DAMAGE COMPENSATION AND HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA

Susan Wanja Njora.
Student, Master of Public Policy and Administration, Kenyatta University, Kenya.
Patrick Mbataru Nyambari.
Lecturer Department of Public Policy and Administration, Kenyatta University, Kenya.

©2026

International Academic Journal of Law and Society (IAJLS) | ISSN 2519-772X

Received: 19th October 2026

Published: 14th November 2026

Full Length Research

Available Online at: https://iajournals.org/articles/iajls_v1_i3_188_207.pdf

Citation: Njora, S. W., Nyambari, P. M. (2026). Damage compensation and human-wildlife conflict resolution in Laikipia county, Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Law and Society, 1*(3), 188-207.

ABSTRACT

Human- wildlife conflict is a global problem. Balancing the needs of a rising population with the conservation of bio-diversity make it more urgent to understand the continuously changing dynamics of human–wildlife relationships. This study aimed at adding to the growing academic interest in human-wildlife conflict. It investigated the effects of damage compensation on human-wildlife conflict resolution in Laikipia County, Kenya, an area characterized by increasing human-wildlife interactions due to expanding agricultural activities and the encroachment of human settlements into wildlife habitats. The study had two objectives: examining the effect of timing of disbursement of damage compensation funds on human-wildlife conflict resolution and determining the effect of adequacy of damage compensation funds. It was informed by the Social Equity Theory. It adopted a descriptive survey research design that allowed for mixed (quantitative and qualitative) methodologies. The target population were 406 individuals comprising of farmers, pastoralists, local authorities, government representatives and representatives of non-government organizations engaged in wildlife conservation and compensation programs. The sample size were 198 individuals arrived at through stratified random sampling. A structured survey questionnaire that captured primary data on respondents' experiences was distributed to them. In addition, key informant interviews were done, to provide in-depth data and insights into the broader socio-economic implications of compensation practices and their effectiveness in resolving human-wildlife conflicts. The instruments were subjected to expert assessment to enhance their validity. Pilot testing was conducted to determine their reliability and effectiveness in measuring the desired variables. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics, supported by SPSS version 24, a statistical package for the social sciences. Moreover, qualitative data were analyzed thematically to supplement quantitative data interpretation. This study found that wildlife damage compensation in Laikipia County is undermined by administrative delays, weak communication, inadequate and uncertain funding, and inconsistent application of equity, which collectively erode trust and limit conflict resolution effectiveness. The empirical analysis revealed that timeliness and adequacy of compensation, and not just fairness, greatly affect the resolution of human-wildlife conflicts. The measures to remedy the identified shortcomings include digitization and simplification of the process of filing claims, establishing definite deadlines for the provision of services, communication improvements, financial sustainability, valuation criteria standardization, and the integration of compensation with the conflict prevention program. The findings from the above study can be used not only in Laikipia county but also in other areas that experience human-wildlife conflicts. The findings will contribute to the establishment of harmonious co-existence between humans and animals.

Keywords: damage compensation and human-wildlife conflict resolution.

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts between humans and wildlife affect many parts of the world. Recent years, there have been more incidents of human-wildlife conflict, causing livestock, crops, and, in some cases, deaths among humans. Human-wildlife conflict arises when people and wildlife interact negatively, it can result in harm to property, livestock, crops, or even human injury or death (Mekonen, 2020). The conflict between conservation efforts and human livelihoods is made worse by the fact that humans frequently take punitive acts in response to this complicated dynamic, such as poaching or habitat degradation.

Globally, compensation schemes are adopted to mitigate human–wildlife conflict through alleviation of financial burdens and by fostering coexistence (König, Kiffner, Kramer-Schadt, Fürst, Keuling, & Ford, 2020). These mechanisms reimburse affected individuals and communities who suffer wildlife-induced losses. In India, the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1972 provided conservation and compensation frameworks for damages caused by species such as tigers and elephants (Srikanth, Das, Elangbam, Singh, & Rafiq, 2023). Nevertheless, the problem of bureaucratic inefficiency, late payment, and underpayment affects the effectiveness of the law (Rosenbloom, Kravchuk, & Clerkin, 2022). In the same way, National Law No. 157/1992 of Italy provides compensation for damages resulting from the damage by protected animals, including bears and wolves (Cardarelli, Calaciura, Zaghi, & Bogliani.

Wolf compensation schemes exist in various locations within the United States and are facilitated through government agencies and organizations dedicated to the environment (Richardson, 2022). The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 is a federal act that helps in protecting endangered species in America and offers ways to compensate ranchers for damage caused by the species. An example of such scheme is California's Wolf-Livestock Compensation Pilot Program where ranchers are paid in case of any confirmed wolf depredation. This policy tool is meant to help in changing public perception about wolves as well as reduce costs faced by ranchers.

Given that Africa has a rich variety of biodiversity as well as a reliance on agriculture and cattle, damage compensation programs play a significant role in managing human-wildlife conflicts. Among the measures to address crop destruction and animal losses from the activities of elephants in Botswana is an elephant damage compensation program in Botswana. This program was established by virtue of the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act of 1992 (Blackie & Sowa, 2019). Inefficiencies such as the presence of too many administrative fees and delayed payments affect the effectiveness of this program to minimize retaliatory killings and coexistence.

