

# The Conflict Early Warning and Response mechanism (CEWARN)



*in the*

Inter Governmental Authority On Development (IGAD)  
Region

## CEWARN Baseline Studies

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# Baseline Study for the Ugandan side of the Karamoja Cluster

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## List of Acronyms

ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
CBOs	Community-Based organizations
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
KDA	Karamoja Development Agency
KPIU	Karamoja Projects Implementation Unit
LDU	Local Defense Unit
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture
POKATUSA	Pokot, Karamojong, Turkana and Sabinu
DFID	Department for international Development
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defense Forces
UPPAP	Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process

## Executive Summary

This Draft Baseline Report provides an analysis of the nature and form and trends of pastoral conflicts in the Uganda part of the Karamoja cluster. This Report is part of the conflict prevention and management efforts of the Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism (CEWARN) of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The main objectives for establishing CEWARN were to a) enable Member States to prevent cross-border pastoral conflicts from developing into armed violent conflicts on a greater scale, b) enable local communities to play an important part in preventing violent conflicts, and c) enable the IGAD Secretariat to pursue conflict prevention initiatives and to provide technical and financial support

This Report will provide insight to member States, development partners and other stakeholders on the nature of pastoral conflicts and its related developments, and inform the adoption of response options to pastoral conflicts in the “Karamoja cluster”.

This Report covers the Ugandan side of the Karamoja cluster, which includes Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit in the Karamoja region, plus neighboring Kapchorwa district, these four districts the “Areas of Reporting” under the CEWARN initiative and covers the period starting from June 2003 to April 2004. The geographical coverage is limited to these districts because they are either inhabited by groups belonging to the Karamoja cluster (the Pian, Pokot, Matheniko, Bokora, Tepeth, Jie, Teuso, Labwor in the districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit), or is affected by cross –boarder pastoral conflicts (Kapchorwa district).

Whereas various interventions in the region, right from the colonial period, have aimed at maintaining peace and security and bringing about development, they failed to appreciate pastoralism as a mode of livelihood and production. The result is that these interventions have not brought about the desired transformation and development and therefore competition over natural resources that provide the basis for livelihood for the bulk of the pastoralists abounds and has metamorphosed into military-style armed conflict.

Various pastoral conflicts between the different groups within the country and with other pastoralists across the borders have been documented during the June 2003 to April 2004 reporting period. The data collected so far indicates that the relationships between these groups are characterized by shifts in alliances and axes of conflict with the actors being diverse and changing. Figure 1 shows the high and fluctuating violent incidents for the report period. The argument in this paper is that the nature of the relationship between the Karimojong and the state laid ground for the survival mentality among the people since it created the impression that the world was against them. The result has been a state of constant conflict between the different groups within the country and across national borders. This is in form of attacks and revenge attacks. However, the occurrences of internal conflicts far outweigh cross-border conflicts. This has occurred with a momentous toll on human life and loss of livestock.

If this situation continues unabated, the revenge attacks by each community will lead into continued escalation of conflicts in the area with the result that the insecurity will discourage the desired state-led development, and that by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) – thereby limiting the ability of the state and development partners to provide for the community. However, if the suggested interventions are effected, then there will be reduction in hostilities and therefore human deaths and loss of livestock. The resultant stable security situation will also

attract social services, the private sector – and therefore development. This will be the desired scenario. The worst case will be if government employs coercive force to maintain peace, law and order. This will result into hostilities between the warriors and the military – often with devastating repercussions. The deterioration in the security situation will be fertile ground for alienation of the community – making a bad situation even worse.

Continued disenfranchisement of pastoralists through policies that do not foster the development of pastoralism as a viable mode of production but instead see it as an irrational production system that is destructive to environment and therefore needs to be eliminated will lead to failure of the various attempts at development in pastoral areas.

Efforts at poverty eradication and development ought to be streamlined and focused towards; a) developing pastoralism as a viable mode of production and livelihood; and b) providing viable options for survival for pastoralists. These should lead to a reduction in the reliance on natural factors for production and livelihood, and will reduce the dependence on pastoralism for livelihood.

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) is Uganda's national planning framework, which provides goals for government policy and program and establishes principles to guide investment plans and the management of the economy. It commits government to the overriding priority of tackling poverty. If the PEAP is to provide an opportunity for pastoralists to benefit from national development programs, pastoralism should be recognized as a mode of production and livelihood. However, as of now the main development focus for Karamoja is anchored on the need to provide security in the region in order to attract development.

# 1. Purpose and Scope

Out of the realization that economic development depends a great deal on peace and security, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) developed a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in 2002 as a mechanism that would enable the region to systematically anticipate and respond to various conflicts that currently plague the countries in the region. CEWARN is expected to provide IGAD Member States with the conflict early warning and response opportunities through the collection and analysis of information on impending violent conflict. The CEWARN initiative is being piloted across pastoralist borders – specifically looking at the pastoral groups referred to as the ‘Karamoja’ and ‘Somali’ clusters. These groups cover the countries of Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. In Uganda, the pastoral groups belong to the Karamoja cluster and they live in the districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit. Kapchorwa district is included because it is victim of raids by the Pokot pastoralists of Kenya.

The objectives of CEWARN include a) enabling Member States to prevent cross-boarder pastoral conflict from developing into armed violent conflicts on a greater scale; b) enabling local communities to play an important part in preventing violent conflicts; and enabling the IGAD Secretariat to pursue conflict prevention initiatives and to provide technical and financial support. This is expected to enable governments, regional organizations and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to deal with the conflicts before they flare up into violent confrontations.

The process of gathering the data is facilitated by Field Monitors who cover specific areas (called Areas of Reporting AOR, see appendix 1) who compile and submit information by completing a detailed situation report form, and by reporting all events that are violent in nature – providing details on the type of event, initiators, recipients, deaths and or injuries and source of information. This information is posted to the CEWARN Reporter by the Country Coordinator, a software developed for the handling all the conflict data. The Country Coordinator synthesizes and analyses the data collected and it is from this analysis that early warning indicators are provided.

## 1.1 The Geographic Scope

The region referred to above is generally known as ‘Karamoja’<sup>1</sup>. This is a relatively flat semi-arid region punctuated by some hills and mountains that include Mount Moroto in the east, which reaches up to 10,114 ft; Akisim and Napak Mountains to the west overlooking Katakwi district, and Mount Kadam toward the southern border. It is characterized by inadequate and unreliable rainfall – averaging 350 mm to 750 mm per annum; unreliable with regard to when and where it falls, how much and for how long it falls, and what area it will cover. The rains are scattered varying in amount from year to year and even from one place to another in the same year. While one place receives a sprinkle, another receives a heavy storm. (Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Welch, 1969; Cisterino, 1979; Mamdani, *et al*, 1992; Muhereza & Otim, 2002). The result of this pattern of rainfall is a low resource base characterized by seasonal variations in productivity, thus presenting patchy conditions even within the same zone where you can have luxuriant vegetation in one location and near emptiness in another<sup>2</sup>. The rain often falls in

1 Comprising the districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit, and found in the northeastern part of Uganda.

2 Mamdani, *et al*, (1992: 2-7) present a detailed description of the ecological zones and variations of rainfall in Karamoja. They give an account of how factors determining soil formation in the different ecological zones in the region contribute to the present ecological differences and variations in Karamoja. See also Dyson-Hudson (1966:30-32).

torrents and this causes the rivers to swell within a few hours and roar downstream - sometimes through dry areas sweeping people and livestock alike, and whatever else crosses their way. Generally the region slopes westward such that most of the rivers flow to the west consequently feeding the perennial swamps that form its boundaries with Katakwi, Kumi, Lira, and Kitgum districts (see Appendix 2). The naturally occurring water catchment's in the region are small in size and short lived because of the high temperatures in the region that encourage high evaporation.

Such climatic conditions have not favored crop cultivation in this area. Whereas the people of Karamoja are known to have practiced agriculture for long (Gulliver, 1955; Cisterino, *op cit.*; Lamphear, *op cit.*; Ocan, *op cit.*), cultivation in this region has been characterized by crop failure because of the unreliable rainfall. Since the people depend on rain fed agriculture, cultivation has proved unviable. In this environment where four out of every five crops fail (Mamdani et al, *op cit.*; Dyson-Hudson, *op cit.*; Cisterino, *op cit.*), pastoralism is adopted as the most rational and only viable economic activity.

