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The impact of VSF-Belgium's interventions on conflict in Karamoja

A research on conflict and peace



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Abbreviations

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
AU-IBAR	African Union – Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources
CAHW	Community Animal Health Worker
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEWERU	Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit
CMDRR	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
DADO	Dodoth Agro-pastoralist Development Organization
DDG-DRC	Danish Demining Group – Danish Refugee Council
DISO	District Internal Security Officer
DNH	Do No Harm
DPC	District Police Commander
EC	European Commission
FSTP	Food Security Thematic Program
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICRD	Improved Community Response to Drought
IGA	Income generating activity
KADP	Karamoja Agro-pastoral Development Programme
KIDDP	Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan
KLDP	Karamoja Livestock Development Program
LDU	Local Defense Unit
L4L	Livestock for Livelihoods
MADEFO	Matheniko Development Forum
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PFS	Pastoral Field School
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
REGLAP	Regional Learning and Advocacy Program
RPC	Regional Police Commander
TUPADO	Turkana Pastoralist Development Organization
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UPDF	Uganda People’s Defence Forces
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VICOBA	Village Community Banking
VSF-B	Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Belgium
WFP	World Food Program

The impact of VSF-Belgium's interventions on conflict in Karamoja

Introduction

The semi-arid region of Karamoja in North-eastern Uganda is one of the least developed and poorest regions in the country. For many decades, conflict and armed violence have undermined development in the region, resulting in some of the lowest poverty, human development and service delivery indicators for Uganda (Saferworld, 2010, p.6). The insecurity, traditional cattle rustling and proliferation of small arms made it a hazardous undertaking for development actors to operate in the region.

When Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Belgium (VSF-B) started implementing its activities in Karamoja in 2007, it was well aware of the conflict situation, in which it was operating. Initially, VSF-Belgium started its program from Kenya with peace building activities between the Turkana and the Karimojong. The purpose was to improve the access to pastures for the Turkana pastoralists in Karamoja. In 2008, VSF-B started implementing the first phase of the Karamoja Livestock Development Program. In this program, peace building is already embedded within the result 'Improved access to natural resources'. Community dialogue meetings were held at identified sites to come up with agreements to commonly share resources like pasture and water. In the projects to follow, natural resource management and peace building remain key. The awareness is that development and peace go hand in hand.

As we talk today, the security situation in the region has improved significantly since VSF-B started operating in Karamoja in 2007. However, cattle raiding is still rampant and insecurity is still mentioned as one of the main challenges in the lives of the Karimojong people. The conflict is less visible but still within the mindset of the people and the beneficiaries of VSF-B. Especially in the areas of operation of VSF-B, Moroto and Kaabong District, the number of incidents are the highest. As such, we should be aware of the conflict situation and our action's impact on this conflict.

When delivering development aid, it becomes part of the context/conflict, and as such can have an influence on the conflict situation in a positive or negative way. The objective of this study is to look at the impact of VSF-B's interventions on the conflict in the Karamoja region. **What are the possible impacts? And how can we measure and monitor it?** These two questions are the main research questions for the paper.

Methodology

This paper is the result of a research carried out during two years, and presents the findings of a variety of research methods, including community meetings in Moroto and Kaabong Districts during the months of May and June 2013, continuous interviews with peace actors, key stakeholders, partner organisations and focal staff, field visits, trainings and literature research.

The community meetings were held with the FSTP groups in Moroto and Kaabong District: 4 groups in Moroto (Nakwanga, Loyaraboth and 2 groups in Nakiloro), and 3 groups in Kaabong (Loyoro, Locherep and Risai). Interview and interaction with key stakeholders was continuous, although some extra interviews were held in the course of June-July 2013. The list of interviewees and questionnaires can be found in Annex 1.

The findings presented in this report should be seen as mere recommendations and are by no means an exhaustive and results of an all compassing research. More should and can still be done on this topic.

In this study we will mainly focus on two geographical areas where VSF-B is currently operating: Moroto and Kaabong districts (see Map 1). However, the results or recommendations reach further than those two districts and can encompass the whole conflict area of Karamoja, Turkana and Toposa of South Sudan.

Map 1 The seven districts of Karamoja, Uganda



Source: Kingma et al., 2012, p.19.

Overview of the paper

The study begins by describing the conflict situation in Karamoja. It will give an overview of the history of the conflict, government interventions, types and profile of the conflict, the relation between conflict and natural resources, and the cultural perception of conflict.

A second chapter will look closer into the operations of VSF-B in Karamoja. The mission of VSF-B and the organization's domain of expertise will be elaborated in more detail. It is noticed that peacebuilding is a cross-cutting theme, running throughout all the projects.

The third chapter will assess the impact of VSF-B intervention's on the conflict situation, using the Do No Harm approach. The capacities for peace and the capacities for conflict are introduced. Here it is shown that a project can influence the situation through resource transfers and an implicit ethical message. VSF-B has already integrated conflict sensitivity into his programming; however, some examples are given where one should still be thoughtful of the organization's potential negative consequences on the conflict.

In fourth and the last chapter, the options for programming in a conflict sensitive way are explored. The principles and guidelines for conflict sensitive development practice are touched upon and new program options for VSF-B are provided.

Finally, the paper concludes by giving recommendations to VSF-B and other stakeholders for conflict sensitive programming and sustainable peace interventions. Some are directed to VSF-B (or similar organisations working in the same area) and some are meant for other stakeholders, being it government, security providers or other NGO's.

1. Description of the conflict

1.1. *History of the armed violence and insecurity in Karamoja*

Karamoja, roughly the size of Belgium, is a semi-arid savannah with a harsh climate and low annual rainfall. Under the given environmental conditions, pastoralism has been the most viable livelihood in the region since long. To cope with drought and limited resources, the Karimojong would move across different grazing areas in search for pasture and water. The cow is central to the value system of the Karimojong. Animals are not only kept for their economic value, as a way of surviving in a very harsh environment, but also for their major social and cultural significance. The entire fabric of the Karimojong society depends on the cow (Mkutu, 2008, p. 12). As such, livestock ownership is an expression of wealth, and cattle rustling is motivated by the desire to own and accumulate livestock (Kingma, Muhereza, Murray, Nowak, & Thapa, 2012, p. 19). Traditionally, Karimojong have raided to compensate for theft and disease or to acquire wealth for paying the bride price. Cattle rustling is a cultural practice that serves social functions like demonstrating the bravery of new warriors or to initiate boys into manhood. In the pre-colonial times, the weapons used for raiding were the spear, bow and arrow (Mkutu, 2008, p.17).

During British colonial rule in the early twentieth century, national and international boundaries were (re)drawn, confining the mobility of the pastoralist people. The borders were created to maintain law and order and to facilitate the political control over the territory. However, they were established without taking into account the future needs for expansion of the pastoralists. It interfered with their social system and ecology, and disrupted mobility by limiting access to grazing land and water, therefore preventing pastoralists 'coping mechanism' to manage droughts. By restricting the pastoralists to one area, social conflict increased (Mkutu, 2008, p. 22-23). District boundaries were also used to make the differences between ethnic groups more distinct, resulting in inter-clan conflicts within Karamoja (Närman, 2003, p. 130). Colonialism was furthermore characterized by strong military repression and human rights abuses. Its main interest in the region was the trade in ivory. Karamoja was turned into a big game reserve for British colonial officers and access was strictly controlled.

Both colonial and post-colonial government paid virtually no attention to the pastoralists. Poor governance resulted in the marginalization of the region from mainstream development. Karamoja was continuously neglected in the National Development Plans of the country. It only received political attention to ensure violence did not spread to other parts of Uganda (Stites & Akabwai, 2009, p. 10). In the 1980s, Karimojong cattle raids intensified into the neighbouring regions of Lango, Acholi and Teso. During this period, the Karimojong depleted the neighbouring communities of its cattle, causing a deep resentment between the regions (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009, p. 2; Närman, 2003, p131). In 1984, under the Obote II regime, a first attempt was made to forcefully disarm the Karimojong in order to protect the neighbouring communities from further attacks by the Karimojong (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 25).

Most studies (Bevan, 2008; Kingma et al., 2012; Mkutu, 2008b; Stites & Akabwai, 2009; USAID, 2005) acknowledge that the security situation in Karamoja has deteriorated since the 1970s. Several factors contributed to a rise in the frequency and lethality of cattle rustling. First, there was the absence of state security as the interest in Karamoja was very low. Another reason can be attributed to the change in land use. The loss of rangeland since colonial times caused disruptions in the migratory patterns of the pastoralist people. The Karimojong increasingly grazed their cattle in areas where they had historically no access to grazing rights. The rise in mobility created new conflicts with people, with whom they would previously have no contact. Thirdly, conflict was exacerbated by recurrent droughts and livestock disease during that period. In 1975, an outbreak of foot and mouth disease depleted many communities of their cattle. To worsen the situation, the region was affected by famine in the 1980s, killing thousands of people and livestock. Cattle raids increased as people were eager to compensate for their depleted herds (Bevan, 2008, p. 25-26).

A fourth and crucial factor was the proliferation of small arms. The historical origin of weapons in the region dates back to the colonial era when the Karimojong exchanged ivory and cattle for firearms. After independence there was hardly any control on the trade in small arms, and their possession became widespread. The main supply route of small arms was via Sudan (now South Sudan). However, the Karimojong did not only obtain weapons through trade, but also through capture from neighbouring clans, rebel groups like the LRA (Lord Resistance Army) and the Ugandan Army. When Idi Amin was overthrown in 1979, the Matheniko clan looted the army barracks in Moroto, acquiring a substantial number of weapons and ammunition (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 28; Mkutu, 2007, p. 36; Mkutu, 2008b, p. 51-53).



**Villager in Lokiriama (Kenya)
carrying an AK 47**

In conclusion, circumstances like drought, disease and an imbalanced migratory pattern motivated compensatory raiding. However, due to the proliferation of small arms, cattle raiding and conflict over resources became more lethal.

1.2. Government interventions: disarmament operations

The most visible response from the government to the rising conflict in the region was one of disarmament. Numerous state-led disarmament initiatives have been launched in Karamoja since the colonial period. However none of these initiatives proved to be very effective in reducing the armed violence in the region (Bevan, 2008, p. 54).

In 2001, a new disarmament operation was launched, consisting of three phases (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 26-27). The first phase was one of voluntary disarmament. 3 months later, it was followed by a second phase of forceful disarmament. People were

given incentives like ox-ploughs and bags of maize flour in exchange for their guns (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 128). Local Defense Unit's (LDU's) were recruited among the local community to assist the UPDF in protecting the community against cattle raids and in the recovery of stolen cattle. In a third phase that lasted from September 2004 until 2007, heavily military weaponry was deployed to conduct 'cordon and search' operations. The new military tactics were used to directly remove all small arms from the community. The recovery by force, however, resulted in numerous human rights abuses, including the torture and killing of unarmed civilians (Bevan, 2008, p. 54-55).