The CBNRM strategy adopted in Namibia through the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1975 integrates wildlife damage compensation into larger conservation plans (Mbidzo, Newing, & Thorn, 2021). As a result, Musavengane & Kloppers plan to enhance wildlife tolerance by using and benefiting from their natural resources (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020). In South Africa, the provincial governments in cooperation with the NEMBA 2004 compensate farmers

whose livestock have been killed by predators like lions and leopards (de Waal, 2021). Although there have been some positive outcomes, various obstacles still prevail.

There is a pressing need to resolve conflicts between humans and wildlife (Matusal, Megaze, & Dobamo, 2023). Despite this, payment schemes are crucial for solving these issues. For example, in Tanzania, farmers whose crops have been destroyed due to elephant attacks receive compensation paid by foreign organizations and the government (Kegamba, Sangha, Wurm, Meitamei, Tiotem, & Garnett, 2024). In particular, the Wildlife Conservation Act 2009 gives detailed instructions on this project and on how damages that were caused by wild animals, including elephants, should be paid (Anthony, 2021). However, the affected communities are still dissatisfied due to delayed payments and poor compensation, despite all these payment provisions.

In Uganda, there is an agency called the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) which operates a compensation scheme for damage to crops and livestock caused by wildlife, especially lions and elephants (Lenhart, 2023). Even though this program has shown excellent results, it still encounters obstacles including low budget and lengthy bureaucracy. Improving the program's funding sources and reducing administrative procedures are critical to raising its efficacy. On the other hand, Rwanda's compensation scheme for crop losses brought on by gorillas, which is financed by tourism-related gorilla trekking, has shown to be reasonably effective (Rwigema, 2021). The benefits of integrating compensation programs with sustainable tourism are illustrated by the fact that tourism earnings guarantee sufficient funds for compensation.

According to Kenya's Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, damage caused by wildlife is controlled through a comprehensive framework (Otianga-Owiti, Okori, Nyamasyo, & Amwata, 2021). This program, which is run by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), provides compensation for a range of losses, including livestock and crop losses, human injuries, and wildlife-related deaths (Manoa, Mwaura, Thenya, & Mukhovi, 2020). Even with a well-established structure, the program has problems such as payment delays, insufficient money, and ineffective bureaucracy. To solve these issues and guarantee prompt and efficient reimbursement, reforms are required.

Kenyan villages, aided by NGOs and conservation groups like WWF and AWF, created insurance plans to cover wildlife-related losses. These efforts reduce retaliatory killings and build tolerance, supporting national measures. The Predator Compensation Fund (PCF), launched in 2003 in Amboseli, pays Maasai herders for livestock lost to lions, leopards, cheetahs, and hyenas. Compensation requires no predator retaliation and involves community participation in funding and verification. This shows the strength of localized approaches in easing human-wildlife conflict.

The payment for any damages that occur due to wildlife such as crop damages, cattle losses, and injuries or deaths of humans is made through the Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). Nevertheless, challenges like delays in payments and lack of sufficient compensation funds still persist even despite the noble intention of minimizing conflicts. Apart from the

government, the affected communities also get additional help in the form of resources provided by private conservancies and non-governmental organizations such as Northern

Rangelands Trust and the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (Schetter, Mkutu, & Müller-Koné, 2022). Such organizations consider community involvement by conducting educational programs. Human-wildlife conflicts have become a major issue in Laikipia County, Kenya, in recent years. The county, which is in central Kenya is a hotspot for conflicts involving wildlife and humans because of its diverse land use and abundant biodiversity (Benka, 2023). Population growth and human encroachments on wildlife habitats have increased resource competition, resulting in an increase in human-wildlife conflict. This notwithstanding, administrative and financial obstacles frequently impede the effectiveness of compensation plans. While creative solutions like beehive fences and physical barriers like electric fences have shown potential in preventing agricultural damage from wildlife, their success depends on community cooperation and adequate upkeep (Vogel, Songhurst, McCulloch, & Stronza, 2022). Inadequate financing and payment delays are common challenges in Laikipia, but there have also been encouraging changes like greater community involvement and a greater awareness of the advantages of coexisting. All things considered, prompt payouts, proactive community involvement, and additional preventive measures that promote both wildlife conservation and peaceful coexistence are necessary for efficient damage compensation.

Human-wildlife conflict has been rising in Laikipia County in Kenya due to multiple forms of land use and high biodiversity (Benka, 2023). The increase in population and intrusion of humans into the habitats of animals have increased competition, leading to conflict. Compensation programs are in place but face several problems including financial and administrative issues like delayed compensation and lack of funds (Vogel, Songhurst, McCulloch, & Stronza, 2022). Innovative solutions like beehive fencing and electric fencing seem effective in minimizing crop losses; however, the effectiveness is based on community involvement and maintenance. Though many problems persist, there is increased awareness about the benefits of coexistence.

Statement of the Problem

Human-wildlife conflict can be mitigated by compensation for damage. In mid-2023, Kenya's Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife provided $6.2 million in compensation for death and injury to victims of human-wildlife conflict. However, there are still unresolved claims amounting to more than $39 million, which is 6 times the amount of claims that have been settled. This shows the existence of unresolved issues in compensation (VOA, 2023) However, weaknesses in the process and behavior of compensation mean that there are hurdles to achieving compensation's intended purpose.

