course of their work. The pastors and other community response units involved in working with and hosting victims of violence also encounter situations that sometimes break their mental and emotional coping capacities. The study established that indeed during times of destructive violence and confrontation, the community volunteer monitors and response teams are often caught up in the violence that leaves trails of emotional wounds which they clearly share through interviews. They may not understand what they are experiencing but this continued exposure places them at serious emotional drain that can be difficult to cope with. The study team therefore recommends intentional and structured trauma healing work to be incorporated in the design and operationalization of any EWS.

6.1.4 Review the role of local administrators in EWS

In the current FPFK EWS set up, local chiefs are considered alongside other state security structures as early responders and so like, the other structures such as Assistant County Commissioners (ACC), Deputy County Commissioners (DCC), County Commissioners (CC) and Officers Commanding Police Stations (OCS), they also receive alerts that call for quick response which is often characterized by armed security operation. The study revealed that chiefs have used such alerts to frustrate response by sharing information with attack planning groups from their ethnic sides beforehand. There have even been incidences where when asked to verify such information, they gave conflicting informing consequently aiding attack planning and executions.

Chiefs are best suited to facilitate dialogues within their jurisdictions, which will minimize the urge for attacks and revenge attacks.

6.2 Conclusion

The FPFK Early Warning and Early Response System presents a successful and useful model for replication by agencies and actors seeking to effectively prevent conflict and gender based violence among other related vices within the community. The system is a product of research and years of testing and improvement. It is unique in the sense that it provides what the church and faith based organizations can do in prevention of conflict and violence including gender based violence.

The EWS provides an infrastructure that is helpful for a cross section of actors in the areas of operation, including state security actors, civil society groups, faith based organizations and the church. It has also promoted collaboration among various agencies and effective coordination of conflict and GBV prevention initiatives in FPFK target communities. The government has hailed the system and FPFK for the initiative which has contributed to drastically reduced conflicts in the areas where it is operationalized. Often EWS systems have been perceived as a preserve of governments and regional or global bodies such as the Inter-governmental Authority and Development (IGAD) and the United Nations (UN) but this system has challenged this position and proved that the church and FBOs can equally play a role in EWS establishment and operationalization for safer and secure communities.

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Annexes

Annex 1: List of interviewees

Key Informant Interviews

- i. Social Ministry Coordinator-M
- ii. EWS System Operator and Data analyst-M
- iii. Officer Commanding Police Station- Kainuk-M
- iv. Chief- Amolem Location-M
- v. Pastor Mt. Elgon-M
- vi. Project Leader-Peace and Rights Project- F
- vii. Pastor- Turkana/West Pokot-M
- viii. CEPBU Representative-M
- ix. FPFK Project Coordinator Kisumu-M
- x. Project support staff- driver-M

Focus Group Discussions

- i. Turkana-Pokot Peace and Livelihoods program staff- 3 (Males)
- ii. Peace monitors Turkana 3 (M2, F1)
- iii. Peace monitors West Pokot- 5 (M2, F3)
- iv. Community Peace Representatives and Peace monitors- Mt Elgon.- 5 (M3, F2)

Annex 2: List Secondary Data Sources

- i. FPFK November, 2020 Report on the Turkana Pokot Peace and Livelihood Project
- ii. FPFK September Field Visit report on Setting up the EWS system - Turkana Pokot Peace and Livelihood Project
- iii. FPFK Turkana Pokot Peace and Livelihood Project Progress Report: June/Aug 2020

Annex 3: Study tool

a) FPFK STAFF (PM/PB CT Project officers)

Context analysis, staff experience

1. How long have you worked in this area?
2. Please explain the context in which you work- types of conflict, risks, actors, root causes and triggers.
3. When was the EWS developed? What informed/motivated its development?
4. Explain the formation process-who was involved and what was their role? (Probe for inclusion and representation, participation. What is your role as staff?)
5. Orientation- were you given sufficient orientation to work in this area? Explain?
6. How do you recruit staff and volunteers who work in this context? (Probe for ethnic considerations when recruiting volunteers, drivers, etc.)
7. How do you induct new staff and volunteers upon recruitment to work here?
8. How is conflict sensitivity applied in the development and operationalization of the EWS?