The disarmament initiatives, which were meant to improve the security situation in the region, did not attain the desired effects. On the contrary, it fuelled the conflict between the state and the Karimojong society. Through mere disarmament the state did not tackle the root causes of conflict. The only response to the conflict was to get rid of the gun, whereby the social and economic dynamics were neglected. Many Karimojong feared to hand in their weapons for defensive reasons. They were concerned that disarmament would disturb the power balance. Communities that were not yet disarmed would have a comparative advantage in raiding. For the community, warriors were seen as a source of security to protect the homestead and the livestock. After the removal of the gun, the state security forces were not able to provide adequate protection, and the *manyattas*¹ were left as prey for neighbouring communities. Initially, disarmament failed to address the root source of insecurity. A holistic approach including issues as governance, security of property and livelihoods was lacking (Bevan, 2008, p. 63-64; Mkutu, 2008b, p. 143-144; Stites & Akabwai, 2009, p. 14).

The challenges during the first phase of disarmament were partly addressed with the launch of the *Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan* (KIDDP) in April 2008 (Saferworld, 2010, p. 47). It was acknowledged that underdevelopment and insecurity were the root causes of the armed violence in Karamoja. Within the KIDDP framework, disarmament activities were complemented with development interventions and measures to enhance security. It encompassed different components like livelihoods, peace building and strengthening of the police force.

Today, disarmament is generally seen as having had a positive impact on the security situation². The majority of the community members support the idea of weapon reduction. However, resentment towards the UPDF (Uganda People's Defense Forces) remains because of the committed acts of brutality during the disarmament operations, and of the perceived unequal disarmament of arms from different communities (Saferworld, 2010, p. 11).

¹ *Manyattas* are Karimojong settlements consisting of semi-permanent grass thatched houses built of mud and wattle. These settlements are often fenced with sticks and thorny bushes as a protective measure (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 12).

² Minutes Peace Actors Coordination meeting Moroto District of 20.02.2013; Interviews with key stakeholders Moroto and Kaabong district.

1.3. *Types and profile of the conflict*

The nature of *conflict*³ is complex, and it is difficult to categorize the conflict in Karamoja under a specific typology. However, studies (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 27-28; Mkutu, 2007; Saferworld, 2010, p. 3) have noted that the conflict situation in Karamoja is characterized by three types of conflict: conflict between ethnic groups, conflict within ethnic groups, and conflict between the state and de Karimojong society.

Conflict between ethnic groups:

The most frequently cited type of conflict is the conflict between the ethnic groups, and more specifically the practice of cattle rustling. This type of conflict is characterized by tense or broken relationships between groups, and occasional violence from one group against another in a cycle of attacks and retributions (Saferworld, 2010). As already mentioned in the *history of armed violence and security in Karamoja*, cattle raiding and counter-raiding has existed for centuries, and originates from a pastoralist culture of survival and distribution of wealth (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 27). However, the traditional practice, faced with changes like drought, disease, disturbed migratory pattern and the proliferation of small weapons, became more lethal and destructive. Current raids have become smaller in scale and are carried out by a small group of five to twenty warriors (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 32; interviews with key stakeholders Moroto and Kaabong district). The warriors usually carry small arms, resulting in a number of casualties. Generally the epicenter of a raid remains within the kraals (UHRC, 2004, p. 33).

Conflict dynamics between the ethnic clans in Karamoja are complex. Karamoja consists of six main tribes, their geographical location coinciding grosso modo with one of the districts in Karamoja: Dodoth in Kaabong, Jie in Kotido, Matheniko and Tepeth in Moroto, Bokora in Napak, Pian in Nakapirpirit and Pokot in Amudat District (See *Map 2 Karimojong sub-clans and neighbours*). The Karimojong share close ethno-linguistic ties with the Turkana and Pokot in Kenya and the Toposa in South Sudan. The whole region is often called the Karamoja Cluster.

³ Conflict can be defined as a social situation where two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives (Kriesberg, 2007, p. 2).

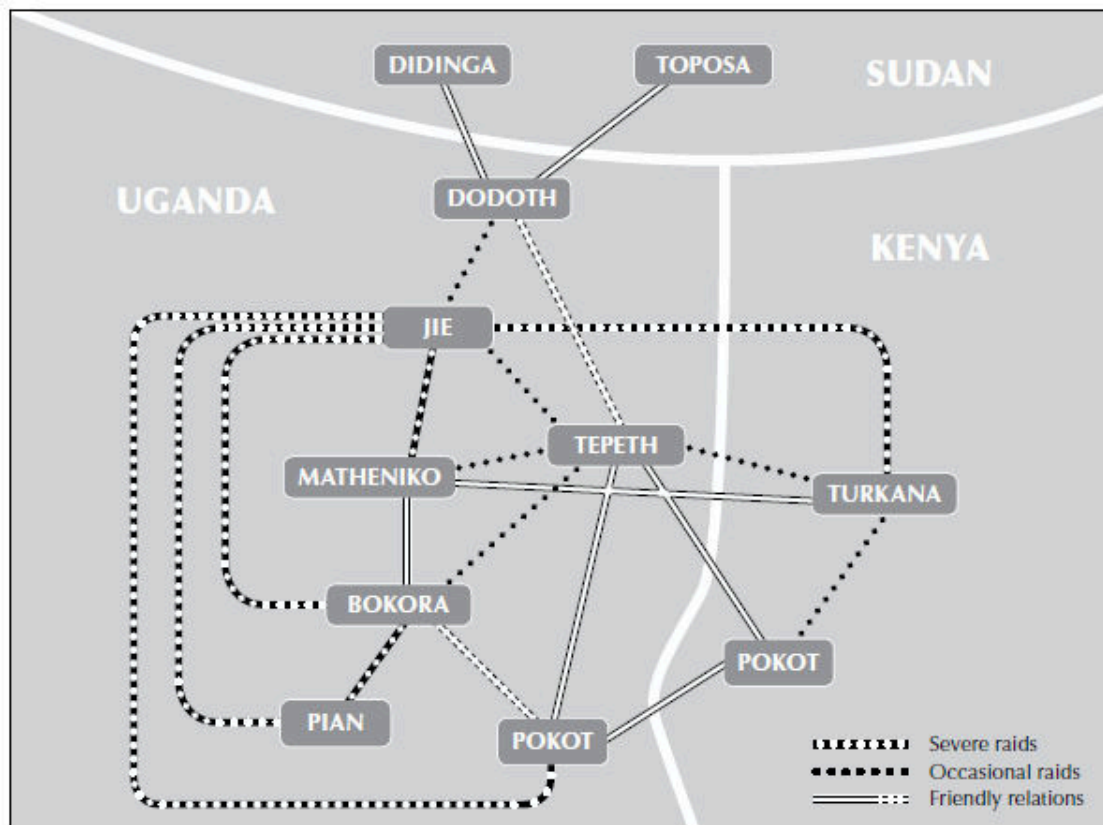
Map 2 Karimojong sub-clans and neighbours



Source: Bevan, 2008, p.19.

A general pattern of conflict relationships and alliances between the ethnic groups in Karamoja can be observed. The Dodoth, for instance, cite the Jie as their main enemy. The Jie, in its turn, note that their main threats are the Matheniko and Tepeth from Moroto District. *Figure 1* shows the *general conflict pattern between ethnic groups in Karamoja*. Due to the dynamic nature of conflict however, alliances can shift rapidly, and this should be taken into consideration when studying the figure below.

Figure 1 General conflict patterns between ethnic groups in Karamoja



Note: Given the dynamic nature of these conflicts, the map may rapidly become outdated.

Source: Kingma et al., 2012, p. 33.

It is interesting to note that until the mid-1970s, the main tribes of the Karimojong ethnic group (Pian, Bokora and Matheniko) did not engage in raids amongst themselves. Raids mostly occurred across districts or country borders and among different tribal groups. The reason was partly that it was easier to incorporate raided animals into herds that were far from their place of origin (Stites, Akabwai, Mazurana, & Ateyo, 2007, p. 58).

Conflict within ethnic groups:

This type of conflict refers to individual-level conflict and conflict between households. It is conflict at the very local level, and if unresolved, can result in violence and loss of life. According to a study of Saferworld (2010, p. 72), the level of intra-community violence within Karimojong communities is high. It is mostly perpetrated against men, and involves the use of firearms. Quarrels at household level are mostly related to poverty, access to water and jealousy between individuals or families (Saferworld, 2010, p. 70). Conflict within ethnic groups is mainly characterized by domestic violence, murder and petty crimes like theft of food items and personal belongings. This type of conflict increases local level insecurity, and undermines social cohesion.

Conflict between the state and the Karimojong society:

The root cause of the conflict between the Karimojong and the state is related to the independent way of life of the pastoralist people, and the non-acceptance of external rulers (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 27-28; Salih, 1990, p. 16). The difficult relationship between the state and the Karimojong has existed since the colonial period. Subsequent rulers have found it difficult to impose their authority on the Karimojong. The notion of a modern sovereign state did not coincide with the lifestyle and values of the Karimojong. The state system of security and justice failed to incorporate the traditional mechanisms of justice practiced by the local communities, causing tensions between the two (UHRC, 2004, p. 19). In the face of human rights abuses and intrusions from outside, Karimojong will show a strong sense of solidarity for their tribe mates. When they are confronted with an outside force, they will protect and cover up for their fellow Karimojong. In the instance of raids for example, they will rarely disclose precise information to an 'outside tribunal' regarding the culprits or the number of cattle raided, even from within the communities where the cattle have been raided (UHRC, 2004, p. 19-20).

The conflict is linked to the long political, economic and social marginalization of Karamoja. In recent years, the government has increased its engagement in Karamoja. However, distrustful and tense relationships remain, sporadically erupting into armed violence between the state (notably UPDF) and the local people (Saferworld, 2012, p. 2).



UPDF at Cross border peace dialogue in Lokiriana (Kenya), January 2013

In addition to the three types of conflict, the conflict in Karamoja is **local, national, international, regional and global** in nature (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 3-4). The local conflict and cattle rustling between communities becomes a national issue, when the conflict spills over to the neighbouring districts or when it affects the security of the whole nation of Uganda. It becomes an international issue, when communities from one side of the border launch raids on animals from the other side. A lot of cross border raiding takes place between the Turkana of Kenya and the Karimojong of Uganda. The conflict takes on a regional dimension when the Turkana of Kenya become allies with the Karimojong from Uganda to attack the Toposa from South-Sudan. And finally, the conflict is global in nature since the small arms, that make the conflict more lethal, are manufactured abroad and imported into the country.