Kapchorwa district shares borders with the districts of Mbale in the west and south, Nakapiripirit in the north and the Republic of Kenya in the east and south. It covers an area of 1,738 sq km. The Mt. Elgon rainfall zone characterizes the district, which is a westward extension of the conditions prevailing on the plateau and mountains of neighbouring Kenya. The district's climate is also affected by altitude. There are two wet seasons in the district and their duration varies from area to area depending on the altitude and topography. The annual rainfall ranges between 920mm to 1,650mm. Areas in the north tend to have drier and sometimes erratic conditions while it is wetter in the southwestern areas.

Appendix 3 gives the demographic characteristics of the districts that comprise the region, including Kapchorwa district.

#### Summary Table of Total Land Area covered in CEWARN's Areas of Reporting

DISTRICT	TOTAL LAND KM <sup>2</sup>	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION DENSITY
Kotido	13, 208	596,130	45
Moroto	8,518	170,506	20
Nakapiripirit	6,379	153,862	27
Kapchorwa	1,731.7	193,510	113



**A District Map of Republic of Uganda: With highlighted areas of the Ugandan side of the “Karamoja cluster”**



## 2. Background and Historical Context

The Karamoja area today is synonymous with violence, drought and poverty. A number of factors, both natural and man-made, are responsible for this – as we attempt to discuss them here. We show that it is the blend between these factors that has resulted in the lethal cocktail of violence of different forms and nature that has plagued the region. The situation has manifested itself in high levels of poverty where in Karamoja today it is such that the majority of the people lack the very basic requirement of food. This is so mainly because of the frequent crop failure due to the vulnerability of the region to drought.

It is true that violence in the Karamoja region dates back to the colonial era, however, since then it has metamorphosed from being a predominantly culturally sanctioned survival ritual performed using traditional weapons, spears, to one bearing the characteristics of externally driven entrepreneurial and political attributes using automatic weapons. This is compounded by the proliferation of small arms as a result of conflicts in the Greater Horn of Africa.

Whereas there may be no assessment of the impact of cattle rustling in Karamoja per se, the effects are glaring in the form of loss of human lives, displacement, destruction of property and natural resources – all leading to general underdevelopment.

Different interventions, both national and international, have taken place in the Karamoja region – all aimed at bringing about peace and security in the region. This is more to do with the desire to maintain law and order in the region and peace in the neighboring districts rather than to develop the area. There have been numerous peace meetings between feuding communities within Karamoja, and also between Karamoja and their neighbors across the borders in attempts to broker peace in the region. These meetings have been funded by local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Regional/International NGOs, and the respective governments. In spite of all these efforts, conflicts have continued in the Karamoja.

At the end of 2001, President Museveni launched a campaign for disarmament in Karamoja. This indicated renewed interest in security and development in the region not only by the government, but also among donors, regional initiatives and NGOs. However, this excitement and optimism soon turned into disillusionment when the security situation was seen to deteriorate rather than improve.

### 2.1 Historical Context

States in Africa has received criticisms for the manner in which they treat pastoral communities (Markakis, ed., 1993; Mamdani, 1996). The situation in Uganda has been no exception. Right from the colonial period, policies that have been developed for Karamoja have largely been inappropriate and have contributed to the current conflict structure in the area. The literature that looks at the impact of colonialism on the livelihood of the Karimojong people has a consensus that the results of these interventions were disastrous to the Karimojong – mainly because of the

attitude(s) that governed the policies<sup>3</sup>. In deed, the available information leads one to the conclusion that State intervention in general, which starts with colonialism, has had major influence on the direction that the development of Karamoja as a region has followed.

After Uganda was declared a British protectorate in 1894, Karamoja as a region remained un-administered by the British for over a decade. Being a semi-arid region, it did not offer the attraction, which, at the time, was to encourage the colonies to produce cash crops like cotton and coffee, which were meant to feed the industries at home in England. The only interaction Karamoja had with the outside world was with hunters and traders whose interest was mainly ivory (Barber, 1964). Abyssinian (Ethiopian), Greek and Arab traders had traded guns for ivory with the Karimojong. These traders established relations with the Karimojong and were the first major external influence on Karimojong cultures and traditions. A famous British hunter, "Karamoja Bell" was also involved in this trade and it is apparent that it is the competition for the ivory that was another factor that he used to prompt the colonial government to use military force to exclude the other traders from the region (Barber, *ibid.*).

### **2.1.1 The proliferation of firearms in Karamoja**

While the colonialists ignored Karamoja, trade in ivory by Arab, Greek, Ethiopian, Swahili, and some British ivory traders continued to flourish. It is reported that Ethiopian traders established themselves in the region, and large caravans were camped at the present Dodoth county, Kotido district (Welch *op cit.*: 51). These traders continued to trade ivory with various ornaments as well as guns. Barber (*op cit.*) gives account of how the Ethiopian, Greek and the Arab traders had traded guns for ivory with the Karimojong. Their aim was to ease the hunting of elephants and therefore increase the supply of ivory.

As the proliferation of modern arms in the area also continued, these arms found their way into other areas of the protectorate. In deed the District Commissioner Nimule, responsible for Acholi, wrote to the Governor in charge of the Protectorate in July 1910 that two Acholi chiefs had already armed their followers with 1,200 rifles received from various traders via Karamoja (Welch, *op cit.*: 49; Barber, *op cit.*: 16). Commenting on the repercussions of the situation, Barber observed that:

“On the strength of their reports, border officials argued that action had to be taken, not because administrative expansion was profitable, not because there might be untapped resources, but because in military terms, the British could no longer ignore the North”<sup>4</sup>.

Barber argues that while all this was going on, the Government had no detailed knowledge of the district, and of the firearms trade in particular (Barber *ibid.* :16). The stand of the Protectorate government was that both the human and economic cost of administering this remote region was too great. What comes out as a clear manifestation of the interest (or lack of it) was stated by Lord Harcourt, Secretary of State, that,

“it appears to me both dangerous and un-remunerative for the Governor of Uganda to undertake the administration of a country which is not easy to access from headquarters and which has no great resources”<sup>5</sup>.

3. See Dyson-Hudson *op cit*; Baxter, P.T.W. 1975, Cisterino, 1975; Lamphear, 1976; Pazzaglia, 1982; Mamdani et al, 1992 and Ocan, 1992.

4 Barber, J.P., 1968, *Imperial Frontier*, East African Publishing house, quoted in Welch, *op cit.*: 50)

Governor Frederick Jackson who assumed office 1911 was of the view that it was the traders who were to blame for the sorry state of affairs in Karamoja, and not the Colonial government, and so decided to close the district to all traders, allowing only one opening at Mbale, and with just occasional patrols in the area<sup>6</sup>. The control of herds that was enforced by government during the period the region was closed intending to achieve two major objectives: (i) simplify the administration of the Karimojong by having them settled and therefore be able to control the ivory trade which had escalated to gun-trafficking, and (ii) enforce compulsory labor regulations for pastoralists especially for construction work on roads in the region. It was also during this period that the colonial government forced relocation of communities from where they had formally settled – apparently to enforce the above objectives.

The subsequent establishment of permanent police posts in 1916 and introduction of a political structure that introduced a hierarchy of chiefs were all aimed at easing the administration of Karamoja region. Dyson-Hudson (*op cit.*) convincingly argues that this system of government did not work as it was intended to because the Karimojong hierarchy was determined through the age system, which confers authority of leadership to the corporate body of elders as opposed to the pyramid type of administration of the system that was introduced. Other than force, the introduction of this new political system was the first external influence that affected the political organization of the Karimojong society.

The colonial government sought to undermine the traditional system by using the younger generation, belonging to the junior generation-set, as leaders. This did not augur well with the community because the new chiefs had been given a wide range of powers in accordance with the Native Authorities Ordinance of 1918. These measures were met with hostile response from the people because they affected the social fabric, and their very existence: mobility and labor to take care of the herds, since part of the labor force supposed to take care of the herds was required by government. The colonialists also realized that the young men they had recruited as chiefs had no leverage in the society and thus proved ineffective in implementing government policy<sup>7</sup>. The apparent failure of the system justified even more state brutality against the Karimojong as it was being forced to work.

### **2.1.2 The drawing of boundaries**

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5 File 1049 Entebbe Archives. Secretary of state to the Government of Uganda, December 2, 1910, in Barber, J.P., "Karamoja in 1910". *Uganda Journal*, 28, 1, 1964: 16.