Information gathering, dissemination, processing and response

9. How is Early Warning data collected and disseminated? (Probe for tools used, levels of data collection and those involved?)
10. Which digital tools are used in the EWS? How are they used? How are they procured and maintained?
11. What challenges have you experienced with the use of digital tools? How have you overcome them? (Remoteness of communities, network coverage, cost, capacity of users)
12. What are the different types and levels of response and who (Institution and individuals) is involved at each level? What are their specific response capacities and challenges
13. Describe the interface between the (warners) and (responders)?
14. What are the risks associated with information gathering and sharing? How are they mitigated?
15. To what extent has the EWS addressed the challenges and risks it was established to address?
16. Which resources were involved? How much and how?
17. How does the EWS address the specific needs of men, women and youth in the context? How was/is each of these groups involved?

Collaboration and networking

18. How do you work with other agencies in this area on EWS?
19. What value has this brought to your/their work and to the EWS?
20. What challenges, if any have you faced working with these agencies? What opportunities do you see?

Community engagement and participation

21. How is/was the community involved?
22. What motivates their participation? (Information sharing, etc)
23. Have you carried out any trauma healing initiatives in the target communities? If yes, briefly explain the process. How has this contributed to the success (or challenges) of the EWS. How is trauma healing an important aspect of the EWS?
24. What mechanisms have you put in place to ensure that the EWS is sustainable beyond current project?
25. Which county and national government structures do you engage under the EWS and how?
26. Who utilizes the EWS? How? How do the utilizers ensure the EWS is sustainable?
27. Challenges faced in the development and operationalization of the EWS.

Working with pastors

28. Describe your engagement with pastors on the EWS? How do you select them? Their role and Value added?
29. Have pastors been trained in CS/GBV? If yes, how has this knowledge been utilized for the operationalization of the EWS?
30. What challenges have you experienced working with pastors in the operationalization of the EWS? (Community perceptions, link to conflict sides, capacity issues)

31. How have you mitigated them?

Adaptability/ replication across various contexts

32. What do you consider as factors for effective establishment of a EWS?

33. Why may it be easy in one context and challenging in another?

34. How would you rate the response capacity at: community level (Explain), Government level (Explain) to early warning information disseminated?

35. What challenges have you faced in developing and operationalizing the EWS? How did you overcome them?

36. How do you achieve (Perception of) neutrality, inclusivity and reliability of the EWS across the ethnic (or other group) divides? How are target communities engaged?

37. What have been your best and worst moments working with EWS?

38. Who else utilizes the EWS and how?

39. Any recommendations to enhance the EWS, capacity building needs?

Peace committee/Elders

40. How were you selected to be part of the EWS?

41. What is your role in the EWS?

42. How effective have you been in executing this role?

43. What has been your best moment working with the EWS?

44. Explain how the EWS works?

45. How does the EWS capture or represent the interest of all groups in these contexts. (Ethnic groups, religious groups, civil society groups, youth, women and men etc.)

Peace Monitors/Chiefs/ACCs

46. Role in the development and operationalization of the EWS

47. How does the EWS link with and into the national peace building and conflict prevention mechanism?

48. How is Early Warning information relayed, processed and responded to at their level?

49. How effective is the EWS in promoting peace and co-existence across the different groups (Ethnic)?

50. How does the EWS address the different interests of women, youth and men across the different groups?

51. How is neutrality achieved in the EWS? (Even with perception) Peoples confidence in the EWS

52. What was the situation like before the establishment of the EWS? How is it now? Explain the changes?

53. What can be improved? Why? How?

54. Challenges experienced with the EWS.

55. How is information and those who share it protected?

Women/Youth

56. Describe the situation before the establishment of the EWS and now. What specific issues have been addressed?
57. Role played in the development of EWS and its execution?
58. How has the EWS facilitated and /or strengthened cohesion among them and across ethnic groups?
59. Sustainability of the EWS beyond FPFK work in the area
60. How has the EWS addressed traumas from the past experiences of war and other natural disasters?
61. How is information and its dissemination protected?
62. What needs to be improved to enhance the benefits of the EWS to the women, youth and general communities?

Feasibility (additional questions)

63. Describe your work context? (Conflict and violence issues, actors included)
64. What are your current interventions in these areas?
65. How does government respond to these issues of conflict and violence in your area?
66. How does the church/faith community respond to these issues?
67. How does the church/faith community collaborate with government on these issues?
68. How pastors / other religious leaders linked to conflict sides? Is it an issue that requires addressing?
69. Do you have an early warning system in place or have you ever attempted to initiate one before? What challenges did you experience?
70. Do you see any opportunities for establishing a EWS? Explain? (Probe for capacity building, digital tools and government good will)
71. Have you and the rest of the staff and pastors been trained in CS? If yes, how has the Knowledge been utilized?