These factors include the time of release, lack of funds, equal distribution, and lack of public participation. There is not enough information about the impact of these factors on the solving of HWC in Laikipia County, which faces HWC problems. HWC in Laikipia County poses a major problem to the local community causing regular destruction of crops, livestock, and injuries to people. For example, data collected in Laikipia in 2023 over a period of six months

found that leopards caused 45.5% of the cases of HWC, lions 31.1%, and hyenas 23.5%. The estimate cost of insurance coverage to address HWC victims, including those affected by snakes, would be approximately KES 3.5 billion (Laikipia Forum, 2023; Republic of Kenya, 2020).

Despite the introduction of the various compensation measures through the government and other stakeholders, the success of such projects has not been consistent. The inefficiency of administrative measures has led to increased pain among the affected people and undermined public support towards the conservation of the environment. Inadequate community engagement in the process of development and implementation of schemes has also contributed to reduced levels of trust. The need to examine issues such as adequacy, equity, promptness, and public engagement is thus imperative to improve on conflict mitigation processes. This paper sought to achieve this through a study in Laikipia County.

Objectives of the Study

i. To examine the effect of timing of disbursement of damage compensation funds on human-wildlife conflict resolution
ii. To determine the effect of adequacy of damage compensation funds on human-wildlife conflict resolution

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section delves into the theoretical foundations, empirical literature and the conceptual framework which are elaborated in detail below:

Theoretical Framework

This research was grounded on Social Equity Theory, which offers various standpoints regarding the motivating factors for community participation in compensation plans. Social equity theory, associated with the works of scholars such as John Rawls (1971), is focused on the issues of justice and fairness in resource and opportunity distribution. The theory claims that the fair treatment, meaning the distribution of resources and rewards depending on needs and justice, results in improved community welfare and social outcomes. It reveals the way people's happiness and engagement in social activities depend on the fairness of the distribution process.

The application of the social equity theory into damage compensation and human-wildlife conflict management will enable one to understand the impact of equitable distribution on the conflict and the community satisfaction can be achieved (Chen, Zhang, Zhang, & Kong, 2022). Trust and cooperation between the community and wildlife management authorities can be facilitated in cases where the payment is perceived to be equitable. This is particularly true in situations where there exist different socioeconomic classes because there is the possibility that the pay disparities could worsen the situation and create perceptions of injustices. Perception of justice is equally very important. If the disadvantaged people perceive that they are receiving

low payments compared to the rich individuals, then the payment mechanism could become ineffective.

As per the social equity theory, the presence of just and clear compensation schemes will be crucial in ensuring that everyone is provided with adequate support and recognition (Zhou, Govindan, & Xie, 2020). The provision of effective compensation systems to cater to all those affected by it is dependent on the application of equitable distribution (Fulmer, Gerhart, & Kim, 2023). Using the concept of Social Equity Theory will provide a complete insight into how justness in the compensation process affects the attitudes and cooperation of the community.

The current research conforms to the research objectives since it seeks to establish the effectiveness of damage compensation as a strategy of managing the human-wildlife conflicts in Laikipia County. Disbursement timeliness relates to procedural equity since itis expected that the compensation should be timely, making the victims happy and reducing tension. Adequate payment relates to distributive equity since it should match the loss that has been incurred; failure to do this will make one feel that their needs are being neglected. Equitable distribution makes sure that all people are treated fairly irrespective of where they are coming from.

Empirical Literature

Human–wildlife conflict (HWC) is a major issue in Kenya, especially in Laikipia County, where it causes property loss, livestock deaths, and sometimes human fatalities. This paper reviews empirical findings on how damage compensation affects such conflicts across different areas.

Timing of Disbursement and Wildlife Human Conflict Resolution

The timeliness of compensation payments in human-wildlife conflicts plays a major role in determining how effectively the conflicts can be solved. The timeliness of payments creates harmony within the community, prevents any kind of retaliatory action, and conveys a feeling of promptness (Gubbi, Poornesha, & Madhusudan, 2019). Late payments, on the contrary, will just add to the frustration and anger, and may even cause the killing of animals as a form of retaliation. Therefore, timely payments become extremely important for maintaining peaceful co-existence of humans and wildlife as it fosters a sense of accountability in institutions. It has been found that timely payments of the proper amount of money ease tensions in the community (Eklund, López-Bao, Tourani, Chapron, & Frank, 2020).

In Europe, The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) has been established as a means of financial assistance to the EU Member States post-disaster. Applications for the financial assistance must be made within 12 weeks of the occurrence of the disaster after the evaluation process of releasing the funds. This ensures that the recovery process takes place efficiently (European Parliament, 2023). As for the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) in the USA, deliberations regarding the prompt release of the funds have been going on. An executive director has been advised to have the power of releasing the funds immediately (Boell Foundation, 2024).

The GCF in Africa offers finance for climate-related projects, however, research has found delays in the disbursement process, with a median period of 13 months, although some projects have been completed within 36 days (UNFCCC, 2023). This information highlights the importance of efficient processes to guarantee timely funding. Sociologically, timely compensation ensures prompt assistance to families dependent on agriculture and livestock and prevents suffering resulting from the damages caused by the wildlife. Timely payments help maintain economic stability, prevent further harm like poaching, and assist in quick recovery (Gross, Lahkar, Subedi, Nyirenda, & Keil, 2021). The people who receive timely compensation do not regard the wildlife as a danger and work together for their conservation (Barua, 2020).

Also, the payment timing has a direct effect on the community's trust in the organization. The trust that communities have in government and non-government organizations which handle compensation procedures can be compromised by late payments. Disengagement from future conservation measures could arise if a community is made to wait for a long period to be compensated due to corruption (Bhatia, Redpath, Suryawanshi, & Mishra, 2020). A quick payment will go a long way in helping to mend relationships between humans and conservationists, and this is an indicator of fair treatment, something that is essential in resolving wildlife-human conflict issues.