Increasingly, cattle raiding has been carried out for **commercial** purposes (Bevan, 2008, p. 27-30; Kagan, Pedersen & Ollech, 2009, p. 202-203; Stites et al., 2007, p. 60-61). Raided cattle are sold on the market to make immediate profit. With the money earned,

the warriors buy food items, weapons or start their own business. During school holidays for instance, there might be an increase in raids, caused by students who go home and resort to raids to raise school fees. In any case, livestock is removed from the pastoralist system, and cannot be recovered by counter raiding. Reports show that a lot of raided animals find their way to markets in neighbouring districts and even cross border to Kenya (UHRC, 2004, p. 31-32). One of the reasons is the reduced opportunity costs of involvement in armed criminality. Due to the increased severity of cattle raiding, some communities are left without cattle. As such, a lot of young men find themselves without livestock and future for socio-economic advancement. A man without cattle cannot acquire a bride and support his community. In the community they are sometimes seen as failures and pressured to go raiding for livestock. As such, nowadays two types of raiding are observed; the first type is the raids carried out to rebuild herds after disease or drought, for dowry or as revenge. The second type is the commercial raids (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 18).

Commercial raiding differs from traditional raiding in scale and violence. The number of people involved in raiding is smaller. When in the past a raid would engage up to 800 warriors, today, five to ten young men would secretly launch a raid against their neighbours to steal cattle. Although the raids are smaller, they are more frequent and more violent, due to the opportunistic nature of the attack and the lack of planning. Powerful business people and some politicians are involved in this type of cattle raiding and nurture the conflict (Stites et al., 2007, p. 60).

According to a recent study of the Small Arms Survey and Danish Demining group (Kingma et al., 2012), the **security situation** has improved in recent years. Cattle raiding, acts of violence and killings involving firearms have decreased. However, incidents remain high and it is difficult to predict whether the relative improvement in security situation will last over a long time. In an update of tracking the key conflict and security dynamics in Karamoja, Saferworld (2010) states that the conflict between ethnic groups is still high, and the Karimojong fear attacks by other ethnic groups. As such, normal daily life in Karamoja is disrupted, not necessarily by actual violence, but by the *perceived threat* of violence between ethnic groups. This climate of danger and fear restricts the mobility of people to graze their cattle, cultivate their gardens, do business or make other movements.

1.4. Conflict, environment and natural resources

As mentioned earlier, the conflict in Karamoja mainly revolves around natural resources like pasture and water. Karamoja is an arid and semi-arid region with harsh climate and low annual rainfall (Knaute, 2009, p. 23). It is characterized by savannah plains, covered with seasonal grasses, thorned bushes and occasional small trees. There are two major seasons, the dry season running from roughly late November to end of March, and the rainy season runs from beginning of April until November. During the wet season, grass is in abundance and pastoralist can graze their animals near the homestead. In addition, the pastoralist plant crops like maize and sorghum to diversify their diet of meat, blood and milk (UHRC, 2004, p. 8). In the dry season, animals are taken far away in search for pastures and water. The Karimojong depend very much on the ecological conditions of the area for their movements.

Since the colonial period, the pastoralists saw their grazing areas increasingly restricted due to different policies supporting large-scale agriculture, private land ownership and the creation of forest and game reserves like the Kidepo Valley National Park and the Matheniko, Bokora and Pian game reserves (UHRC, 2004, p. 8-9). The loss of rangeland contributed to the conflict in the area, since the Karimojong had to graze their animal further in insecure areas, where they were susceptible to attacks from other clans.

The land use is furthermore restricted by the increasing exploitation of minerals in the area, like gold, marble and limestone. Officially, all mineral areas belong exclusively to the national Government, and anyone extracting these minerals has to pay royalties. This conflicts with the traditional idea of communal ownership of land by the communities. According to the 2002 Mining Bill, 3% of the revenue of mineral extraction goes to the land owners. Since the land is communally owned, the 3% goes to the Land Area Association, intended for community projects⁴. However, Land Area Associations have not been formed, and local communities are not aware of the provision. In addition, Exclusive Mining and Prospecting Licenses have been granted by the Government to various companies, restricting the access to dry season grazing areas and critical water points for the pastoralists (USAID, 2005, p. 29).

Another factor affecting the environment and its natural resources is change in the climatic conditions. Those changes are characterized by an elevation in temperatures, unpredictable rainfall pattern and an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Period of long droughts are alternated with periods of very heavy rainfall, causing floods and landslides. Climate change, changes in land use, and overpopulation have led to environmental destruction mainly deforestation, overgrazing and soil erosion (Knaute, 2009, p. 22-23). As an alternative livelihood and coping strategy, the Karimojong cut trees for charcoal and firewood, further depleting their environment.



Kobebe dam, a main water and pasture resource for Karimojong and Turkana pastoralists

Studies have found that there is a direct link between changes in climatic conditions, availability of natural resources and conflict in the region (USAID, 2005, p. 17-18). Drastic change in climate affects the availability of resources like water and pasture. Due to higher temperatures and severe droughts, surface water will dry up more quickly, reducing the water for livestock. The grass cover becomes scarcer and unable to sustain the

livestock populations. As a result, conflict over control of and access to natural

⁴ Minutes Peace Actors Coordination meeting Moroto District of 20.02.2013.

resources arises amongst the pastoralists (MacOpiyo, 2011, p. 27-28). Clans will try to gain a monopoly over certain grazing areas through violence. As such, some rangelands that are well endowed with pasture are not accessible for grazing, because people fear attacks from other clans.

In Karamoja, conflict incidents tend to intensify during the dry season⁵. The main reason is that the scarcity of pasture and water forces the pastoralist to graze their livestock in far distant enemy territory. Another reason is the reduced workload as compared to the wet season, when they are engaged in their gardens. The men have more free time and get engaged in raiding in order to acquire livestock for post-harvest ceremonies and marriage rituals. In addition, when natural resources are limited and people are confronted with food deficits, they will resort to raiding as an alternative livelihood. In years of favorable climate, the number of incidents reduces, there is inter-clan socializing, depleted stocks are replaced through friends and marriage, and clans make agreements to commonly share grazing areas (USAID, 2005, p. 17-18).

1.5. Cultural perception of conflict

Traditionally, conflict in the sense of cattle raiding between ethnic groups was considered a cultural practice. Raiding was socially accepted as a means to compensate for depleted stocks, and to acquire livestock for marriage or other rituals like initiation ceremonies. Through cattle raiding, young men, also called *Karachuna*⁶, demonstrate their manhood and form alliances with other families and clans. Livestock raiding and marriage determine the place of a young man in Karimojong society. A warrior without cattle is seen as a failure in the community. They will be unable to marry and support their communities (Bevan, 2008, p. 27-28). In the Karimojong culture, when a woman is not married, her children will remain within her own lineage. Another man can even marry the woman and adopt the children of the first man, who was unable to pay the bride price. As such, pressure is high for young warriors to acquire livestock and to go raiding. The number of livestock for dowry can add up to one hundred cows. The acceptance of polygamy and having of multiple wives augments the need for livestock even more.

In pre-colonial times, no guns were used in raiding. Attacks were carried out using spear, bow and arrow, and traditional rules dictated that human life had to be spared as much as possible. It was even common to forewarn the targeted community of an attack, so they could keep the women and children away and defend themselves and their cattle. Cattle rustling takes place within a set of rules and taboos controlled and sanctioned by the elders (Kagan, Pedersen, & Ollech, 2009, p. 203; UHRC, 2004, p. 11).

In the past, the whole community was involved in planning and preparing for a raid (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 19-21; Stites et al., 2007, p. 57). The Council of elders selected the time and target of the intended raids, and gave the approval and traditional blessings to the young warriors. The elders play a powerful role, as they are the leaders, policy makers, decision makers and resource managers of the community. After raiding, they 'cleansed' the raiders through cleansing ceremonies, and compensation rituals. The

⁵ UNDSS report of January 2013.

⁶ *Karachuna* literally means youth.

diviners or fortune tellers were consulted and gave information on which animal to sacrifice for a good raid, where to go raiding and which way to take and how to come back. The *Kraal*⁷ leaders also played an influential role. They were the ones ensuring security for the cattle, and to make sure they got enough pasture and water. Kraal leaders were composed of prominent warriors and elder. They defined the migration routes, and mediated access and use of resources with neighbouring clans (USAID, 2005, p. 26-27).

Women also used to play a crucial factor in supporting cattle raiding. When the women were faced with food deficits, they would encourage the men to go for raids, either directly or indirectly through the children. They would call their husbands 'weak' or 'unmanly' for staying at home, while others are acquiring wealth through raiding. Women prepare food for the young warriors motivating them for the expedition. After a successful raid, the women praise the warriors and celebrate through dancing and singing. In the past, reputable women are consulted before a raid to give the young warriors advice (USAID, 2005, p. 37-38). As mentioned above, women are indirectly involved through the system of the bride price. Sometimes, they can stir up the conflict by pressuring the men who have not yet paid their bride price, or by even abandoning them for a richer man.



Women are indirectly involved through the high bride price

Today, the communal planning and preparation for a raid is rare (Stites et al., 2007, p. 58). More commonly, raids are planned in secret by a handful of warriors without the consent of the elders, and attacks are carried out without advance notice against unsuspecting groups. Sometimes the elders are aware of these secret preparations, but turn a blind eye, since they also profit of the benefits of raiding. People will call this kind of raids cattle 'theft'. They are smaller in scale, more opportunistic and more frequent.

Although, the nature of conflict is changing, and the number of people involved, conflict still affects the whole community. Women and children are especially vulnerable. They cannot defend themselves and are depended on the men for their livelihood. Through cattle raiding, they sometimes lose their husbands and sons, and are sentenced to a life of poverty. During disarmament human rights abuses, like rape took place impacting the lives of the women.

As mentioned in *the types and profile of conflict*, the nature of cattle raiding has changed from a traditional practice to demonstrate the courage of warriors and acquiring bride wealth to a criminal, violent and commercial activity (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 13). One of the

⁷ A *Kraal* is a non-permanent enclosure where the Karimojong keep the cattle at night. They are often protected with thorny fences and defended by warriors against possible raids. Some Kraals are protected by the UPDF and LDU's and are called protected Kraals (Kingma et al., 2012, p. 12).

reasons is the proliferation of small arms. The gun has weakened the traditional institutions that maintain the cohesion within the community and shifted the balance of power from the elder to the youth (UHRC, 2004, p. 16). The Karimojong society is organized in an age set system, which enables the community to have a hierarchy of authority. The senior elders make decisions and they would be implemented by the second generation and youth. Power is passed over from one generation set to the next. Unfortunately, the current ruling age set or senior elders have failed to transmit the power to the second generation, resulting in a large number of uninitiated adult men without any status or recognition. In order to obtain status or wealth, young men are forced to disobey the orders of the elders and resort to raiding (USAID, 2005, p. 36).

The role of the elders is furthermore affected by increased education of the youth, and their involvement in alternative activities like business and trade (Mkutu, 2008b, p. 25).

It is important to study the role and involvement of the different actors in the community, as they are the people to target in conflict resolution and peace building activities. In *chapter 3*, they can be identified as the actors for conflict (dividers), and at the same time focal actors for peace (connectors) as they play potential roles in sensitizing the community for peace.