6 See Welch, 1969: 52, and Cisterino, 1979: 67. Cisterino shows how even after Uganda achieved independence there was still a notice at Iriir (border between Karamoja and Teso) as one entered Karamoja that read, "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING KARAMOJA CLOSED DISTRICT. NO VISITOR MAY ENTER WITHOUT AN OUTLYING DISTRICT'S PERMIT".

7 Referring to the change in the power locus in the area from elder to Chiefs, the Report of the Karamoja Security Committee mentions that,

"Their administrative authority has been taken over by appointed chiefs who have been imposed on the tribes. They (the chiefs) cannot therefore claim and actually do not get spontaneous loyalty from the tribes. Their value in maintaining law and order is inevitably very limited. It follows therefore that the strong chains of custom have been removed and replaced by the strange strings of local administration which are too weak to hold tribesmen away from raids" (Uganda Protectorate, 1961: 6).

It was after the appointment of the first District Commissioner for Karamoja in 1921 that boundaries in the region were drawn. However, it has been argued that the investigations to draw these boundaries were conducted during the wet season – which was a disadvantage for the Karimojong. The Karimojong practice a transhumance system of managing their livestock in that the livestock is moved to specific areas during specific seasons in rhythm with availability of scarcity of water and pasture. The general practice is that the livestock is concentrated in the eastern parts of the region during the rainy season. This is done because these areas are generally rocky with poor soils such that when the rains cease; the grass here often wilts immediately. It is normally then that the livestock are moved westward – through the central belt where the permanent settlements are to be found. It is argued that the investigations for drawing these boundaries did not appreciate the transhumance nature of the Karimojong resulting in a misjudgment that the vast land to west of the region reserved for the dry season was "unused land" and was allocated to the neighboring tribes (see Baker *ibid*: 192). For instance, the southwestern plains that had been grazed by the Bokora and Pian communities were given to Teso (Usuk area now in Katakwi district).

The marking of the boundaries, as elsewhere in the country, was done along "tribes" or "clans". Whereas the Karimojong practiced a local system of sharing resources, government demanded that the herders get written permission from the local chiefs to move from one area to another. In the end, these boundaries interfered with the seasonal movement of the Karimojong that enables them to track water and pasture within their region. Most of the reciprocal and complementary alliances that the Karimojong had developed locally were broken by these boundaries<sup>8</sup>.

The pastoralists also lost some land when it was gazetted by government into Kidepo Valley National Park, Matheniko game reserve; and South Karamoja controlled hunting area, forest reserves, &c. It is estimated that the Karimojong lost a total of about 5,000 square kilometers through all these adjustments (Mamdani, *op cit*: 23). This in turn heightened the conflicts between the different groups within the region (Ocan, *op cit*) since it reduced the links that had existed between them. As a consequence, rivalry and violent conflict over the available resources that were earlier used communally intensified, and have continued to date.

The main objectives of these moves were to encourage the Karimojong to adopt a sedentary system of livestock production and/or agriculture, and to the policy makers then, the reduction of the land available for a mobile production system was one way of achieving it.

### **2.1.3 Political Trends**

The stand taken by post-independence governments in Uganda on pastoralism and pastoralists has not been any different from the one by the colonial governments. Cisterino, (*op cit*: 90) contends that it is even harsher. This approach is partly to blame for the crisis that Karamoja is facing today.

In 1961, towards the end of the colonial era, a committee was commissioned with the task to “enquire into measures to be taken for the maintenance of Law and Order in Karamoja and matters directly related thereto and make recommendations”. The committee interpreted the phrase “matters directly related thereto” to embrace all measures social, cultural, and economic

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8. See Dyson-Hudson, *op cit* :231-235

*that would teach, induce and assist the Karimojong to live a settled and peaceful life and make progressive and law abiding citizens*<sup>9</sup>.

It is therefore not surprising that the post-colonial regimes did not change from the approach of sedentarization for the Karimojong. Indeed one of the recommendations of the Committee was that resettlement of the Karimojong into arable areas should be carried out so that more food crops could be introduced in their diet (Uganda Protectorate: 28). The thinking of the Karimojong should be changed from looking at cattle for prestige to that of cattle turned into cash (*ibid*: 27). It was also recommended that government strikes a ‘holy terror’ to enforce these changes (*ibid*: 16).

*“The only force they will respect is that superior to their own and the only authority, that which can fight and defeat them. The aim should be to strike holy terror among the people and show them that the government has enough warriors to combat with their own”.*

This is exactly what the independence governments did. Soon after independence in 1962-1963, government soldiers raided homesteads and forcibly confiscated spears punishing those found in possession of them. This period is locally referred to as *ekaru a’ mukuki*<sup>10</sup>.

The policy document that was meant to usher new perspectives and chart out a way forward for Karamoja left a lot to be desired. Instead of seeking to improve the livelihood of the Karimojong, it instead sought to “change the thinking” of the Karimojong about their mode of production. The document observed that, “*Economic development must be centered around cattle and cattle products, but it must be cattle turned into cash, and the Karimojong must be taught to think accordingly.*”<sup>11</sup> The cattle kept by the Karimojong were seen not as the basis of survival but as commodities.

The first independence government maintained military presence in the region to try to contain cattle rustling, which had escalated because of the poor governance and availability of weapons during the colonial area. The period between 1971 and 1979 under the presidency of General Idi Amin was characterized by brutality. The regime was keen to have the Karimojong join the ‘main stream’ of the rest of the Ugandan society. Probably having served as a soldier in both the colonial and the first independence regimes, and therefore having been influenced by the existing policies, Idi Amin handled the Karimojong with the kind of military hand that remains memorable to the people. He not only fought cattle rustling, but also attempted to radically change the social lifestyle of the Karimojong through, for instance, forced wearing of clothes and not wearing of traditional regalia and ornaments – refusal of which was punishable by death.

The overthrow of Idi Amin introduced a new dimension to the security situation in Karamoja. The Karimojong broke into the armory of Moroto army barracks and looted large amounts of arms and ammunitions. This introduced a new dimension to the conflict into the region. It was the Matheniko and the Tepeth groups, who are closest to the army barracks, that benefited most from the looting and this caused imbalance of power in the region. On the contrary, the Bokora group was the biggest victim – where they were raided of virtually all of their stocks. The increased number of raids also affected the neighboring districts as the raiders tried their luck in those areas.

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9 Uganda Protectorate, 1961, Report of the Karamoja Security Committee, p.vii.

10 Meaning the year of the spear. ‘Mukuki’ is a Swahili word for spear.

11 . See Cisterino, *op cit.*: 89, Report of the Karamoja security committee, 1961.

It was then upon the new regime to enforce peace in Karamoja and provide security to the neighboring communities. People's militia forces were therefore established in the neighboring districts in order to protect the communities from incursions of the raiders. During this period, there were often bloody clashes between the militia and the Karimojong. In one of these clashes, the militia from the Teso region killed a prominent warlord called Apaloris. There were also accusations that during this time, the Teso militia set up roadblocks where the Karimojong were forced out of the vehicles and later killed<sup>12</sup>.

The 1985 military coup that ushered in the short-lived military government led by General Tito Okello resulted into the disorganization of this militia force. Meanwhile, the government also mobilized and armed some Karimojong and took them to the capital to boost its badly tarnished military strength. When the regime was overthrown 6 months later, the Karimojong fled with their newly acquired arms thereby boosting the arsenal in the region. This weighed favorably for the Karimojong when they later mounted raiding campaigns against their neighbors<sup>13</sup>.

When the NRM government took power in 1986, it disbanded the militia force and absorbed some of its combatants into the regular army. However, there was no alternative force that would counter any attempts by the Karimojong to rustle cattle from these areas. This situation gave ground for unimpeded raids by the well-armed Karimojong against their defenseless neighbors. The same article in the *Weekly Topic* (February 25, 1994) attributed these raids to vengeance for the way these communities had treated them in the past when they had militia forces.

So right from the colonial era, the development focus for Karamoja has been resettlement of pastoralists, provision of water, schools, health facilities, agricultural projects, and security. The focus of the colonial government was to eliminate mobile pastoralism and so programs and social services were designed for sedentary people. This focus did not change with the post-independence governments. Since Uganda gained her independence, the Karamoja region has been regarded as a special case resulting in the 1964 Karamoja Act which offered the region a special status in as far as administration and development were concerned. This status was short lived, because in 1971, after a change of government, this status was repealed by the new regime. It was only in 1987 that the NRM government considered reinstating the special status on Karamoja.