Distefano (2023) reviewed global case studies on human–wildlife conflict management, focusing on compensation timing and effectiveness. He found that quick payments reduce retaliatory actions and build trust in conservation programs. Nevertheless, while this study gave an overview of the situation on the international level, it was not able to look into specific problems of the communities in Kenya, especially those of Laikipia County, where human-wildlife conflicts are especially pronounced.

Lukumay, Munishi, and Moyo (2025) studied perceptions of compensation and local mitigation programs near Tanzania’s protected areas using questionnaires, focus groups, and document analysis with 150 participants. Results showed 93% were not compensated, often due to limited awareness. Still, community participation improved conservation, stressing the need to involve locals in designing mitigation measures. However, the study did not quantify the impact of compensation such as timeliness, adequacy or fairness on resolving wildlife-human conflict.

The work of Fidelis, Ndibalem, Kadigi & Byamungu (2026) involved examining the transaction cost issues that surround compensation for losses caused by elephants around Mikumi National Park through a mixed method research design where 405 households and secondary data were used from 2012–2022. The study established that there are high transaction costs that are hidden among the victims because of delays in bureaucracy and thus adding to the financial burden and lowering the value of the compensation. Even though the goal of compensation is to create tolerance, such inefficiencies hinder the effectiveness of compensation.

Manoa & Mwaura (2025) compared Mount Kenya and Amboseli ecosystems using 408 household surveys and the Time Value of Money model. They found heavy losses from late payments, averaging KES 410,168 yearly, which eroded goodwill and fueled hostility toward wildlife. While the study exposed the economic cost of delays, it did not prove whether timely payments resolve conflicts.

Chepkwony, Lyakurwa & Sabuhoro (2025) have analyzed the correlation between human wildlife conflict, livelihood and conservation attitudes among 411 household sampled in Maasai Mara ecosystem through the survey method. The study found that the frequency of conflict is high, but conservation attitudes are very positive because of conservancy benefits. But late payment of compensation was identified as a big problem. While late payment has been recognized as an important aspect by the study, its impact has not been measured quantitatively. Thus, there is no empirical model of compensation factors.

Prompt payment directly links to equity and justice. Delays create perceptions of inequality, especially when some receive compensation earlier than others (Bhatia, Redpath, Suryawanshi, & Mishra, 2020). To secure community support for conservation, payments must be prompt and equal. In this study, the payment schedule shapes conservation outcomes, public sentiment, financial stability, and program credibility.

Adequacy of Damage Compensation Funds

Another important factor that plays a crucial role in influencing the effectiveness of conflict resolution is adequacy of compensation. In case compensation is not adequate enough, it could result in people having the perception that their losses are not properly compensated for, and they will become negative towards wildlife conservation. Several studies have proven that in case compensation is inadequate, i.e., if it takes care of just a portion of loss experienced by the individual, it might fail to meet its objective.

Worldwide, Thapa and Diedrich (2023) investigated the gains and losses resulting from PAs in Nepal using the ICDP model of management. It was established that although gains from economic activities like nature-based tourism were well-known, perceptions about the cost-mitigation efforts and participation in such schemes were rather low (Thapa & Diedrich, 2023). It is in an attempt to solve this challenge that this study seeks to investigate how adequate compensation fund schemes can ensure that compensation schemes are in line with reality on the ground.

Study on compensation to communities affected by protected areas in Europe It is noted that financial compensation in such cases does not effectively address economic and social damages caused to the people. This is mainly because the valuation processes in such cases are often not effective enough, thus causing problems in terms of satisfaction and economic difficulties among the affected population (Tagliarino, 2017). On the other hand, a study done on land compensation laws in Asia, based on 50 countries shows inconsistencies in the way that valuation of expropriated land is handled in those countries (Nyaupane & Poudel, 2019)

The Lupande Game Management Area in Zambia's Eastern Province was studied by Morgan & Nyanga (2023). The study found that there were huge economic costs experienced by smallholder farmers and the Zambian government due to loss of revenue from the problem animals and their trophy parts. The study further pointed out the inadequacy in the implementation of response strategies (Morgan & Nyanga, 2023). This study aims to understand the benefits that proper compensation can bring regarding mitigating these economic losses.