2. VSF-Belgium in Karamoja

2.1. Overview of VSF-B projects

VSF-Belgium has been present in Karamoja since January 2007. One year earlier, VSF-B started implementing cross border peace building activities between the Karimojong and the Turkana from Kenya (Annual report VSF-B, 2006, p. 15). The purpose was to improve the access to grazing areas and water resources for the Turkana pastoralists in Uganda. In 2007 VSF-B started implementing the *Karamoja Livelihood Support Program* with funding from the European Commission. The project's mandate was to increase the resilience of pastoralists to drought by improving access to food and income for target households (Annual report VSF-B, 2008, p. 9). Its main area of focus was water development and soil conservation, livestock health and production and livelihoods security (Annual report VSF-B, 2007, p. 17).

In 2008, VSF-B embarked on its first phase of the three-year *Karamoja Livestock Development Program (KLDP 1)*, funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation. The main objective of the program was to improve the well-being of pastoralists in Moroto District by reducing their vulnerability to disease and drought. Activities centered on improving access to natural resources like pasture and water; improving animal health through the implementation of a community-based animal health service delivery system; improving marketing of livestock and livestock products; and ensuring sustainability through capacity of the local partner, MADEFO (Annual report VSF-B, 2008; Evaluation report KLDP 1, p. 1; Project proposal KLDP 1). In a second phase (since 2011), *KLDP II* continues its activities in the same result areas to ensure lasting improvement in food security and income for beneficiary families based on an improvement in the conditions of livestock production and commercialization. One result area is added, namely the diversification of livelihoods and establishment of Village Community Banks. The geographical location is expanded to include Napak District.

Since 2008, Uganda was included in the implementation areas of several **regional projects**:

- *Improved Community Response to Drought Phase I – III*, is a regional project implemented in Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya in cooperation with Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Germany and Switzerland. *ICRD* phase I to III was funded through ECHO and implemented between 2008 and 2012. Its principal objective was to increase and build resilience of the targeted vulnerable communities through increased access to dry season grazing and water, dissemination of early warning information and market data, the creation of local financial institutions and the construction of water points (Annual report VSF-B, 2010, p. 16; ICRD project proposals and reports).
- *Livestock for Livelihoods* is a three year project running since 2010 and receives funds from the European Commission through AU-IBAR (African Union – Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources). The project seeks to strengthen climate change adaptation strategies through improved management at the livestock-wildlife-environment interface. In Uganda it is implemented in

Kaabong district in cooperation with the local partner DADO (Dodoth Agro-pastoralist Development Organization).

- *Regional Learning and Advocacy Program* (REGLAP) is funded through ECHO since 2009. The program aims at establishing a dialogue between policy makers and nomad pastoralists, in order to better prepare all stakeholders for drought so that the livestock keepers can provide in their livelihoods. VSF-B is the lead organisation in Uganda. In addition, *REGLAP* collects knowledge and best practices and strengthens the capacities of civil society in advocacy and networking.
- *Food Security Thematic Project* (FSTP) is a cross border project funded through FAO, and implemented for a period of 2 years since 2011. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to reduced vulnerability of (agro) pastoral communities in the cross border region of Karamoja and Turkana. The project aims at strengthening the institutional and policy framework, affecting resilience of (agro) pastoral communities and the diversification of their livelihoods in Karamoja and Turkana cross border region.

Since 2013, VSF-B started implementing the *One Health project* in Kaabong District. It is a pilot project aimed to improve the livelihoods, nutrition and health situation of the targeted communities, through a 'one health' approach for people, livestock and wildlife. VSF-B seeks to address the gaps between public health needs, veterinary responsibilities and wild life authorities.

2.2. *Mission of VSF-B and thematic areas*

"The life of the Karimojong depends on animals. If their animals die, they will also die!" This statement, made by the LC V Chairperson of Nakapiripirit District during a stakeholder meeting on livestock farming in the Karamoja sub-region (Oketch, 2013, p. 16), reflects well the **vision** of VSF-Belgium: Healthy animals, healthy people.

VSF-Belgium's **mission** is to '*Empower disadvantaged livestock dependent communities in developing countries to improve their well-being*'. In Uganda, the objectives mainly cover improving the welfare of vulnerable populations by building the capacity of the local (agro-) pastoral communities to address their own needs to improve livelihood and food security, drought resilience, disaster preparedness and response. To achieve this, VSF-B focuses on the following **thematic areas** (Smit, 2012):

- Sustainable access to natural resources through improved natural resource management and utilization, conflict mitigation and peace building.
- Improved emergency preparedness and response capacity through the establishment of effective early warning networks and community based preparedness plans.
- Protection of key livelihood assets through the establishment and support of community based animal health services, private sector support systems and alternative sources of income.
- Improved livestock and livestock product marketing.
- Increased women's participation and involvement in development activities.
- Working with and capacity building of local partners.

- Dissemination of lessons learnt to partners and communities and harmonization of approaches of key stakeholders.

According to a meta-evaluation of the projects in East-Africa done by Suzanne Smit in 2012, the main quality of VSF-B is that it has well exploited its niche in supporting livelihoods, especially the communities' primary asset: livestock. VSF-B has a unique experience in facilitation of participatory community interventions and in livestock health and production. Furthermore its major strengths are the consortium approach, partnerships with other, particularly indigenous development organisations, the employment and training of national staff, involvement of cross border communities, the integration of women and the creation and support of local institutions. Another important quality is that project designs are well adapted to the traditions and customs of the local community. In addition, the projects invest in sustainability through capacity building of local actors to ensure the activities can continue independently of VSF-B.

2.3. Peace building as a cross-cutting theme

From the onset of VSF-B's activities in Karamoja, peace building and community dialogues were embedded in the Natural Resources Department. In the first phase of *Karamoja Livestock Development Program* (KLDP 1), peace building was part of the result 'Improved access to natural resources'. Community dialogue meetings between different clans, communities and villages were held at identified sites to come up with agreements to commonly share resources like pasture and water. In the projects to follow, the activities of peace building and conflict mitigation were linked to natural resource management, a logic choice keeping in mind that the conflict in Karamoja mainly revolves around pastures and water sources.

While specific peace building activities are within one department, VSF-Belgium includes *conflict sensitivity* into his programming. This means that VSF-Belgium takes into account the context of operation, the relation between its intervention and the context, and tries to minimize the negative consequences of its interventions (Saferworld, 2010). *Conflict sensitive programming* covers the whole range of activities of VSF-Belgium in the Karamoja sub region, and as such peace building is a cross-cutting theme running throughout the whole program. Conflict sensitivity will be explored in more detail in chapter 4.

Peace dialogues and Reciprocal Grazing Agreements

Moroto and Karamoja as a region has a high potential for sustaining animals – livestock and wildlife, as the range condition is good most of the year. However, due to insecurity, a lot of the rangelands are inaccessible to both livestock and people. The practice of cattle rustling and petty theft made the pastoralist fear to graze their animals in certain areas. The strategy of VSF-Belgium is to facilitate access to these grazing zones through peace building and conflict resolution activities between communities and with their cross border neighbours. During *peace dialogue meetings*, communities are brought together and share their concerns regarding conflict in the area, they agree on the sharing of natural resources like pasture or water points, and come up with *Reciprocal*

Grazing Agreements. In 2011-2012 for instance, VSF-B was involved in the organisation of several peace dialogues in Nakonyen common grazing area. This area is well endowed with pastures, but regular cattle thefts between the Pokot, Tepeth, Matheniko and Turkana hinder the well utilisation of the resources. VSF Belgium acts as the moderator during the peace dialogues and guides the community to come up with Reciprocal Grazing Agreements on use and access to grazing and water resources.



Peace dialogue meeting in Nakonyen grazing area, November 2012

The elders play a key role in the peace dialogue meetings, as they are traditionally the gate keepers and decision makers in the society. Furthermore involved are the *peace committees*, established per sub county by the Ugandan government (The Republic of Uganda, 2010), and government officials, such as the RDC who is the head of security in the district. Other actors involved are the army (UPDF), civil society organisations and NGO's.

Natural Resource Management Committee

VSF-Belgium strengthens and establishes Natural Resource and Environmental Committees. These committees are key in the management of grazing and natural resources to minimize environmental destruction and degradation of rangeland. To achieve this, communities will establish resource maps that guide them on resource use and planning. It is important to have community historical profile to document and go back in time on how they have handled challenging situations, establish their migration routes, and coping strategies. The Natural Resource Management Committees also play an important role in peace building, and in some areas the Peace Committees are incorporated in the Natural Resource Management Committees. The Committees will organize dialogues with other neighbouring committees to agree on the sharing and access of resources.

Regional and district peace coordination

Under the guidance of the Resident District Commissioners for Karamoja and UNDP, a Peace working group is set up to coordinate conflict resolution and peace building activities in Karamoja sub region. At the regional level, Riamiriam Civil Society Network acts as a secretariat of the working group. VSF-Belgium belongs to this consortium of peace actors in Karamoja region.

Peace coordination is decentralized at district level. In Moroto district, VSF-Belgium and DDG-DRC (Danish Demining Group - Danish Refugee Council) have been identified as District focal actors to ensure coordination of peace activities within the district. VSF-Belgium and DDG-DRC facilitate and organise quarterly coordination meetings for all peace actors. These meetings are chaired by the RDC of Moroto district as head of security in the district.

3. Impact of VSF-Belgium's interventions on conflict

As activities are implemented, one should be well aware of the context of operation. The working context is not a sterile and airless environment. All actions influence and are influenced by a variety of actors in the operating environment, which ranges from the micro to the macro level, from the community level to district, province, region, country and neighbouring countries. One should deal with actors like donors, other (I)NGO's, government actors, security personnel and – not to forget – the beneficiaries. Each of them have their own interest, needs and objectives. When operating in this context, certain decisions will be made and interventions implemented that can, unintentionally, influence the actors that fuel the context.

In this chapter, the impact of VSF-Belgium's interventions on conflict is researched in more detail. Are there ways in which VSF-B, unintentionally, creates or intensifies tensions in the society? How can this be avoided? And instead act in a way while contributing to peace through its interventions? The purpose of this exercise is not to cast criticism on the work of VSF-B, but rather to learn from its past experiences, and in the light of VSF-B as a *learning organisation*, to see how it can do better.

The impact of VSF-B on the conflict, will be evaluated using the framework of Do No Harm (DNH in short), developed by Mary Anderson. In what follows, a short introduction to the Do No Harm approach will be given. In a second step, the DNH framework is applied to the Karamoja context and the impact of VSF-B on the conflict situation is analyzed. Finally the indicators, that can be used to measure the improvement in a security situation, are shortly touched upon.