#### **2.1.4 Socio-cultural situation**

It is important to understand the social and political organization of the Karimojong in order to understand how they try to get the best out the physical, political and economic environment they find themselves in. As mentioned above, the natural conditions and other factors, some of which are external to their immediate environment, impact on the alternatives available for their survival and are responsible for shaping their options for survival. The two main ways in which the Karimojong society is organized is through territorial, and age groups. Our argument here is

12 For instance see *The Weekly Topic*, February 25, 1994.

13. In a paper he presented for a conference on peace and sustainable development for Karamoja and neighboring districts in 1994, Hon. Dan Michael Ochyengh, delegate from Kapelebyong to the Constituent Assembly discusses this in more detail.

that Karimojong adaptations are best defined using the political criterion, which is why we choose to look at the basic forms of political organization.

Whereas Dyson-Hudson (*op cit.*, p.104-154) details Karimojong territoriality, specifically describing the clan system, we argue here that the nature of the demands for security today makes organizing along the clans inappropriate because grazing camps are organized on the basis of loyalty to and respect for the abilities of the kraal leader to offer good leadership and protection for the stocks and not on the basis of clan or lineage<sup>14</sup>.

The Karimojong maintain two types of settlements: the permanent settlement or homestead (*ere*) where most of the family members (mainly women, children, and the elderly) stay, and the temporary settlements or grazing camps (*nawii*), which are the dwelling places of the herds-boys and warriors. The temporary settlements are established in the grazing areas – often located some distance from the *ere*, and this is where the livestock are kept. Each kraal is under the leadership of a battle-hardened kraal leader and his following is dependent on his ability to present himself as a credible warrior whose choices and strategies can ensure the safety of livestock, and can lead to increase the stocks through raids.

The age system is the most important form of social organization among the Karimojong, and it is through this system that roles and authority among the males are assigned and managed. The age-set system; its nature and role are discussed in detail in Muhereza and Otim (2002: 132-139) but suffice it to mention here that the adult Karimojong males are divided into two age units: the senior and the junior generation-sets. By nature of the system, a father and son cannot belong to the same generation, and so the father always belongs to a generation set that is senior to that of the son. But whereas it would sound s, eligibility for initiation is not by virtue of being a mature male per se, but rather is based on a complex system that takes into consideration which generation set your father belongs to. It is only the sons of the reigning senior generation set who are eligible for initiation. As a result, the sons of the men in the junior generation set are not initiated and belong to the unrecognized group of *ngidooi* or rats. Ironically, these form the majority of the male population in Karamoja, and are the actual ‘combatants’ engaged in the wars for security and aggression. This traditional system provides that the fathers (senior generation set) provides leadership to the sons (junior generation set) in a corporate manner, and so our argument is that the existence of the vast majority of the armed warriors today, who do not belong to the junior generation set, presents a situation of a power vacuum since their fathers cannot exercise traditional authority over them – but instead it is the grandfathers of the warriors, who belong to the senior generation set. The result is that the youth have little or no respect for the elders since most of them are senile and depend on these warriors for their survival. This partly explains the position that “elders no longer have power” in Karamoja. This means that the traditional age-set system, which confers the highest traditional authority on the elders, is inadequate in traditionally handling the security situation in the region today.

### **2.1.5 Economic Situation**

We have described the limitations of the natural environment in providing viable alternatives for survival and shown how the Karimojong as the most efficient economic activity and source of livelihood adopts pastoralism. The livestock does not satisfy only nutritional needs but is also exchanged for cash that may be used to purchase other essentials.

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14 See Muhereza and Otim 2002, Pastoral Resource Competition in Uganda. Utrecht. International Books.

Suffice it to mention here that livestock production contributes 7.5% of the total GDP in Uganda, and of this, 90% of the total herd is under small holders and traditional pastoralist sector (Meat Production Study). Hides and skins on the other hand contributed up to 5.7% of Uganda's export earnings according to the 2001 figures. But in spite of this, pastoralists remain to be a group that benefits least from national development, and poverty levels in these areas are the highest in the country.

### **2.1.6 Actors**

The relationships between the different groups are characterized by shifts in alliances and conflict. The actors are therefore diverse in form and nature. In the past, different ethnic groups in the region had 'traditional' allies 'traditional' or long-term enemies, and was the latter groups that each ethnic group believed they were justified in attacking and raiding. For instance, the Karimojong (Bokora, Pian, and the Matheniko) traditionally consider themselves as kin and would therefore not attack each other and would instead ally with each other for purposes of protection, defense, and attack. However, this is not the situation today and probably some of the most viscous raids and battles have been conducted against and fought between these groups. For instance the data collected shows that today the Matheniko are allies with a group that is supposed to be their traditional enemies, the Jie. The Bokora are also known to ally with sections of the Jie against the Dodoth, a group that is also considered to be close kin to the Karimojong. These alliances have also involved groups from across the border in Kenya. The situation reports from both Kapchorwa and Nakapiripirit districts show that the Pokot of Kenya and the Pokot of Uganda form alliances to raid the Pian of Nakapiripirit and the Sabiny of Kapchorwa district. The Turkana of Kenya on the other hand have been allies of the Matheniko, with whom they have raided the Bokora and Pian. The Jie also ally with the Turkana. Whereas it Jie and Matheniko used to be sworn traditional enemies, the strategic alliance by each of these groups with the Turkana partly explains the present solidarity between the three. The reports indicate that it is this alliance (Jie/Matheniko/Turkana) that has been the most. The Dodoth of Kotido are also in alliance with the Toposa of southern Sudan. However, their alliance has mainly been for grazing, to access the grazing land in Uganda, and also for protection.

However, it should be noted that these alliances and enmities are not permanent but often shift since they are driven by individualistic concerns for survival and/or profit other than be sentiments of community survival like it used to be. The same applies to the Sabiny community – where some sections also raid from others.

The result is that on the one hand all the cattle-keeping groups in the region are actors in these conflicts, and the form and nature of the conflicts change as alliances change. On the other hand, in a bid to control and/or forestall some of these conflicts, government has sometimes become an actor in the conflicts in the region. Consequently the occurrence and spatial distribution of events is unpredictable and follows the trends of the existing alliances.

### **2.1.7 Outlook**

The future of pastoralism has been subject to discussion with two schools of thought coming out distinctly. One considers pastoralism as doomed to extinction like the hunter-gatherers before them, because of undue competition for natural resources and love for numbers – embedded in the 'tragedy of the commons' and 'cattle complex' theories. The second school of thought



argues that pastoralism is inherently adaptive that is why it has withstood various threats – proving its reliance.

The ‘doom’ perspective was influential in the colonial period and was responsible for policies that pursued the pacification approach sought to restriction of mobility in order to enforce law and order, individualization of land as opposed to communal use that characterizes pastoralism. In spite of its failures, this approach continues to dominate the minds of policy makers to date.

The present Government has shown interest in and desire to provide a lasting solution to the crisis in the Karamoja region, and to stimulate development and transformation to the region. However, these efforts need to be streamlined and focused towards: a) developing pastoralism as a viable mode of production and livelihood; and b) provide viable options for survival for pastoralists. These should lead to a reduction in the reliance on natural factors for production and livelihood, and will reduce the dependence on pastoralism for livelihood.

Probably what offers the best opportunity for pastoralists to benefit from national development programs today is the PEAP. The PEAP is to be achieved through four main goals, also referred to as ‘pillars’. Pillar one seeks to achieve rapid and sustainable economic growth and transformation so as to transform Uganda’s economy to a modern one. The second seeks to provide good governance and security for all. We should note here that it is under pillar two that the disarmament program was designed. The disarmament was intended to provide security in the area and therefore provide an enabling environment for the victims of cattle rustling to benefit from the various development programs. Pillar three highlights strengthening the ability of the poor to increase their incomes. It is in this pillar that the PMA is enshrined, the need to transform agriculture. The fourth pillar aims directly at increasing the quality of life of the poor.

These goals are comprehensive but do not address the root causes of the poverty and crisis in the Karamoja region. Nevertheless, a number of efforts have also been put forth to present the case for the inclusion of pastoralism in the poverty eradication strategies and programs. This is more so with the present revision of the PEAP, implementation of the PMA, and the NAADS. This gives the impression that the pastoralist perspective will be highlighted in these programs and strategies, which may result into appropriate strategies and policies being developed for pastoralists.