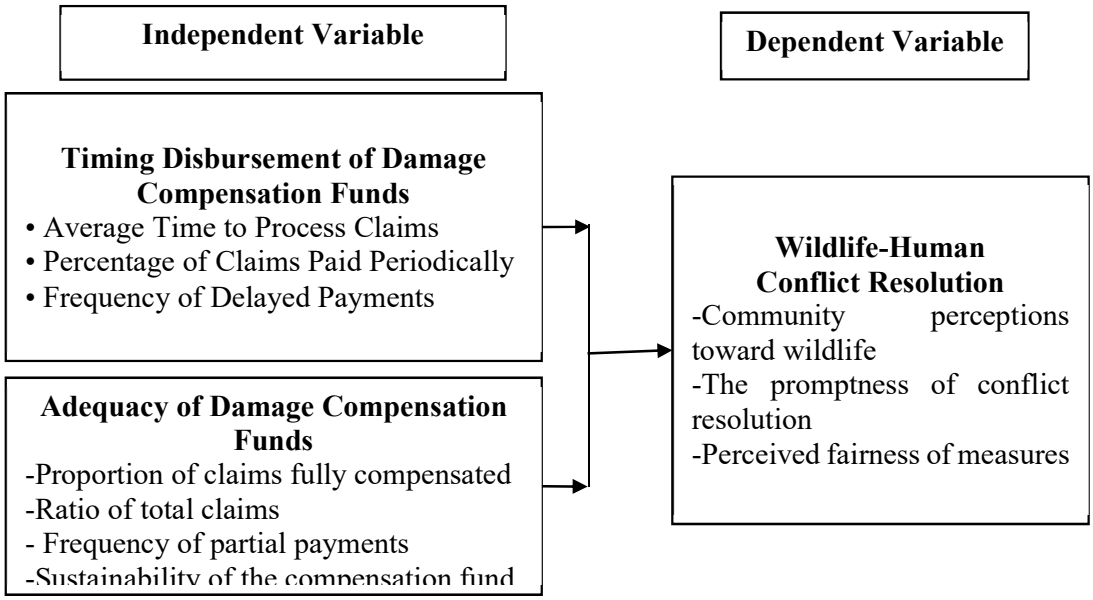
Naik et al., (2024) assessed the effectiveness and adequacy of wildlife-human conflict compensation systems in the Indian state of Karnataka, through government compensation data and surveys of communities, finding undercompensation compared to losses, mainly because the compensation was not revised for inflation. Inadequate compensation created non-reporting of claims by the community and increased antagonism towards government officials, but improved performance where payments were market-based. However, the authors did not look at how adequacy of compensation affects conflict resolution outcomes, as well as the effects of timeliness and equity on community reactions.

Fidelis, Kadigi, Ndibalema & Byamungu (2026) studied elephant presence costs in communities near Mikumi National Park using surveys of 405 people. They found compensation schemes cover only direct costs, ignoring indirect and opportunity costs, which leads to underestimating the true burden of human–wildlife conflict. However, the study did not test whether compensation provided was adequate.

Kegamba et al. (2024) carried out an assessment of conservation policies and laws in Tanzania through a document review study supplemented by community-based research studies. This study revealed that there is compensation which is much lower than the cost actually incurred by the communities, thus leading to poverty and inability to achieve coexistence. This study further observed that the framework of the policies purposely restricts complete compensation. While discussing the insufficiency in compensation, the authors failed to address the effects of insufficient compensation on the outcomes of wildlife-human conflict management.

Efforts by communities to conserve wildlife in the Maasai Mara were examined in Oduor (2020). With a descriptive research methodology employed, it was found that the use of co-management strategy positively impacted on income of the households, opened up business ventures, developed social networks and provided easier access to credit facilities and healthcare services. On the other hand, some issues were raised, particularly, those relating to lack of transparency and equity in allocation of available resources to different communities where only the politically connected ones benefited from them. Moreover, ineffective institutions and scarce resources hindered good management of conservation activities and resolution of human-wildlife conflict situations.

Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey design, which allows the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. This design is appropriate for analyzing perceptions, trends, and relationships between key variables while ensuring an in-depth understanding of compensation mechanisms. Farmers, pastoralists, local governments, government agencies (e.g., KWS), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are involved in wildlife conservation and compensation programs are included in the target population. Cochran's formula for statistical reliability was used to determine the sample size of 384 respondents, whose total number is above 10000 but is categorized. stratified random sampling was applied to get a representative sample. Cochran's formula was applied to compute the sample size, ensuring representativeness and statistical power. With a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the target population of 406 produced a sample of 384 respondents. For data collection, the study used questionnaire and the interview guide, which included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Primary data were collected and analyzed to generate insights. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used. Interviews provided themes on wildlife conflict resolution (Braun & Clarke, 2019) while quantitative data were processed with SPSS v24. Descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages; inferential tests covered correlation, ANOVA, and regression. Multiple regression clarified links between independent and dependent variables.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study recorded an 86.4% response rate (171 out of 198), which is considered excellent and acceptable for data analysis in social science research. Such a high response rate enhances the

validity, reliability, and generalizability of the findings by minimizing non-response bias (Babbie, 2016; Bryman, 2021).

A review of background information revealed that the study population was predominantly male (60%), with females constituting 40% of the respondents. There was very little educational status among the respondents since most of them (53.5%) lacked formal education while 42.2% of them were diploma holders. Very few of them had formal education beyond high school. The low level of education is very critical in relation to human-wildlife conflict management due to the implications it might have in terms of knowledge on the process of getting compensated and the policies relating to wildlife claims.

The demographic age shows that the largest number of people in the survey belong to the economically active age group, especially the age range between 35 and 40 (34.6%). It means that the problem of human-wildlife conflict predominantly strikes people in the age group, who make a living by agriculture and livestock production. Other age categories had a lower representation, which can indicate that the effect of the problem is more acute for people who can work and earn money for their families. Marital status is another important aspect for analysis, which showed that 60% of people are married, which means that these people have stable households that depend on each other economically. Divorced and widowed people constituted over 22%, which also indicated the vulnerability of such categories of people in the case of the impact of the conflict.