3.1. Introduction to Do No Harm approach

The Do No Harm was first introduced as the Local Capacities for Peace Project, by Mary Anderson in 1994. Through broad field experience of mainly humanitarian aid organisations, she researched the impact of aid on conflict. She wrote down her experiences in the book **Do no harm, how aid can support peace-or war** (1999). In her book, Mary Anderson tries to provide an answer to the question '*How can aid be provided in conflict settings in ways that, rather than feeding into and exacerbating the conflict, can help local people disengaging from violence that surrounds them and develop alternative systems for addressing the problems that underlie the conflict?*'

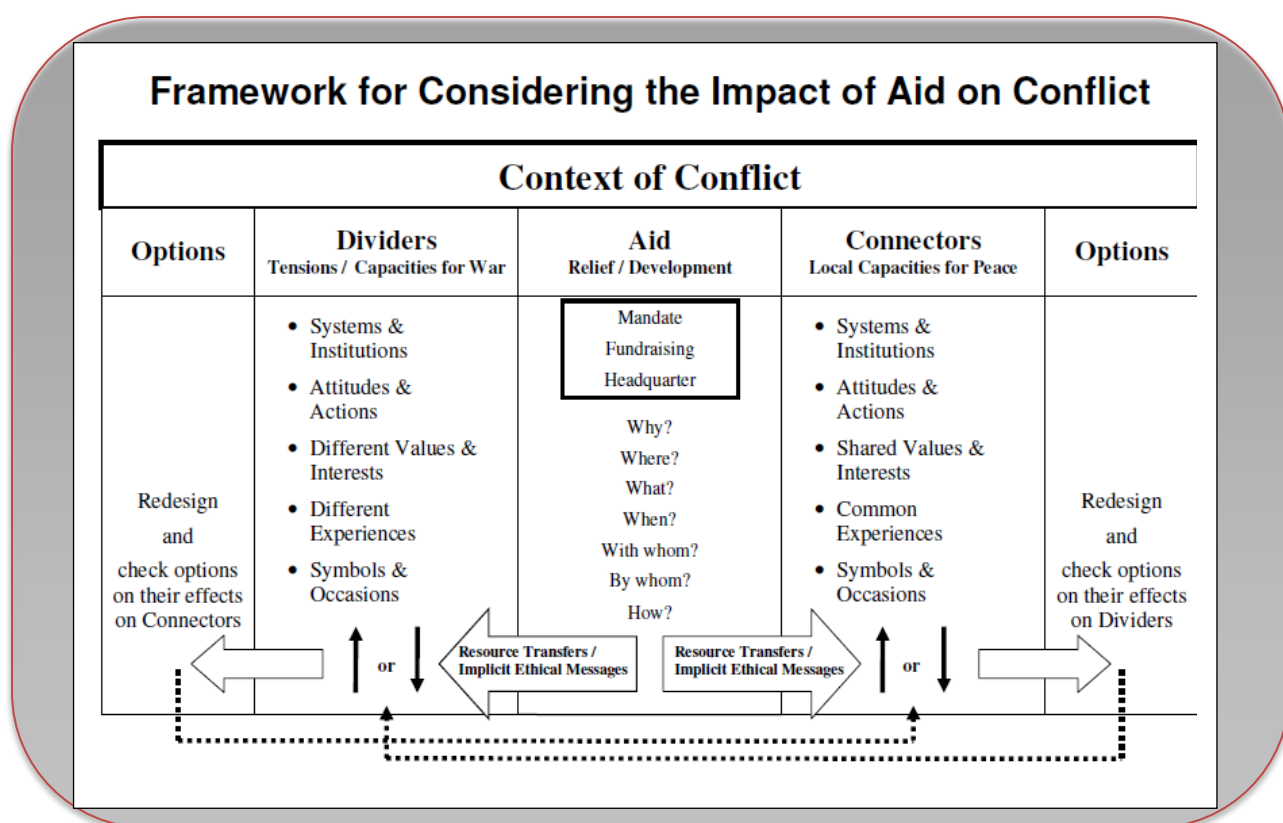
The Local Capacities for Peace Project or DNH was designed inductively, starting from people's field experiences towards a general application of the lessons learnt. The development of the framework involved 4 phases: 1st Phase of gathering case studies of common experiences on the interaction of aid and conflict. 2nd Phase of feedback workshops where the experiences were shared with more aid practitioners. 3rd Phase of implementation of the lessons learnt and the application of the framework at the field level in ongoing projects in conflict situations. 4th Phase of mainstreaming of the lessons learnt and DNH framework in participating organisations.

The Local Capacities for Peace Project is a collaborative effort, organized by the Collaborative for Development Action in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the United States. It involves a number of donor agencies, International NGOs and local aid workers.

According to the DNH framework (see figure 2 below), any given context consists of tensions, divider or local capacities for war, and on the other hand connectors or capacities for peace. Aid or development organisations will influence the dividers or connectors in a society through the **resources** they bring in, being it cash, food, trainings, capacity building, sensitization, etc. Experience shows that when resources are brought into a resource scarce environment, people in conflict areas will attempt to control and use the resources provided to support their side of the conflict.

Besides, the way in which aid is provided often sends **implicit ethical messages** that can increase or decrease the tensions in a certain area. As such, development or humanitarian aid organisations should be aware of their impact, and know that project details matter in strengthening connectors rather than dividers in a conflict setting. The DNH framework shows that there are always options for redesign the program or project in a conflict sensitive way (Anderson, 1999).

Figure 2 DNH framework



Source: Website CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (<http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/publication.php>)

In short, **7 major lessons** can be learned from the DNH framework:

1. Assistance always becomes part of the (CONFLICT) CONTEXT
2. There are two realities in any conflict situation: DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS
3. Assistance has an IMPACT on both dividers and connectors.
4. Assistance produces impact through RESOURCE TRANSFERS
5. Assistance produces impact through IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES
6. The PROJECT DETAILS What, Why, Who, By whom, When, Where and How of assistance programs matter.
7. There are always OPTIONS to redesign an assistance program in a way that do not exacerbate conflict but reduce tensions.

The 7 lessons are key in understanding the interaction of aid and conflict and to monitor and evaluate the impact of an intervention on the conflict situation. They can be translated into **7 to do steps** when embracing the Do No Harm approach (Do No Harm project, 2004, p. 3-4):

7 to do steps in DO NO HARM Approach:

1. *TO understand the context of conflict*
2. ***TO analyze the dividers and tensions***
3. ***TO analyze the connectors and local capacities for peace***
4. *TO analyze the assistance program*
5. ***TO analyze the assistance program's impact on dividers and connectors***
6. *TO consider (and generate) program options*
7. *TO test program options and redesign project.*

In the first chapter of the paper, the context of the conflict (STEP 1) was described. In the second chapter, an overview of the interventions of VSF-B in Karamoja (STEP 4) was given. In this chapter, the following steps will be elaborated in more detail: STEP 2 (Analyze the dividers), STEP 3 (analyze the connectors) and STEP 5 (to analyze the assistance program's impact on dividers and connectors). STEP 6 (to generate program options for redesign or future programs) will be elaborated in chapter 4.

To undertake these steps, information was gathered through context analysis, literature research and interviews with key stakeholders and community groups in Moroto and Kaabong District.

3.2. *Identification connectors and dividers*

As mentioned above, any given context consists of capacities of peace (connectors) and capacities for conflict (dividers). Even in a peaceful environment that does not show conflict on first sight, there are always elements that bring division amongst people. And on the other hand, in every conflict setting (from latent conflict to a severe state of war), there are always elements in a society that connects people and brings them together.

The following categories are useful to understand a certain context (Do No Harm project, 2004):

- *Systems and institutions:* Markets and schools are structures that bring people together, but a government or legal system that discriminates one group against another will divide people.
- *Attitudes and actions:* An attitude of tolerance, acceptance and forgiveness will strengthen the local capacities for peace, while an attitude of mistrust, intolerance and jealousy enhances the dividers in a community. The same attitudes are translated into positive or negative actions.
- *Values and interests:* Common values, like religion or family values unite people. Interest over common grazing areas or water points can divide people.
- *Different/common experiences:* When a community experiences war, it can divide people. Some people may be forced to migrate or are forcefully separated from their families. On the other hand, when war is experienced by all, it can also bring people together. Anti-war alliances can be formed across boundaries.
- *Symbols and occasions:* national symbols like flag, music, sports, historical anniversaries and ceremonies like birth, marriage unites people. Land and district boundaries are symbols of division amongst people.

In the table below, connecting and dividing elements for the Karamoja context are identified. Those connectors and dividers are the results of the context analysis in the first chapter, interviews with key stakeholders, and mainly the field research conducted in Moroto and Kaabong District.

Some dividers or sources of tension may be the product of deep-seated historical injustice (root causes), while other may be recent changes, decisions or occurrences (proximate causes).

Table 1 Connectors and dividers in the Karamoja context

Category	Identifying Connectors and Local Capacities for peace	Identifying dividers/tensions and capacities for war
Systems & Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customary institutions like Council of elders, women groups and youth groups - Good infrastructure like roads - Markets and business - Education and schools - Health centers and other medical facilities - Church and religion - Army detachments and security providers - NGO and government interventions (creation of groups, peace dialogues, ...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historical marginalization by National government - Poor local leadership and lack of transparency - Police and army (they sometimes arrest innocent people) - Poor infrastructure and lack of transport - Lack of schools and illiteracy - Religion (Christians ↔ Muslims) - Council of elders (support and give their blessing before raiding) - Traditional justice system ↔ state system of justice and security
Attitudes & actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attitude of friendship - Attitude of respect and sharing resources together - Cooperation and working together (like cultivating) - Holding of (cross border) gatherings and peace dialogues - exchange visits of people from different communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women (motivating men to go for raids) - Witch doctors (direct where to go raiding) - Youth warriors (are the ones who go raiding) - Raids or theft by warriors of another community - Negative attitude towards the Karimojong (following historical marginalization) - Negative attitude towards security providers like UPDF (following human rights abuses) - Attitude of laziness - Attitude of jealousy and hatred

Values & interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cow is center of value system - Common interest in natural resources like pasture and water - Mineral exploitation like gold mining, for instance in Nakabaat mining area (unites people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispute over land and minerals (reduces grazing land) - Conflict over natural resources like pasture and water. - Polygamy (creates tension within family) - Culture of dowry and accumulation of livestock (makes men to go for raids). - High consumption of alcohol in the villages
Different/common experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raids and conflict can unite the community as warriors or elders reform themselves and advocate for peace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience of hunger and poverty - Experience of livestock diseases - Experience of raids by other (cross border) communities - Experience of human rights abuses during disarmament - Unequal disarmament, creating a power imbalance - Proliferation of small arms
Symbols & occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure like roads, schools, health centers - Sports (Tegla Lorupe event or football for peace) - Ceremonies like birth, marriage, initiation, death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guns and small arms - Scars showing pride of warriors killed during battle - Boundaries (create divisions and reduce land for pastoralists)

3.3. *Impact through resource transfers and implicit ethical messages*

According to the DNH framework, any intervention within a conflict setting will create an unintentional impact through the resources it transfers and the implicit ethical messages it sends (Do No Harm project, 2004). Resources can be material items in terms of food, goats and medicines or immaterial things in terms of trainings, sensitizations or awareness raising.