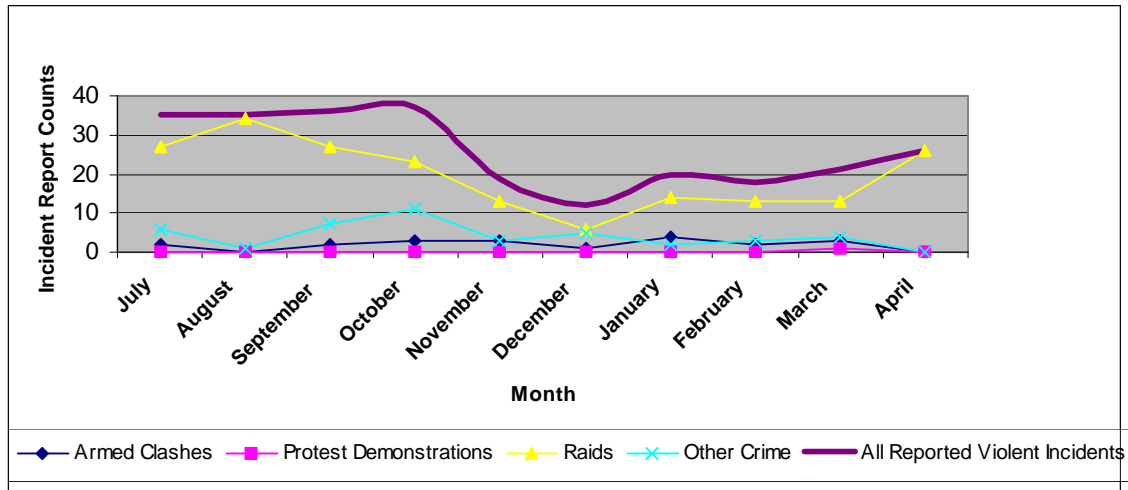
### 3. An overview of the current situation

#### *Violent Incidents*

It is argued that the recent past has seen an escalation in raids and conflicts as a result of the failure of the disarmament program. Figure one below gives a summary of all violent incident reports between July 2003 and April 2004. It shows that the most reported violent incident was cattle raids. The period July to mid-October 2003 was the highest number. The plausible explanation for this is that this is often the onset of the harvest season, and by then, the people are already aware of either poor harvest or total crop failure. In short, there is little or no food to harvest. As a result, the people seek to increase their livestock in order to improve on their livelihood options through the coming 4-6 months of the dry season. The traditional approach to increasing one’s stock of livestock is through raiding.

The subsequent drop in raiding incidents may be as a result of the dry season movements/migrations where the herds are moved to the dry season grazing areas – most times to areas far from settlements. Raiders therefore have to redesign strategies of attack. At the same time, this is often the period when news alliances are forged or old ones that had split during the wet season rejuvenated. These changes, coupled with the preoccupation with setting up new grazing patterns and defence structures in the newly established kraals, often make it difficult for raiders to launch attacks

**Figure 1: Violent incident reports for the Karamoja Cluster, Uganda, July 2003 – April 2004**



The category of ‘other crime’ in the above figure refers to violent acts like road banditry. This is an unpredictable phenomenon that is influenced by factors like proximity of the warriors to roads, or the level of their involvement in cattle raids. August 2003 reported the lowest in other crime, yet it recorded the highest in cattle raids. The same scenario occurred in April 2004. The possible explanation is that when the warriors are very engaged in cattle raids, they have minimal presence on the roads and so fewer cases of road banditry. The month of December 2003 registered the highest ‘other crimes’. There were a number of road ambushes reported in October 2003. October marks the onset of the dry season – and therefore the beginning of migration of kraals. The availability of the warriors because of the on-going movements makes travelers prone to attack.

Protest demonstrations were the least prevalent. The only one reported was in Karenga parish in Dodoth County, Kotido district where a group of heavily armed Toposa warriors from the Sudan stormed the UPDF detachment there demanding for the over 400 heads of cattle that the army recovered from retreating Jie warriors after they had raided the Toposa/Dodoth kraals.

### ***Livestock losses***

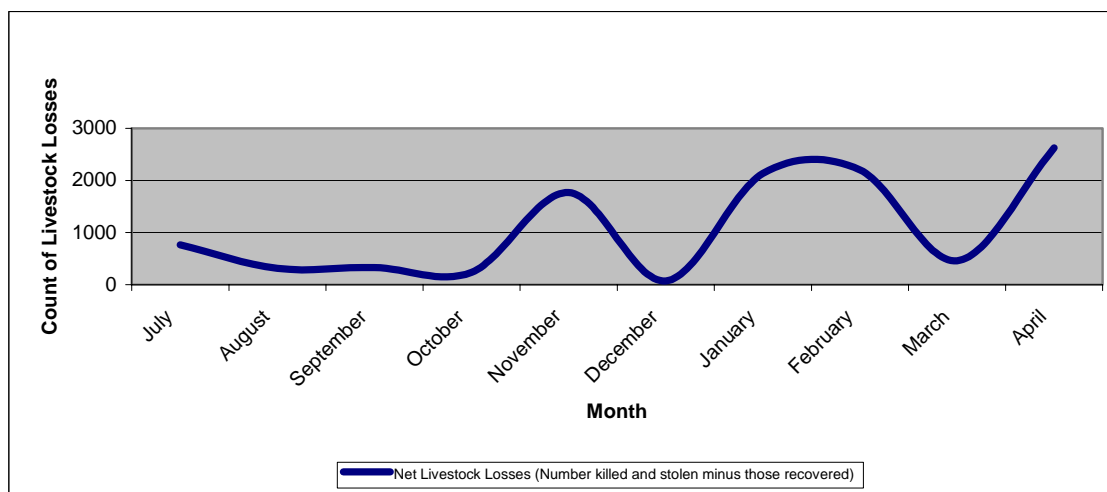
The first observation we make here is that figure two below shows that between July 2003 and April 2004 there is no month in which there was no loss of livestock reported. The low count for the first months between July and mid-October 2003 may be as a result of actual few losses occurring out of the cattle raids. It should be noted that livestock losses do not necessarily correspond to the number of reported raids (see figures 1 and 2) because some of the raids were barely successful. This happens if the raiders are repulsed or when raided cattle are recovered.

However, we would like to observe that this could also be related to the ‘teething problems’ on the side of the Field Monitors, as they were yet to get used to the exercise and the instruments. We shall be able to make a stronger argument on this scenario with subsequent data. The increase from mid October and peak in November could be explained by the beginning of the dry-season migrations. These movements often weaken security in the kraals, as warriors are often yet to map out their new environments. Because of this fact, some of the warriors who form part of the defence force for the livestock also want to go raiding and as a result, the defence is weakened.

January, February and March are dry season months. The dry season is characterized by alliances between the different groups so as to access water and pasture from often far from their homes. The result is boosted strengths in most of the kraals, which results in their ability to mount successful raids. This is also sometimes an undoing because when the team goes on a raiding mission, the kraals are often left with thin defence since much of the force will have gone raiding.

The drop between March and April is because this is the beginning of the wet season and this is when the kraals start moving back to their wet season grazing areas. It also often results into splits in the alliances. The April peak then comes as a result of this splits and therefore weakness in the defence of the livestock.