TIMING OF DISBURSEMENT OF DAMAGE COMPENSATION FUNDS

The first research objective was intended to determine the effect of the time of disbursement of damage compensation on human-wildlife conflicts resolution. The data was collected and results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Timing of Disbursement of Damage Compensation Funds

Variable	Parameter	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Time taken to apply for compensation	Less than a month	8	4.3
	1-2 months	1	0.5
	2-4 months	42	22.7
	More than 4 months	134	72.4
Time for claim approval	2-4 weeks	17	9.2
	1-2 months	33	17.8
	More than 2 months	135	73.0
Satisfaction with time taken to fill out forms	Strongly disagree	17	9.2
	Disagree	51	27.6
	Neutral	21	11.4
	Agree	95	51.4
	Strongly agree	1	0.5
Satisfaction with time taken to process claim	Strongly disagree	14	7.6
	Disagree	53	28.6
	Neutral	36	19.5
	Agree	82	44.3
Satisfaction with turn-around time	Strongly disagree	31	16.8
	Disagree	32	17.3
	Neutral	49	26.5
	Agree	69	37.3
	Strongly agree	4	2.2
Payment received within promised timeframe	Strongly disagree	44	23.8
	Disagree	62	33.5
	Neutral	53	28.6
	Agree	21	11.4
	Strongly agree	5	2.7
Informed in advance about payment dates	Strongly disagree	39	21.1
	Disagree	62	33.5
	Neutral	47	25.4
	Agree	28	15.1
	Strongly agree	9	4.9
	Strongly disagree	37	20.0

Findings in Table 1 indicate that there are long durations of time in the process as well as varying experiences on the side of the claimants. This suggests that there exists a systemic problem in terms of an administrative delay in the process. For example, most respondents indicated that the application process takes over four months (72.4%), while 22.7% of respondents required 2-4 months for application. Analytically, the time required to apply for the compensation in this context of damage compensation is

significant since it demonstrates the procedural problem existing in terms of the form requirements, multiple visits, tough documentation requirements, and lack of support. On the other hand, in the National Study of U.S. Victim Compensation Programs, similar bottlenecks have been identified at the system level by the administrators (Hussemann, et al., 2024).

It was clear that there were still delays even at the point of approvals, whereby 73.0% felt that approvals took more than 2 months, 17.8% felt that it took 1-2 months, and only a few (9.2%) felt that approvals took 2-4 weeks. This indicated that there were delays in the processing after submission of the claims, which in turn led to an increase in the number of approvals required, especially due to documentation issues, manual process, and coordination issues. In contrast, the respondents seemed satisfied with the time taken to complete the compensation forms, since 51.9% agreed/strongly agreed.. According to Key Informant (KI1), if payout were more regular, this could ease tensions and demonstrate state responsiveness. When the government, for example through KWS, issues payment to victims, including cases that had delayed for years, as it happened in 2025, trust is improved retaliatory responses are reduced in the short term.

Key informant II (KI2) further opined that effectiveness is weakened by delays and funding backlogs. Comparatively, a review by Mekonnen et al (2024) revealed that while injured workers often find the initial claim submission process straightforward, significant, inconsistent delays in receiving care and system feedback lead to mixed satisfaction levels. Arguably therefore, varied experiences in accessing services are a major factor in how workers perceive the overall compensation system.

Perceptions for claim processing and overall turnaround were poor where 44.3% agreed that processing time was satisfactory, 36.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 19.5% were neutral. The overall turnaround satisfaction was modest at 39.5% who agreed or strongly agreed, 34.1% were dissatisfied and 26.5% were neutral. This finding compared favorably with that slow compensation processes can generate stress, frustration, and reduced trust—particularly where losses threaten livelihoods (Brooks, Tapsell, Rubin, & Greenberg, 2024). Data on timeliness and communication on matters of payment revealed that 14.1% agreed that payments arrived within promised timeframes, while 57.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

In the same way, 20.0% agreed that they had prior information regarding the date of payment, while 54.6% disagreed with the statement. Regarding poor communication regarding delays, 22.7% agreed to receiving explanations, while 53.0% disagreed or strongly disagreed. In my opinion, in situations where delays are unavoidable, clear and good communication could help to improve the perception of fairness. Looking back in time, it is evident that in the public sector, the success of any operation relies not only on promptness, but also on clear communication and efficiency (National Audit Office, 2024). This means that current empirical studies provide sufficient information about general compensation challenges, but not specifically for wildlife damage

compensation.

In contrast, qualitative responses indicated that the timing of compensation payments affects the way communities perceive wildlife and their willingness for conservation. Early payment for any damages caused by wildlife enhances the chances of conserving wildlife, while late payment hinders conservation. Key Informant 3, (KII3) opined that delayed compensation means unresolved loss which could deepen resentment. Subsequently, households could fall into debt or food insecurity, and whereby wildlife become viewed as a threat rather than a shared natural resource.,.KI1 opined that when quick compensation payment signals that authorities recognize people's losses. This reduces feelings of neglect and helps households recover faster and lowers the pressure to take self-help actions such as retaliatory hostility against wildlife. KII2 further observed that timely payment enhances trust in institutions and make communities more willing to report incidents, and to participate in prevention measures.

Adequacy of Damage Compensation Funds

The second study objective aimed at determining the effect of adequacy of damage compensation funds on human-wildlife conflict resolution. Obtained data was analysed and presented in the Table 2.