There are various ways how **resources** can feed into, prolong and worsen the conflict:

- *Theft*: when goods provided through development assistance are stolen by warriors to support the conflict either directly or indirectly.
- *Market effects*: Assistance affects prices, wages and profits and can either reinforce the war economy or the peace economy.
- *Distributional effects*: When assistance is targeted to some groups and not to others, and these groups overlap with divisions represented in the conflict, assistance can reinforce the conflict.
- *Substitution effects*: Aid resources can substitute for local resources, whereby the latter are freed up and can be used to support the conflict. Leaders can abdicate their responsibility for the welfare of the people and concentrate on the conflict instead.
- *Legitimization effects*: By providing aid to people who are involved in the conflict, you indirectly legitimize their actions.

Furthermore the DNH framework, identifies seven types of **implicit ethical messages** which can have a negative impact on the conflict.

- *Arms and power*: for instance when aid organisations hire armed guards to protect their goods or escort them to the field, the implicit ethical message is that security and safety is derived from weapons.
- *Disrespect, mistrust, competition among agencies*: when aid organisations refuse to cooperate with each other, the message you give is that it is unnecessary to cooperate with anyone with whom you do not agree.
- *Assistance workers and impunity*: When project workers use the goods of the organisation for their own benefit, the message is that if one has control over resources, it is permissible to use them for your own pleasures and objectives.
- *Different value for different life*: When for instance organisations allow the evacuation of expatriate but not local staff, it sends a message that some lives are valued more than others.
- *Powerlessness*: When project staffs disclaim responsibility for the impact of their interventions, people interpret it as if individuals in complex circumstances cannot have much power, and thus they do not have to take responsibility for what they do, or how they do it.
- *Belligerence, tension, suspicion*: When assistance workers are nervous and worried for their own safety, they can approach situations with suspicion and belligerence, and as such reinforce the tension in a society.

- *Publicity:* When NGO headquarters, in raising funds, use publicity pictures that victimize one side over the other, they can reinforce the demonization of one party in the conflict and as such strengthen the divisions.

At first sight, the DNH framework seems more designed for humanitarian aid organisations in a more severe conflict setting than Karamoja. However, the DNH framework will also prove useful in development cooperation, and in cases of a more latent and less violent environment.

As the dividers and connectors in the previous section are identified, and the way in which an organisation can influence them through the transfer of resources and implicit ethical messages, the **impact of the organisation's interventions** on the dividers and connectors will now be assessed. For this, the profile of VSF-B, described in chapter 2, should be kept in mind. For easy understanding, the project details are recapitulated in the table below.

Table 2 Project details VSF-Belgium in Karamoja

Project details: VSF-Belgium in Karamoja

Why? To empower disadvantaged livestock dependent communities in developing countries to improve their well-being.

Where? Kaabong, Napak and Moroto Districts

What? Support to local populations to improve livestock keeping and other aspects surrounding it: micro-loans, natural resources management, training, emergency aid and peace negotiations.

When? *Depending on project*

With whom? Staff (Program manager, Livestock officers, community mobilizers, admin & support staff), local government, CBO's, NGO's, community leaders, peace committees, natural resource management committees,

For whom? Beneficiaries

How?

- Sustainable access to natural resources through improved natural resource management and utilization, conflict mitigation and peace building.
- Improved emergency preparedness and response capacity through the establishment of effective early warning networks and community based preparedness plans.
- Protection of key livelihood assets through the establishment and support of community based animal health services, private sector support systems and alternative sources of income.
- Improved livestock and livestock product marketing.
- Increased women's participation and involvement in development activities.
- Pastoral field school and VICOBA approach, support to IGA's.
- ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) and participatory approaches.
- Working with and capacity building of local partners.

3.4. Assessing impact on connectors and dividers

Impact on dividers

In overall, VSF-Belgium has already integrated the Do No Harm approach and conflict sensitivity into his programing. However, there are some cases where one should still be thoughtful of the organisation's potential negative consequences on the conflict.

➤ *Distributional effects of assistance*

VSF-B implements its activities in certain sub counties, parishes and villages. The locations are agreed upon during proposal writing, project initiation and planning, in coordination with district and local government and other stakeholders in order to not replicate the same activities. As such assistance is targeted to some groups and not to others in the community. This does not pose much of a problem as long as these groups do not overlap with divisions represented in the conflict.

For instance, one of the main conflict corridors in Moroto district is between the upper Matheniko (also called Tepeth) and the downer Matheniko of Nadunget sub county, the area of Kodonyo being the main conflict spot. If we would target all our efforts on one community and not on the other it could have potential negative effect on the conflict.

Another example was mentioned by the Chairman of Nakwanga village during a community meeting. In Nakwanga village, Tapac sub county, VSF-Belgium supports the community through the Pastoral Field School approach and Village Community Bank. The community had set up a Cereal Bank, with input from VSF-B, to improve their livelihoods and strengthen their resilience throughout the dry season. The chairman expressed his concern that the cereal bank had created jealousy from neighbouring communities.



Cereal bank in Nakwanga village, Tapac s/c

➤ *Theft and market effects*

In general VSF-B focuses on empowering and **capacity building** of livestock dependent communities to improve their well-being. As, such there is not so much an influx of material goods, like food or cash in comparison with for instance the traditional food distributions by World Food Program. Sometimes items will get stolen like VICOBA kits, money, cereals, goats that were provided to the groups, medicines, etc. However the impact on the conflict is rather limited.

The same accounts for the market effects for two reasons. First of all, the material goods bought or staff recruited is limited and as such cannot influence the market very much.

Secondly, some of the resources are brought from outside, like medication and technical trainings. Sometimes resources are bought from within the community, like study goats, bulls for peace dialogue meetings, cereals, labour for cooking, etc. The prices hike when they realize an NGO is buying the items, however the rise in price is temporal, and the impact on the market and conflict remains small.

An element to keep in mind is the **support to local markets**. As we have seen in the



Nakiloro market, Moroto District

context analysis, cattle rustling has become very much commercialised. This means that stolen cattle are sold on markets for easy cash. When one supports local markets, the raiders are given a *means* to sell off the raided cattle. When VSF-B gives support to local markets (since it is identified as a connector bringing different communities together) this element should be kept in mind. For instance, there could be a system in place to track the origin of the sold cattle in order not to support the cattle raiders.

➤ *Issue of alcohol consumption*

Uganda is rated amongst the countries with the highest alcohol consumption in the world. This is reflected in the villages in Karamoja. Alcohol is taken in the form of local brew, made from sorghum or maize, and forms part of their daily food intake. The women start preparing the local brew in the morning, and by midday nearly the whole community, men and women, have tasted the brew.

To study the impact of alcohol consumption on the conflict would be interesting, but falls outside the objectives of this paper. What can be said, however, is that alcohol is identified as a 'divider' by the communities. They see alcohol as being destructive for their family and the broader community. People get drunk and either become aggressive and start fighting, or lazy and not able to work. Before going for a raid, warriors will take alcohol to give them more courage. More indirect, alcohol is one of the contributing factors leading to poverty.

As such, one should be sensitive not to support alcohol consumption in the community. For instance, when an organisation buys alcohol during a peace community dialogue to seal the agreements made at the end of the day, it indirectly gives a message that it legitimizes and approves the intake of alcohol. Another example is that sometimes women will use the saved money from VICOBA, and invest it in 'local brewing' as an alternative income generating activity. VSF-B could sensitize on the bad effects of alcohol and provide the groups with different options for IGA's.

➤ *The issue of allowances during meetings/peace dialogues*

During community meetings and peace dialogue meetings, allowances/facilitation fees are paid to invited government officials, local leaders and UPDF representatives. This handing over of money can increase tensions in two ways. First of all, in this way VSF-B legitimizes the actions of those actors. In *table 1* (Connectors and dividers in the Karamoja context) some of them were identified as ‘dividers’ in the community. Due to human rights abuses during disarmament the relation between the Karimojong and the security providers, like UPDF, remain tense and distrustful. As well is the relationship with the local or district leaders, who are not always seen as very transparent and honest to the community. When VSF-B provides them with allowances, it unintentionally supports one side of the conflict and gives a message of ‘it is unnecessary to be transparent, cooperative and respectful to others’.

Secondly, development or security provision should in first place be a responsibility of Uganda and its leaders. When organisations like VSF-B or other NGO’s provide allowances to the leaders, it gives both the community and the leaders the implicit message that ‘they are not responsible for development and security of their country’. In addition to this is the *substitution effect*: local resources can be freed up and used to support the conflict or used for other matters rather than the welfare and the security of the people.

Government and local leaders should be the examples of a society. They should be elected or appointed for their merits or qualifications. In Uganda, however, this is not always the case as corruption is still very high. Paying of high allowances or facilitation fees supports corruption, since leaders will attempt to control these resources and increase the benefits of their higher position as a local leader or government official. It sends a message that ‘if you are in a more powerful position you will get money and you can use it for your own benefit’. Taking into account education and sensitization on good governance, transparency and integrity is important.

Impact on connectors

Looking at the side of the connectors, we will see that VSF-B strengthens the connecting factors in the society through group formation, community meetings, exchange visits and strengthening of customary institutions.

➤ *(Cross-border) Peace Community dialogues and reciprocal grazing agreements*

VSF-Belgium brings communities, government and other stakeholders together in *peace community dialogues*. The initiative for a peace dialogue mostly comes from the community, local leaders or government. Sometimes they follow security incidents or are preventive in order to ensure peace in a certain area. Communities, who are in conflict with each other, are brought together in one central area. Mostly they also involve cross-border communities like Turkana or Pokot from Kenya, and Toposa or Dinka from South Sudan. The meetings involve the *peace committees* and elders, women and youth from the various areas. During peace dialogue meetings, they share their

concerns regarding conflict in the area, agree on the sharing of natural resources like pasture or water points, and come up with *Reciprocal Grazing Agreements*. In 2011-2012 for instance, VSF-B was involved in the organisation of several peace dialogues in Nakonyen common grazing area. This area is well endowed with pastures, but regular cattle thefts between the Pokot, Tepeth, Matheniko and Turkana hinder the well utilisation of the resources. VSF-B coordinates with key stakeholders, acts as the moderator during the peace dialogues and guides the community to come up with Reciprocal Grazing Agreements.

➤ *Natural Resource Management Committees*

VSF-B strengthens and establishes Natural Resource and Environmental Committees. These committees play a key role in the management of grazing and natural resources to minimize environmental destruction and degradation of rangeland. Peace building is embedded within the mandate of the Natural Resource Committees. The Committees will organize dialogues with other neighbouring committees and key stakeholders to agree on the sharing and access of resources.