It should be observed here that the livestock losses do not necessarily relate to the number of reported raids (see figures 1 and 2) because some of the raids were barely successful and so with minimal loss of livestock. Figure 2: Net livestock losses in the Karamoja Cluster, Uganda, July 2003 – April 2004

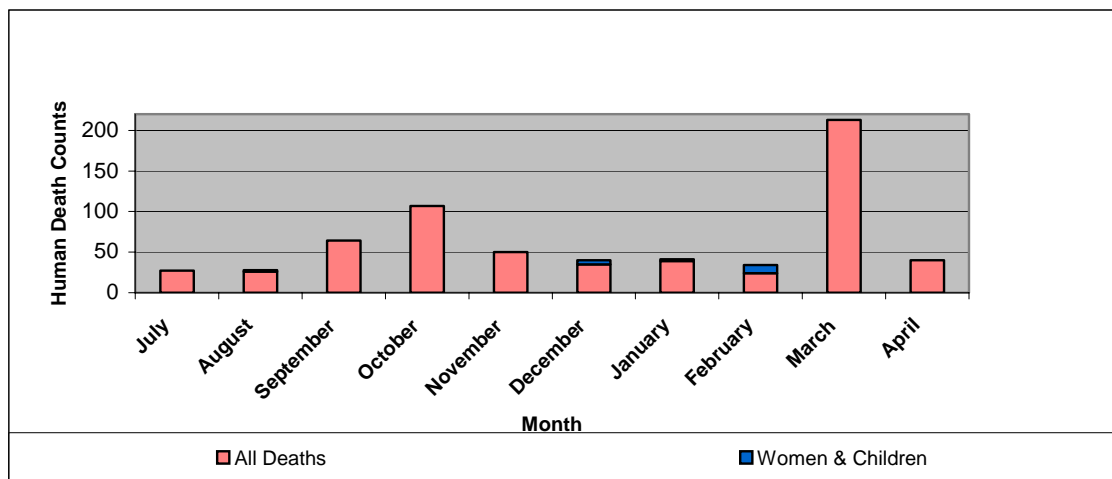


### ***Human deaths***

Other than loss of livestock, the other deplorable consequence of cattle raids is loss of human life. Whereas the figures can be said to reduce human life to numbers, the social impact is heavy. The formations akin to military formations that the kraal leaders develop are not only meant to protect the livestock but also minimize human deaths. This explains the episodic death toll as shown by Figure three below. Human deaths are highest in the months when livestock losses are

low, (December 2003 and March 2004), and low when the livestock losses are high (January and February). One possible explanation is that the battles that often are associated with failed raids leave a number of people dead, whereas the successful raids with large livestock losses are often associated with minimum or no loss of human life. This is because the latter are related to lapses in security such that the livestock is raided without much fighting.

**Figure 3: Human deaths in the Karamoja Cluster, Uganda, July 2003 – April 2004**



### ***Vulnerability ratings***

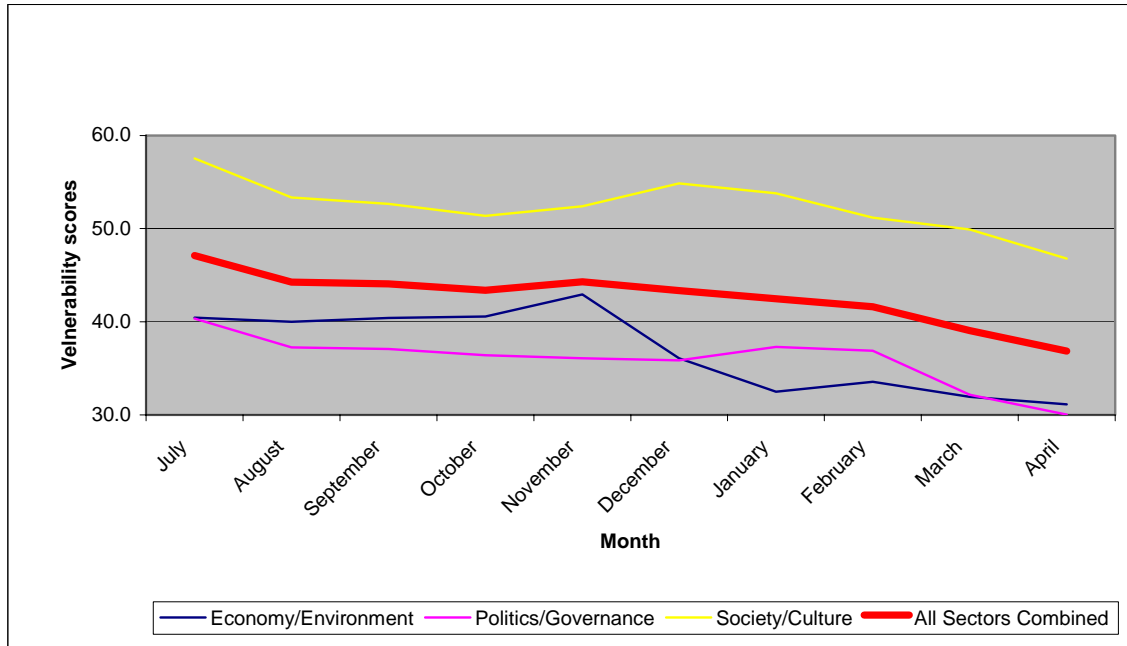
The question of vulnerability is related to the factors that make the situation vulnerable to conflict. These include the economy/environment, politics/governance, society/culture, and others. Figure four below indicates a general trend of declining vulnerability ratings. This is not in consonance with the increases in violence as indicated in figure one, and various factors may explain this.

Whereas November and December 2003 show an increase in the vulnerability rating of environmental and economic factors, it is immediately followed by a sharp decline. This is because November/December show the intensification of the dry season and therefore increased scarcity of water and pasture for the livestock. However, the response is mobility where the herders move their livestock to other resource rich areas, most times outside the region into the neighboring districts. This explains the drop in vulnerability.

The ratings of politics/governance are generally low although January and February 2004 were an exception. This may be because of the sentiments that were expressed by the leaderships of the neighboring districts to the effect that they were not going to allow the Karimojong to enter their districts for dry season. In spite of this, the Karimojong moved into these districts and this may explain the tensions.

The highest vulnerability scores by the category of society or culture. It also shows fluctuating trends. The general observation is that the society/culture curve is similar to the politics/governance curve, which can be interpreted to indicate a relationship. Culture or traditions is/are dynamic, and what people choose to make relevant depends on factors that are

sometimes outside the local. The role of such factors in influencing the options available to and decisions of individuals is critical. It can be said that mobility and politics/governance have played a significant role in the declining trend in vulnerability ratings. Figure 4: Vulnerability ratings for the Uganda side of the Karamoja Cluster, July 2003 – April 2004



Below, we present selected cases that show two scenarios of the types of conflicts and main actors. The first scenario presents cases where the State is an actor in conflict. It presents a situation where policies that are intended to bring peace end up fuelling conflict. The second scenario on the other hand presents cases of internal conflicts within the region and shows relentless attacks even when they are not successful in terms of taking livestock. It also shows the conflict relationship between the Jie and Dodoth, immediate neighbors, which is characteristic of the relationships between most of the neighboring communities in the region unless they are on friendly terms allied – in which case they will have a strong force for purposes of raiding their neighbors. Understanding the nature of these conflicts is important for conflict resolution and any attempts at fore-stalling conflicts.

#### **CASE 1**

On January 27, 2004, one warrior was killed and an unspecified number of people beaten in a roadblock mounted by the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) along the Moroto-Iriir road at Lorengecora parish Iriir sub county, Bokora county in Moroto district recover illegal guns from the warriors. A few days later, on January 29, 2004, some warriors were shot at by the UPDF near Kangole Trading Centre. The warriors reacted by mobilizing to attack the military detachment in protest over these incidents. 3 personnel of the Local Defence Unit (LDU), a militia force, and 4 members of the community were killed. On January 30, 2004, the UPDF/LDU mounted a military operation in the neighboring villages using heavy battle tanks – in an attempt to flush out the warriors. 15 people were arrested and 21 guns recovered by the army. It was also reported that people lost property as their homes and shops were looted.

It took meetings between the elders, local leaders and the military to quell the situation.

**CASE 2**

Jie warriors attacked Dodoth kraals at Kaimese parish, Lolelia sub county in Dodoth county, Kotido district on November 30, 2003 and took over 200 heads of cattle. There was heavy exchange of fire in which 5 people were reported killed there was one injury. On the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2003, the Jie attacked the kraals at Lobongia parish, but were not successful. The Dodoth recovered all the livestock they had taken after hot pursuit. One of the attackers was killed. Another attempt mounted on 11<sup>th</sup> December by the Jie on the kraals at Kamacarikol Parish in Kathile Sub county was not successful. Four of the attackers were killed and an unspecified number injured – evidenced by the trails of blood.

## 4. Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment

### 4.1 Proximate Factors

Karamoja is a region that has benefited least from government since Uganda attained independence. We attribute this to two main factors: i) the perceptions of pastoralism held by policy makers, – who continue to make policies and design programs that do not take into consideration the pastoralist mode of production, and ii) the perspectives pastoralists themselves hold about what is outside their mode of production. Because the Karimojong have remained largely insignificant – socially, economically, and politically, - most governments have shown little concern with their livelihood, or if they have, the policies continue to be inappropriate. For decades, governments have aimed at stopping the Karimojong from practicing their mobile way of production and lifestyle and at forcing them to adopt a sedentary mode of production. In political circles, it is generally agreed that mobile pastoralism is not only backward but also destructive to the environment.