Table 2 Adequacy of Damage Compensation Funds

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Claims fully addressed	Strongly disagree	8	4.3
	Disagree	63	34.1
	Neutral	61	33.0
	Agree	53	28.6
Compensation covers losses incurred	Strongly disagree	8	4.3
	Disagree	83	44.9
	Neutral	61	33.0
	Agree	33	17.8
Funding covers all submitted claims	Strongly disagree	7	3.8
	Disagree	79	42.7
	Neutral	51	27.6
	Agree	48	25.9
Funds adequate relative to total claims	Strongly disagree	8	4.3
	Disagree	79	42.7
	Neutral	34	18.4
	Agree	64	34.6
Confidence in future availability of funds	Strongly disagree	7	3.8
	Disagree	67	36.2
	Neutral	43	23.2
	Agree	68	36.8

The results on the adequacy of damage compensation funds reveal considerable

reservations among respondents regarding whether the compensation mechanisms sufficiently address incurred losses. A substantial proportion (34.1%) of respondents were dissatisfied with whether claims were fully addressed and 4.3% strongly disagreed. On the other hand, 33.0% were remained neutral and 28.6% agreed that their claims were fully addressed. These findings corroborate Kariuki and Ouma, (2023) in their study titled Evaluating claim satisfaction in Kenyan insurance firms: Customer perspectives and systemic challenges. which showed that many claimants in Kenya's insurance sector report that their full damages are not captured in settlements, leading to dissatisfaction and reduced trust in compensation frameworks.

Likewise, similar views were held concerning the compensation being sufficient to cover the losses caused in the sense that a little below half of the participants, 44.9% disagreed while 4.3% strongly disagreed on this issue. On the other hand, only 17.8% were of the view that the compensation was adequate enough whereas 33.0% were neither here nor there. This is similar to the findings of Adebayo et al. (2025) in their research titled "Agricultural Compensation and Loss Recovery: Evidence from smallholder farmers in Nigeria".

Concerning whether available funds were enough to meet all claims, there were more negative responses than positive ones. It can be seen from the results that 46.5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, where 42.7% disagreed and 3.8% strongly disagreed, whereas 25.9% agreed that funds were enough for the fulfillment of all claims. The reason for this lies in the difficulties in compensation programs, where due to limited funds and lack of administrative mechanisms, not all claims are paid. For instance, Munyua & Kanyinga (2024) in their report, Public compensation schemes in Africa: Financing gaps and institutional performance.

Where the participants were asked if the money was sufficient compared to the entire amount claimed, 42.7% disagreed while 4.3% strongly disagreed, signaling significant worries over the sufficiency of the money. However, 34.6% believed that the money was sufficient while 18.4% held no opinion. This demonstrates a difference in experience or expectation. The divided opinion is supported by Pham & Nguyen's (2025) study entitled Perceptions of compensation equity and procedural fairness among disaster affected households in Vietnam, where claimant satisfaction regarding the sufficiency of compensation depended on the clarity of communication and transparency of the process despite the same amount of money.

Lastly, there was uncertainty regarding the future availability of compensation funds as well. Even though 36.8 percent were in agreement concerning the future availability of funds, 36.2 percent disagreed with this notion, while 3.8 percent strongly disagreed. There were also 23.2 percent who were neutral on this matter. This is consistent with a recent study which explained how institutional instability and unpredictable allocation of funds contributed to claimants' lack of confidence. According to Elmi & Wanjiku (2025) 'Sustainability of compensation mechanisms in East Africa: perceptions of

affected communities' study, the repeated delay of payments schedules and unreliable budgetary considerations led to household doubts concerning the future of compensation programs.

In general, the results of this analysis highlight the problem of the insufficiency and reliability of the damage compensation fund, with people being generally dissatisfied with their experience of using them more often than satisfied with it. These observations are confirmed by the recent research carried out in 2022-2026, which highlights the problems of inadequate compensations, lack of compensation for all losses, and the low confidence in future financing.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study finds that the compensation process faces the challenge of delays in the administrative system, especially post-submission of claims, although there are no problems with filling out forms. Secondly, inadequate communication and the non-transparent payment period decrease trust in the process. It is very important to have a timely compensation process that is not only consistent but also transparent, as this is needed to reduce vulnerability.

In addition, the study reveals that, the compensation fund is seen to be inadequate since the amount paid does not always manage to compensate for the loss in full. Moreover, the study reveals that, the limitation imposed by financial constraints and bureaucracy hinders the settlement of all claims leading to partial payment. In addition, there is doubt over the sustainability of future funding in future.

In addition, the study reveals that, the issue of fair damage compensation is not strongly perceived because of the lack of consistency in the criteria applied in valuation and payment in case of identical cases. Furthermore, the study reveals that, unequal access and poor inclusion of marginalized groups makes compensation unfair and non-confident.

Recommendations

To increase efficiency, fairness, trust, and effectiveness of such programs in the long run, the study recommends the following, based on its conclusions.

i. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, and the County Government of Laikipia need to make the process of compensation more

i. efficient and digital in order to cut down post-submission delays through the simplification of the verification and approval processes.

ii. The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, KWS, National Treasury and Parliament (oversight body) needs to set up a clear schedule of services for the processing and disbursing of claims for improved accountability and efficiency.

iii. The KWS, County Government of Laikipia, local administration, and community conservancies must improve their communication and transparency processes through regular SMS updates, notices to the general public, and community meetings regarding claims processing and payments.

iv. The National Treasury, Parliament, Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, and development partners need to increase the sustainable financing of compensation funds through increased budgetary allocations and long-term financing.

REFERENCES

Benka, V. A. (2023). Expanding the Scope of Challenges to Human-Wildlife Coexistence, and the Implications for Conservation: A Case Study of Laikipia, Kenya. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife, 28*(6), 585-601.