➤ *Group formation*

Another connector is the group formation through approaches like Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR), Pastoral Field Schools, Village Community Banking and Community Animal Health Workers. Through involvement in the groups, the community gains knowledge, self-esteem and new ideas for income generating activities. Group dynamics are enhanced, and they learn to work together as a group in support for the development and peace in their respective communities. Linkages are created with Animal Health workers associations, other PFS and VICOPA groups, local government actors and other NGOs.



Loyaraboth PFS group performing dances during World Food Day, November 2012

➤ *Exchange visits*

VSF-B supports people from different communities, locations or nationalities to visit each other. The purpose is that they can learn from each other's experiences and knowledge. It strengthens the solidarity between the communities, as they interact with each other and create friendships. During the FSTP project, the PFS group of Nakiloro in Karamoja visited the PFS groups in Lokiriana, Turkana, to share lessons learnt from the pastoral field school and VICOPA approach and to learn from each other's enterprises they had set up during the previous FSTP phase.

➤ *Respect of customary institutions and involvement of women and youth*

VSF-B recognizes the role of the traditional institutions in the Karimojong society, and tries to involve them as much as possible. Elders are respected and are traditionally the decision makers in the community. They play a key role in peace building, and are often reformed warriors who have changed their lives to advocate for peace. As well as the elders, VSF-B especially targets women and youth to be involved in its activities. As described in the context analysis, women and youth are very much involved in the conflict, not only as perpetrators, but also as victims. Through targeting them, we can sensitize them on peace building and give them alternative possibilities to sustain in their livelihoods.

➤ *Support to peace commemorations and sports events*

Peace commemorations are events that bring people together and remind them of the past conflict and the historical agreement that was made to keep the peace between different communities. VSF-B supports peace commemorations like the Lokiriyama Peace Accord, signed in 1973. The commemoration is an important symbol to remind young warriors, who were not yet born at that time, of the peace built by their fathers and the importance of endorsing peace.



Tegla Loroupe Peace Race, 28th May 2011

Equally important is to engage youth in sports events or other social activities to tackle idleness and build their self-esteem. In such events, youths from different (rival) communities come together and participate together in sports. They feel united and learn how to respect each other. VSF-B supports the Tegla Loroupe peace run in Moroto District. Tegla Loroupe is a Kenyan athlete from West-Pokot District in Turkana. With the Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation, she advocates for cross-border peace in the pastoralist triangle of Turkana, Karamoja and South Sudan.

➤ *Improvement of animal health*

One of the connectors of Karimojong society is the 'cow'. Due to the nature of the area, livestock is the most sustainable livelihood. Through the improvement of animal health and production, VSF-B wants to empower livestock dependent people. Activities undertaken are training of CAHWs, vaccination campaigns, trainings on animal husbandry, PFS approaches, etc. Via its unique experience in animal health, VSF-B supports the development of the communities and contributes to peace in the area.

➤ *Support in alternative livelihoods*

Next to support in animal husbandry and livestock keeping, VSF-B supports the communities in alternative livelihoods and in undertaking income generating activities like bee-keeping, cottages for tourism, setting up of small businesses, crop production and poultry-farming. Especially through the VICOBA approach, beneficiaries save money, and can use the savings to set up alternative income generating activities. In addition the community is trained on business skills, financial management and record keeping. The youth are well involved in this activity, in order to keep them away from raiding and avoid idleness.

➤ *Education and sensitization*

The main focus of VSF-B is on capacity building and empowering the local community. VSF-B educates and sensitizes the community on livestock health, animal husbandry, agronomy, sustainable natural resources management, disaster risk reduction, sanitation and hygiene, business and entrepreneurial skills, peace building and sharing of natural resources, and financial management and record keeping, amongst others. The objective of education is to tackle the ignorance that is paramount in the community. This will help them in the development of their communities. Education is seen as an important connector in the Karamoja context, as in bringing people together and learning about development and peace issues.



Training of the community on goat management

➤ *Cooperation and coordination with other partners*

VSF-B invests in cooperation and coordination with other, particularly indigenous development organisations partners, like MADEFO, KADP, DADO, TUPADO, etc. In addition, VSF-B builds the capacity of those organisations with the objective that they can take over the project after some time. This methodology enhances the sustainability of the interventions of VSF-B. Another advantage is that the local partners have a rich knowledge of the context and culture of Karamoja, and act as an entry point to the communities. They are helpful in assessing the conflict and making of context analysis.

Besides, VSF-B plans and implements its activities in close cooperation with district administrative departments like Veterinary-, Production-, Health- and Water office. It furthermore coordinates its activities with the sub county chiefs, Community

development officers, Local Councilors and Parish Chiefs, and other partners working in the same area. In peace building, VSF-B works in close collaboration with other peace actors like RDC, DISO, LC V Chairman, army, police, CBO's and NGO's. In Moroto district, VSF-Belgium and DDG-DRC (Danish Demining Group - Danish Refugee Council) have been identified as District focal actors to ensure coordination of peace activities within the district.

Continuous sharing of information and a good working relationship nurtures a positive environment and atmosphere of dialogue. To the community, it gives a message 'that working together and sharing of information is important'.

Above, the connectors are identified on which VSF-B will have an impact through its interventions. What follows are a few testimonies of the importance of Pastoral field schools, Village Savings and Loan Associations, and sensitization of the local communities.

Testimonies from Nakiloro village, Moroto District



"VSF-Belgium sensitizes us on how we can protect our environment, and reduce the effects of hazards such as droughts and floods. They teach us how to plant vegetables using different planting techniques and terracing. We also learn about hygiene and how we can protect our water resources. It has benefited both us and our neighbours, the Turkana in Kenya. We are sharing pasture and water together, and it has brought peace to the area."

(Iluk Akirikira, Riamiriam VICOBA, Nakiloro)

"Nakiloro used to be a dangerous place. During cattle rustling between the Turkana from Kenya and the Karimojong from Uganda a lot of people were killed in this area. On one occasion, I was shot in the leg by armed warriors. VSF-Belgium has sensitized the community on peace, and gave the people of Nakiloro alternative opportunities to provide in their livelihoods. These days, Nakiloro is peaceful. I can move freely from this side of the border, across to the Kenyan side without being harmed. Now, people are settling down here, and trying to develop themselves. Even private investors are coming for business such as gold mining."



(Francis Lokut, Olakunos PFS, Nakiloro)



"I am a member of the Village Community Bank in Nakiloro, which is supported by VSF-Belgium. Through the association, I managed to save up to 200,000 UGX (60 EURO). With this money I started my own shop. I sell items like sugar, cooking oil, soap and matchboxes. People from the village and around come here to buy from my shop. It has changed my life a lot. Now I have some money to go to Moroto town to buy more items that I can sell here. Other members of the saving and loan association are seeing my success and are starting their own businesses."

(Rose Alem, Riamiriam VICOBA, Nakiloro)

Remarks when applying the DNH framework

The DNH framework is a flexible tool, and should be constantly taken into consideration when providing assistance or development aid in a certain area. When applying the DNH framework to identify the impact of an interventions on the conflict, it should be kept in mind that **never** a whole assistance program has an impact. It is rather a piece of an assistance program, one or several decisions and activities that result in a positive or negative impact on the conflict. The difference is in the detail! As such, an organisation should apply the DNH framework to every project and activity it is undertaking. The principal question of DNH '*How can aid be provided in a way it support the connectors rather than the dividers*' should be asked over and over again, and eventually be mainstreamed into the organisation's mode of working (Do No Harm Project, 2004, p. 7).

Besides, the context analysis should be updated regularly. Regions of conflict are dynamic. The impact on connectors or dividers in a society can differ, depending on the time the intervention is implemented. For instance, historical issues can continue to be factors in the present, but how they manifest themselves and how important they are changes over time. As such, it is important to update your understanding of the context regularly.

3.5. Indicators for measuring improvement in peace

The exercise in the previous sub chapter helps to assess the impact of VSF-B's interventions on the conflict. Changes in the connectors and dividers, through resource transfers or implicit ethical messages, are used as indicators. In the *Karamoja Livestock Development Program phase 2*, there are indicators that are directly targeted to measure an improvement in the security situation. In the result 'Improved management of natural resources', two outcome indicators measure improvements in the security situation, namely:

- Number of livestock enclosures set up in areas that were not previously used (for safety reasons)
- Number of women utilising pathways that were previously not used (for safety reasons)

Both are *effect* or *outcome indicators*, measuring change linked to the output or activities in a relative short time. During the research, some additional indicators were identified to measure an improvement in peace or security in a certain area. The following answers were given when we asked the community and key stakeholders for the *signs of peace* and *conflict*. Some of the indicators are interesting to consider in future proposal writing as indicators for improvement or decrease in security situation. They are highlighted in blue.

Table 3 Signs and indicators of peace and conflict in the Karamoja context

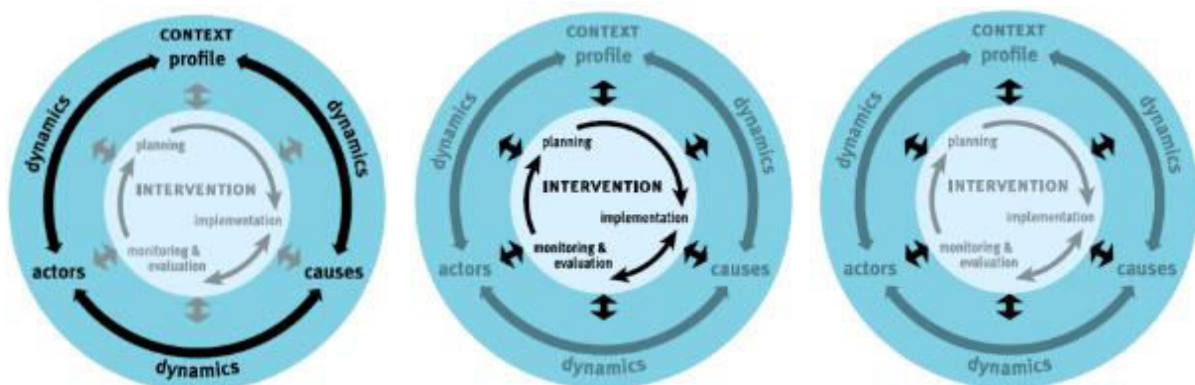
Signs of peace	Signs of conflict
Many gatherings and community meetings	Drought
Celebrations and intermarriages	Hunger and poverty
Free movement at all times	Diseases
Cross visiting of neighbouring communities (exchange visits)	Death and casualties
Effective recovery of lost animals	Raids and theft
People cultivate far from their village	Fighting
People share markets	Land wrangles
All people are mining in the same area	Jealousy
Unity among the community	Strange people come through the village
High fertility rate of humans and animals	Lack of cooperation within family
No raids	Laziness
Presence of NGO's	Lack of respect and understanding
Education (children are taken to school)	A lot of quarrelling among the community
There are many structures	People are drunk
Development	The owl (bird) is a sign of conflict
People are well fed and healthy	Foreseer foretell through reading stars and moon
Unity within family	People are making an alarm
Friendship	Symbols of fire
Sharing of resources	Gun shots

4. Options for conflict sensitive programming

4.1. Conflict sensitive development practice

Conflict sensitivity means taking into account the context (chapter 1) in which you operate, looking into the details of your intervention (chapter 2), and understanding the interaction between the intervention and the context (chapter 3). And finally, **acting** upon this understanding in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts. The figure below nicely visualizes the process of conflict sensitivity:

Figure 3 the process of conflict sensitivity



Source: Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2003, p. 3-4.

When an organisation wants to apply conflict sensitivity, the following assumptions should be in place (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2003):

- There should be a willingness and ability to implement conflict sensitivity.
- The organisation should be open to continuous learning and institutional adaptability to reflect conflict sensitivity.
- There should be an ability to deal with uncertainty, as there is no one-fit approach for conflict sensitivity.
- The organisation should remain honest and humble in recognizing the extent or limitation of the impact of interventions.
- It should recognize the complexity in which it operates.

In addition, the Consortium for Conflict Sensitivity (2003) identified some guiding principles in applying conflict sensitivity:

Guiding principles in conflict sensitivity:

<i>Use of participatory approaches and methods</i>	<i>Transparency</i>
<i>Inclusiveness of actors, issues and perceptions</i>	<i>Partnership and coordination</i>
<i>Impartiality in relation to actors and issues</i>	<i>Timeliness</i>
<i>Accountability for one's own actions</i>	<i>Complementarity and coherence</i>
<i>Respect for people's ownership of the conflict and their suffering</i>	

4.2. *New program options*

In the previous chapter, it was shown that VSF-B can sometimes, unintentionally, strengthen the dividers in a society. With this understanding, VSF-B should try to redesigns its programs and think of new program options to avoid the negative impact on the conflict and instead strengthen the connectors in the society. Some hints for possible program options were already mentioned while elaborating on the impact on dividers. Here are some options:

➤ *With regard to the distributional effect:*

Distributional effects will always be there, since VSF-B cannot target ALL the communities. VSF-B has to prioritize and target the communities where the need is the highest, or those that were assigned to them in coordination with district and other stakeholders. Communities, however, might not always understand the reason why some parishes or villages are selected, and others not. As such, it would be helpful to sensitize neighbouring communities on the project, and to make them aware of the benefits to the whole community. Close cooperation and coordination with other stakeholders will also counteract the negative impact through distributional effects. It was also mentioned earlier that distributional effects do not pose much of a problem as long as it does not overlap with divisions represented in the conflict. Keeping this in mind in future proposal writing, already contributes to conflict sensitivity.

➤ *With regard to theft and market effects:*

It was mentioned that theft and market effects do not contribute too much on the dividers, and that the impact is rather small. To strengthen and support the local communities, one can buy the 'input' resources as much as possible from the communities themselves. When supporting local markets, one should keep in mind the 'commercialization of cattle raiding' and support a tracking-of-origin system in order not to indirectly support the cattle raiders.

➤ *With regard to the high consumption of alcohol:*

VSF-B could sensitize the community on the bad effects of alcohol and give alternative options for income generating activities through the PFS and VICOBA groups. In the light of community peace dialogues, VSF-B should not support the buying of alcohol and act as a role model for the community.

➤ *With regard to the payment of allowance and substitution effect:*

VSF-B could lobby with other stakeholders like UN to reduce the amount of facilitation fees or allowances, and to come up with a reasonable standard fee covering transport costs and other travel expenses.

During peace dialogue meetings, no allowances should be paid to government or security providers, since it is their responsibility to provide safety in the region. Since the local government only receives a small budget for peace and security, they could be facilitated in terms of fuel or transport. VSF-B could sensitize the higher government

levels that a stable peace is not yet reached in the area, and that support for the local government in peace issues is necessary.

The substitution effect can be counteracted by working closely together with the government at local levels, and by continuous reminding them of their responsibilities. One option is to build the capacity of local government and to educate them on good governance, transparency and integrity.

One should keep in mind that the impact on dividers identified is not exhaustive, and neither are the options for redesign. What was provided in this chapter are just a few options, but many more could be explored.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Any intervention in any context can influence that context in a positive or negative way. As such, when operating in a conflict setting, development agencies can sometimes, unintentionally, strengthen the dividers in a society. This paper studied the impact of VSF-B's interventions on the conflict in Karamoja. Using the Do No Harm framework, the following cases were identified where the organisation should be thoughtful of its potential negative consequences on the conflict: distributional effects of assistance, theft and market effects, issue of alcohol consumption and issue of allowances during meetings/peace dialogues.

Looking at the side of the connectors, VSF-B strengthens the connecting factors in the society through group formation, community meetings, exchange visits, strengthening of customary institutions, support to peace commemorations, providing of alternative livelihoods and through its focus on animal health (*the* connecting factor of mainly pastoralist Karimojong society). In overall, VSF-B has well integrated the Do No Harm approach and conflict sensitivity into his programming.

The Do No Harm framework developed by Mary Anderson is only one way of assessing an organisation's impact in a certain context. But no matter which tool one uses, it should be kept in mind that never a whole assistance program has a positive or negative impact. It is rather a piece of an assistance program, one or several decisions or activities. As such, an organisation should be *conflict sensitive* throughout the whole project cycle and mainstream it in the programming. This means understanding the context of operation, the details of the intervention, the interaction between the intervention and the context, and to act upon this understanding.

From the results of the research and the wide experience of VSF-B in Karamoja some recommendations can be drawn for conflict sensitive programming and sustainable peace interventions. Some are directed to VSF-B (or similar organisations working in the same area) and some are meant for other stakeholders, being it government, security providers or other NGO's.

For VSF-B and other (I)NGO's:

- When implementing its activities, the (I)NGO should be a neutral actor and avoid any association with weapons or arms. For instance, one should not take any armed UPDF soldiers in the organisation's car who ask for a lift.
- Conflict is related to hunger, poverty, drought and environmental degradation. Contributions in enhancing food security and strengthening of community resilience, will indirectly positively impact on peace.
- To increase and expand PFS/VICOBA groups to other parishes and sub counties.
- To continue strengthening of traditional institutions like Council of elders and women groups.
- To disarm the 'mindset' of the beneficiary community through continuous sensitization and education on peace and development.
- To support cross-border uniting elements through exchange visits, community dialogues, group formation and other cross border initiatives and meetings.

- To strengthen Peace building Committees and Natural Resource Management Committees through capacity building, and to support the communities in coming up with Reciprocal Grazing Agreements.
- To support education and literacy.
- To support sensitization on livelihoods, animal health, sustainable management of natural resources and peace issues.
- To invest in alternative livelihoods for the idle youth through IGA's and vocational skills training. Include the youth in approaches like PFS, VICOBA and CAHWs.
- To empower the women in the communities and to engage them in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.
- To support the commemoration of historical events to remind people of peace, for instance Lokiriyama peace agreement.

For government and other stakeholders:

- To advocate for regional disarmament (triangle Uganda-Kenya-S-Sudan), close cross-border collaboration and sharing of information.
- To strengthen local government structures and to build their capacities.
- Enforcement of law should be in place to punish the culprits and avoid corruption.
- To invest in cross border / cross community infrastructures like roads, schools, health centers, markets and water points.
- To settle disputes over mineral wealth and land issues and sensitize the communities on their rights.
- To invest in economic development of the region and job creation for the youth.
- The government should be transparent, upright and aware of his exemplary role in society.

For all:

- Last but not least: Peace building takes time! There is need for long term peace building projects. The current security situation remains volatile, and it is difficult to predict whether the relative improvement in security situation will last over a long time. The main challenge is the sustainability of this relative peace.

“Peace and development goes hand in hand”



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Annexes

1. List of Interviewees

Moroto District:

Mr. Nahaman Ojwe – RDC Moroto District
Mr. Ojeva Kennedy – DISO Moroto District
Mr. Muhanguzi Charles – Deputy DISO Moroto District
Mr. Ayepa Cosmas – LC V Vice chairperson and Secretary for Security Moroto District
Mr. Obia George – DPC Moroto District
Mr. Okot Obwana – RPC Moroto District
Mrs. Atugonza Sylvia – Programme Coordinator Riamiriam Civil Society Network
Mrs. Akello Lucy – Programme Coordinator MADEFO
Mr. Lotukei Dean Rafael – Project Officer IRC
Mr. Kokedienny Jimmy – Project Manager DDG-DRC

Kaabong District:

Mr. Lokwee John – Assistant CAO Kaabong District
Mr. Lokol Adelio – District Planner Kaabong District
Dr. Eladu Fredrik – District Production Officer Kaabong District
Mr. Ocen Robert – Deputy DISO Kaabong District
Lt. Katuune Esau – Intelligence Officer UPDF Kaabong District
Mr. Lomoe Lokure Simon – Program Coordinator DADO
Mrs. Nakienny Anna Stella – Project Officer Warchild UK

2. Questionnaires community and key stakeholders

Community groups:

Conflict analysis (in plenary, +- 1h)

- Q1: What are the elements that unite/connects/brings together the community?
Q2: What are the elements that divide the community?
Q3: If you wake up tomorrow morning and there is conflict, how does your community look like? (Probing for signs of conflict)
Q4: If you wake up tomorrow morning and there is peace, how does your community look like? (Probing for signs of peace)
Q5: What are the benefits of living in peace and harmony with your neighbours and within your community?
Q6: Who is involved in the conflict, and how? Why? Where?
Q7: What are the most important sources of conflict?

Coping mechanisms and peace building (in focus groups or in plenary, +- 30 min)

- Q8: How do you as a local community cope with and solve conflict WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY?

- Q9: What do you do to keep peace WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES?
- Q10: Who is involved in peace building within your community?
- Q11: Who is involved in peace building from outside your community?
- Q12: Do you engage in peace initiatives (for example: peace dialogues)? And what are the outcomes?

Impact of VSF-Belgium (in focus groups or in plenary, +- 30 min)

- Q13: What does VSF-B do in your area (in general)?
- Q14: Do VSF-B interventions contribute to peace in your area? And with your neighbours?
- Q15: Do VSF-B interventions contribute to conflict in your area? And/ or with your neighbours?
- Q16: What do you think, is not done and should be done or considered for sustainable Peace?

Stakeholders:

- Q1: How is the current conflict situation? And how would you compare it with the last 5-2 years?
- Q2: What are, according to you, the main sources of conflict in your area?
- Q3: What are the challenges for peace in your district/Karamoja?
- Q4: What are the main interventions of development partners and government regarding peace?
- Q5: How would you assess VSF-B's interventions?
- Q6: Do you have any other suggestions for sustainable peace interventions in your area?