As indicated in chapter 2 above, there are a number of factors that are responsible for the inherent conflict situation in the Karamoja region. These include natural/environmental, social, political, and economic – both internal/local to the region, and external. These may have an increasing or decreasing effect on the likelihood of conflict. Whereas the natural/environmental factors are largely responsible for the lack of food in the region, the state has not been able to provide a viable solution. The result has been escalating conflict of resources in the region.

A browse through the literature on conflicts in Karamoja suggests that there has been a fundamental shift in the nature and form of raids in the Karamoja region from small traditionally sanctioned raids using spears, to large raids mainly for economic gain (Ocan, 1992, Otim, 2000, Muhereza & Otim, 2002). The increasing availability of small arms and light weapons in the region mainly as a result of the wars in southern Sudan, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), plus the economic motive have been blamed for the increasing proliferation of arms in the region and for the ever-escalating raids

### 4.2 Factors Accelerating Conflicts

We have described the natural environment of the region and shown how it has contributed to scarcity of resources in the area. Because of frequent crop failure, the people have opted to pastoralism for their survival. However, livestock requires adequate pasture and water for them

to thrive and since the two are in short supply, this raises competition, which has often resulted into conflicts.

Our argument is therefore that in spite of these seemingly good intentions of bringing development to the region, infrastructure and general development in Karamoja has remained the poorest in the country. Policies designed to reduce rangeland through gazettement and alienation of land has reduced the land available for grazing and so lead to increased competition for the few resources. The situation was exacerbated by the increased availability of arms in the region as individuals not only sought to violently keep off others from certain areas but also raided livestock from them.

The militarized approaches to interventions in Karamoja resulted into poor relations between the Karimojong and the government – to the extent that the Karimojong see the state more-or-less as an enemy. No wonder government is called *aryeng* – meaning enemy. Whereas in 2001 the Karamoja disarmament program had been received with optimism and enthusiasm by most people in the area.

The disarmament program for Karamoja was launched in December 2001 with the aim of removing illegal guns from the people. The process was divided into 2 phases: the voluntary phase – where the people were given the opportunity to voluntarily return the guns to government, and the forceful phase when the guns would be recovered by force by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF). It is however important to note that under this program, illegal guns were also recovered from Kapchorwa district. A total of 7,319 guns were recovered during the voluntary phase and 3,367 during the forceful phase, 1,418 of which were voluntarily handed in<sup>15</sup>.

As a measure to boost the security in the area, government sought to recruit warriors into a paramilitary Local Defence Unit / Force. One condition of being recruited was that one had to own a gun, which would then be registered as government property and given back to the individual who would undergo military training.

According to the strategy, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and Local Defence Units (LDUs) were to deploy at the border with Kenya and Sudan to ward off any attempts by the pastoralists from these countries to launch attacks at the disarmed Karimojong. However, one of the challenges that was encountered and which also contributed to the apparent failure of the program was the lack of protection against attacks from across the borders<sup>16</sup>.

Probably one of the biggest criticisms of the disarmament program was that it was a unilateral decision by the government of Uganda with apparent disregard of the regional nature of what is often referred to as the 'Karamoja problem'. This is in spite of the existence of regional inter-governmental organizations like the East African Community and IGAD – through which the government of Uganda could have sought to address the disarmament issue. The relentless raids from the neighboring pastoralist groups in especially Kenya and the Sudan were a discouragement to the groups in the Karamoja region. Since the cause factors had not been adequately addressed, the region was plunged back into conflict situation. There are reports of free movement of arms and ammunition in the region and it is argued that the warriors have rearmed. The data collected on violent events attests to this.

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15 See <http://www.karamojadata.org/disarmament2.htm>.

16 See Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development & Centre for Basic Research, 2003 Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP), Moroto District Report. Kampala

Whereas it is true that the present government has exhibited concern about bringing change to Karamoja, some of the development projects have borne frustrating results. Before then, most of the projects in the region were carried out mainly by international NGOs whose projects are usually ad-hoc and spontaneous responses to problems of famine, disease or violence in the region and were not aimed at a long-term improvement of pastoral life (Wabwire, 1993). It was the establishment of the Karamoja Development Agency (KDA), by Statute 4 of 1987, which ushered the present state-led development programs into the region. The aim of establishing the Agency was to have it spearhead development in Karamoja. The functions of the Agency focused on transforming the Karimojong people by diversifying and improving their mode of production, improving facilities for social services in the region and coordinate all developmental projects in the region. One of the functions included providing sufficient water for the region for the purpose of developing agriculture and animal industry<sup>17</sup>.

The achievements of KDA have been downplayed by the accusations that the Agency was generally a failure – mainly as a result of poor leadership and financial mismanagement<sup>18</sup>. The activities and projects of KDA were financed through a grant from the European Community.

The establishment of the Ministry of State for Karamoja later, on top of KDA, seems to authenticate government interest in finding a solution to the problems in the region. Later in 1998, the Karamoja Projects Implementation Unit (KPIU) was also formed with the same objective of fostering the development of the region.

Suffice it to say that whereas these developments have taken place, all these structures and efforts seem to be transient in that they have not been able to usher in a lasting solution to the crisis in the region. This creates the impression that there is still a problem of effective planning, coordination and implementation for Karamoja.

### 4.3 Factors Decelerating Conflict

Government interventions in the region – right from the colonial period – were all aimed at bringing about development in the region. However, they were and still are misdirected because of the failure to appreciate pastoralism as a mode of production. But suffice it to say that this good will has resulted into building of some confidence in government. This partly explains the positive response during the disarmament where over 80% of the guns were voluntarily surrendered to government.

The increasing presence of NGOs and donors also helped to boost the levels of external intervention in the area. The increase in the presence of NGOs in the area was preceded by the phenomenal famine of 1980, and it is no surprise that their development focus was more with agriculture (Okudi, 1992; Wabwire, 1993).

The concerns for development for Karamoja went alongside security concerns since the security of development workers was often at stake as they conducted their activities. This resulted in

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17. See Statute 4: Karamoja Development Agency Statute, 1987, Government of Uganda.

18. See Wabwire, op cit; report of the Proceedings of The Karamoja Forum, May 17-20, 1995; The New Vision, September 19, 1995; and The People, February 28, 1996. KDA is also accused of sidelining the local people in the process of project design and implementation resulting to the failure of most of the projects.



different strategies for peace building and conflict management in the region – also as a result of donor interest. These include the POKATUSA peace-building project funded by DFID through World Vision, which aims to build capacity among the Pokot, Karimojong, Turkana and Sabinu – thus, the origin on the acronym. Karamoja Agro pastoral Development Project, a long-standing development project in the region also conducts training in peace building. Other Community Based Organizations (CBOs) like the Karamoja initiative for Sustainable Peace, Matheniko Development Forum, and the Kotido Peace Initiative all conduct programs on peace building as part of their development programs.

The effects of such approaches are that many individuals have had contact with the outside world and have been educated on the ills of conflict and methods of avoiding and or resolving conflicts. However, the question is to what extent do people put this information and knowledge into practice?

The government of Uganda put in place the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) as a framework to guide sector planning, and, the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) as the framework for transformation of the agriculture. The biggest criticism with regard to the pastoralist economy is that the focus is on settled cultivators. Only after clear policies for the pastoralists are brought on board will this poverty alleviation strategy be beneficial to pastoralists.

The introduction of alternative forms of survival also reduces the dependence on the traditional pastoralist mode of production. A case in point is the mineral prospecting. Mining is an area of growing interest to both the Karimojong and the entrepreneurs, and mining of limestone and marble is carried out in many areas of the Karamoja region today. However, the interests of the local community in the business need to be protected. Wrangles already occurred between the entrepreneurs themselves and between the entrepreneurs and the communities<sup>19</sup>. Only when the needs of the pastoralists are protected will the people be able to reap the benefits of this alternative. This will in turn reduce competition for the meager natural resources that has been a major cause of violent conflict in the region.

#### 4.4 Best Case Scenario

The best-case scenario is when policy makers and planners change attitudes towards pastoralism and pastoralists, and start seeing the former as a viable mode of production and the latter as a rational people with limited options for survival. This is related to the question of the perspectives people hold about pastoralists, which perspectives are responsible for the stereotypes and biases with regard to pastoralism and pastoralists. The images and prejudices people hold about the Karimojong play a critical role in shaping how they (including scholars, policy makers, and development workers) regard pastoralism and relate with pastoralists. It is the influence from the school of thought that looks at pastoralism as a ‘primitive’ production system that leads policy makers and development practitioners to design and develop interventions that seek to change pastoralists from primitivism to modernity – here defined as settlement. This is done with disregard of the limitations of the physical environment and the adoptive nature of pastoralists and so the interventions fall short of providing viable alternatives for survival. As a result, the Karamoja region has suffered neglect and inappropriate programs that has given the impetus for lawlessness to thrive.

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<sup>19</sup> See UPPAP Moroto District Report; Muhereza, 2003.

A change in such prejudices and biases will lead to the appreciation of pastoralism as a viable mode of production that not only ensures the survival of a sizeable proportion of society, but also significantly contributes to the national economy. Livestock production currently accounts for 7.5% of Uganda's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, it is important to note that of the approximately 5.6 million cattle in the country only 10% are under ranching schemes while traditional pastoral grazers and smallholder farmers hold 90%<sup>20</sup>. This underscores the contribution of pastoralism to the national economy, and yet pastoralism as a production system still fights for recognition by policy makers. Even Uganda's policy framework for eradication of poverty, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan, has holes with regard to consideration of pastoralism because interventions target only commercial ranching, the 10%.

A change in attitude will result in a change of the approach, and will see appropriate policies that an enabling environment for the development and improvement of the pastoralist sector. This will provide for appropriate inputs and technologies, and a diversification of the livelihoods through the introduction of viable alternatives. This is expected to reduce the overdependence on the low producing pastoralist livestock and will also offer alternatives for income generation. As a result, commercials raiding may be curbed.

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#### 4.5 Worst Case Scenario

Continued disenfranchisement of pastoralists through policies that do not seek the development of pastoralism as a viable mode of production but instead see it as an irrational production system that is destructive to environment and therefore needs to be eliminated will lead to failure of the various attempts at development in pastoral areas precisely because of the approach. External influence in livestock trade and criminal behavior including illegal arms trafficking can take advantage of the worsening lawlessness in the region to thrive in their activities. This will lead to escalating raids and banditry in the region to the extent of scaring away of development workers in the region. This is a situation that is already worrying some NGOs operating in the area at present.

#### 4.6 Most Likely Case Scenario

The present government has portrayed a desire to seek for a lasting solution to the situation in the Karamoja region. The moves to create structures and institutions for the development of Karamoja and restoration of peace and security in the area are a step in the right direction, and this provides the basis for stating here that there is hope for peace, security and development of the region.

Unless there is deliberate and conscious change in outlook by policy makers, the status quo will prevail – where various efforts at bringing peace and development to the region are more of short-term solutions because the root problems are not addressed.

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<sup>20</sup> See Uganda Investment Authority 2002; Republic of Uganda 2001.

## 5. Policy Needs/Response Options

The strongest argument we make in this report is that there is need for change in outlook of government and policy makers on pastoralism. This may be done through:

- Sensitization and education programs that target of policy makers and development workers on the rationale of pastoralism, its constraints and opportunities. The assumption here is that this will help them reflect on previous policies and identify where they fall short of providing an enabling environment for the development of pastoral. This will result into the formulation of policies and interventions that do not just treat symptoms but address the very development of the needs of pastoralists.
- Deliberate increase and tailoring of budgetary allocations addressing the sometimes unique needs for development in the Karamoja ought to be considered by government
- Interventions by Civil Society and Development agencies that seek to sensitize both development planners and the local people in Karamoja Region will help in highlighting the needs of the region and direct attention of planning processes to address these specific needs of the Karamoja region.
- Develop strategies and systems for service delivery that are conducive to the mobile nature of the pastoralist production system. The Alternative basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) program, which seeks to provide education for mobile populations, should be expanded to all the areas in the region since it has been piloted for over five years now with commendable results. This will go a long way to bringing enlightenment to the community, thereby addressing the problems of illiteracy, poverty and other development challenges that have characterized the region.
- Policies developed should incorporate those traditional practices that have proved to be helpful in maintaining pastoralism as a viable mode of livelihood.
- We have already alluded to the need for the inclusion of the pastoralist mode of production in the formulation of development policies. This should start from the appreciation and recognition of pastoralism as a mode of livelihood. This will lead to the introduction of appropriate technologies that will improve the efficiency of pastoralism and/or harness the hash environment inhabited by pastoralists – which contributed to the conflict situation in the region.
- There is need to development early warning systems for drought and famine. This will help in planning so that the response can change from the present ‘fire brigade’ approach to a more effective and prepared ‘help’ approach.
- Conflict early warning will also go a long way in anticipating and forestalling violent conflict in the region.

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## Appendix 1: Population characteristics of the Areas of Reporting

District	County	Sub county	Males	Females	Total	
KAPCHORWA	KONGASIS	BUKWA	5,468	5,488	10,956	
		CHESOWER	4,810	4,906	9,716	
		KABEI	5,847	5,750	11,597	
	KWEEN	SUAM	9,020	8,537	17,557	
		BENET	16,880	16,451	33,331	
		BINYINY	5,508	5,721	11,229	
		KAPRORON	5,023	5,007	10,030	
		KWANYINY	5,757	5,919	11,676	
	TINGEY	NGENGE	1,326	1,171	2,497	
		CHEMA	5,321	5,497	10,818	
		KAPCHORWA T.C.	4,235	4,667	8,902	
		KAPTANYA	6,256	6,300	12,556	
		KASEREM	5,471	5,518	10,989	
		KAWOWO	4,385	4,538	8,923	
		SIPI	4,171	4,233	8,404	
		TEGERES	7,048	7,281	14,329	
<i>DISTRICT TOTAL</i>			<b>96,526</b>	<b>96,984</b>	<b>193,510</b>	
KOTIDO	DODOTH	KAABONG	16,389	14,433	30,822	
		KALAPATA	30,448	32,003	62,451	
		KAPEDO	21,566	21,281	42,847	
		KARENGA	19,308	16,903	36,211	
		KATHILE	24,079	25,215	49,294	
		LOLELIA	13,804	14,604	28,408	
		LOYORO	14,671	16,851	31,522	
		SIDOK	18,005	16,927	34,932	
		KAABONG SUB-COUNTY	30,668	32,620	63,288	
		JIE	KACHERI	9,671	9,072	18,743
	KOTIDO		17,124	15,562	32,686	
	KOTIDO TOWN		6,517	6,992	13,509	
	NAKAPELIMORU		10,834	10,180	21,014	
	PANYANGARA		23,856	23,455	47,311	
	REGEN		12,468	12,034	24,502	
	LABWOR	ABIM	7,482	8,021	15,503	
		ALEREK	6,389	7,180	13,569	
		LOTUKEI	5,646	5,953	11,599	
		MORULEM	4,705	5,266	9,971	
		NYAKWAE	3,860	4,088	7,948	
<i>DISTRICT TOTAL</i>			<b>297,490</b>	<b>298,640</b>	<b>596,130</b>	
MOROTO	BOKORA	IRIIRI	11,800	13,942	25,742	
		LOKOPO	3,097	3,785	6,882	
		LOPEI	6,714	7,398	14,112	
		LOTOME	10,315	11,542	21,857	
		MATANY	5,930	7,386	13,316	
		NGOLERJET	7,530	8,336	15,866	
		KATIKEKILE	7,958	8,064	16,022	
	MATHENIKO	NADUNGET	12,295	13,829	26,124	
		RUPA	10,382	10,027	20,409	
		KRAALS	1,232	1,440	2,672	
	MOROTO MUNICIPALITY	NORTHERN DIVISION	2,078	2,041	4,119	
		SOUTHERN DIVISION	1,607	1,778	3,385	
	<i>DISTRICT TOTAL</i>			<b>80,938</b>	<b>89,568</b>	<b>170,506</b>
	NAKAPIRIPIT	CHEKWII	KAKOMONGOLE	4,408	4,840	9,248
MORUITA			5,171	4,420	9,591	
NAKAPIRIPIT TOWN COU			854	804	1,658	
PIAN		NAMALU	14,696	16,429	31,125	
		LOLCHAT	6,361	7,485	13,846	
		LORENGEDWAT	2,793	3,166	5,959	
POKOT		NABILATUK	8,842	10,719	19,561	
		AMUDAT	10,353	8,247	18,600	
		KARITA	15,899	14,194	30,093	
		LOROO	7,515	6,666	14,181	
<i>DISTRICT TOTAL</i>			<b>76,892</b>	<b>76,970</b>	<b>153,862</b>	