Bhatia, S., Redpath, S. M., Suryawanshi, K. R., & Mishra, C. (2020). Beyond Conflict: Exploring the Spectrum of Human–Wildlife Interactions and Their Underlying Mechanisms. *Oryx, 54*(5), pp. 621-628.

Brooks, S. K., Tapsell, S., Rubin, G. J., & Greenberg, N. (2024). Psychosocial Iimpacts of Post-disaster Compensation Processes: Narrative Systematic Review. *BMC Psychology, 12*(1).

Brooks, S. K., Tapsell, S., Rubin, G. J., & Greenberg, N. (2024). Psychosocial Impacts of Post-Disaster Compensation Processes: Narrative Systematic Review. *BMC Psychology, 12*(1). doi:https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-02025-9

Bryman, A. (2021). *Social Research Methods (6th ed.).* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Cardarelli, E., Calaciura, B., Zaghi, D., & Bogliani, G. (2023). The Natural History and

Characteristics of Italy. *Nature Conservation in Europe: Approaches and Lessons*, 415.

Chen, Q., Zhang, Y., Zhang, Y., & Kong, M. (2022). Examining Social Equity in the Co-Management of Terrestrial Protected Areas: Perceived Fairness of Local Communities in Giant Panda National Park, China. *Land, 11*(10), 1624.

European Parliament. (2023). *The Solidarity Fund: Structure and Impact.* Brussels: European Parliament. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu

Fulmer, I. S., Gerhart, B., & Kim, J. H. (2023). Compensation and Performance: A Review and Recommendations for the Future. *Personnel Psychology, 76*(2), 687-718.

Grachev, S. P., Zhilyaev, A. A., Laryukhin, V. B., Novichkov, D. E., Galuzin, V. A., Simonova, E. V., & Skobelev, P. O. (2021). Methods and Tools for Developing Intelligent Systems for Solving Complex Real-Time Adaptive Resource Management Problems. *Automation and Remote Control, 82*, 1857-1885.

Gross, E. M., Lahkar, B. P., Subedi, N., Nyirenda, V. R., & Keil, P. (2021).

Compensation Schemes for Human-Wildlife Conflict in Africa, Asia And Latin America: Successes, Challenges, And Knowledge Gaps. *Biological Conservation*(255).

Kariuki, J. M., & Ouma, D. O. (2023). *Evaluating Claim Satisfaction in Kenyan Insurance Firms: Customer Perspectives and Systemic Challenges.* University of Nairobi.

KC, B., Baniya, R., Singh, H. B., & Chapagain, B. (2023). Human-Wildlife Conflicts in a Nepalese Protected Area: Conservation Challenges, Mitigation Strategies, and Policy Implications. *Geojournal, 88*(6), 5997-6010.

Kegamba, J. J., Sangha, K. K., Wurm, P. A., Meitamei, J. L., Tiotem, L. G., & Garnett, S. T. (2024). The Human and Financial Costs of Conservation for Local Communities Living around the Greater Serengeti Ecosystem, Tanzania. *Global Ecology and Conservation, 52*, e02974.

König, H. J., Kiffner, C., Kramer-Schadt, S., Fürst, C., Keuling, O., & Ford, A. T. (2020). Human–Wildlife Coexistence in a Changing World. *Conservation Biology, 34*(4), 786-794.

Manoa, D. A., Mwaura, F., Thenya, T., & Mukhovi, S. (2020). Comparative Analysis of the Typology, Seasonality and Economic Cost of Human-Wildlife Conflict in Kajiado and Laikipia Counties, Kenya. *East African Journal of Science, Technology and Innovation, 1*(4).

Nyaupane, G. P., & Poudel, S. (2019). Linkages Among Biodiversity, Livelihood, and Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 38*(4), pp. 1344-1366. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.006

Otianga-Owiti, G. E., Okori, J. L., Nyamasyo, S., & Amwata, D. A. (2021). Governance and Challenges of Wildlife Conservation and Management in Kenya. *Wildlife Biodiversity Conservation: Multidisciplinary and Forensic Approaches*, 67-99.

Rosenbloom, D. H., Kravchuk, R. S., & Clerkin, R. M. (2022). *Public Administration: Understanding Management, Politics, and Law in the Public Sector.* Routledge.

Rwigema, P. (2021). Critical Analysis of Tourism Industry and Sustainable Development during Covid-19 Pandemic. A Case of Rwanda. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management, 8*(4), 594.

Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students (8th Ed.).* London, England: Pearson.

Schetter, C., Mkutu, K., & Müller-Koné, M. (2022). Frontier NGOs: Conservancies, Control, and Violence in Northern Kenya. *World Development, 151*, 105735.

Srikanth, V., Das, A., Elangbam, S., Singh, B., & Rafiq, M. M. (2023). Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Efforts in India. *National Parks, 106*(44,402.95), 1-35.

Taber, K. S. (2018). The Use of Cronbach's Alpha When Developing and Reporting Research Instruments in Science Education. *Research in Science Education, 48*(6), pp. 1273-1296.

Vogel, S. M., Songhurst, A. C., McCulloch, G., & Stronza, A. (2022). Understanding Farmers' Reasons behind Mitigation Decisions is Key in Supporting their Coexistence with Wildlife. *People and Nature, 4*(5), 1305-1318.

Yussuf, I. (2021). *The International Wildlife Conservation Agreements and Protection of Community Rights: a Case Study Conservation in Isiolo, Kenya.* Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi.