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The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

CONFLICT AND CLIMATE ASSESSMENT FOR THE KARAMOJA CLUSTER

FOR THE USAID-FUNDED CROSS-BORDER COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ACTIVITY



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DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

ACME	Acme Development Organization
APaD	Agency for Cross Border Pastoralist Development
AUBP	African Union Border Programme
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBCR	Cross-Border Community Resilience
DISO	District Internal Security Officer
DRM&FS	Disaster Risk Management and Food Security
EAC	East African Community
ENDF	Ethiopia National Defence Forces
ERCA	Ethiopia Revenue and Customs Authority
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
ICPDO	Integrated Community Peace and Development Organization
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
LDO	Local Development Organizations
MCA	Member of County Assembly
NRA	National Revenue Authority (South Sudan)
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
ODR&FS	Office of Disaster Risk Management and Food Security
OPRD	Organisation for Peace Relief and Development
QA	Quality Assurance
SC	Sub County
SO4CM	South Omo for Christ Ministry
SPLM/A	Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army
SPLM/A-IG	Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army-In Government
SPLM/A-IO	Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army-In Opposition
TW-SC	Turkana West Sub County
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WP-SC	West Pokot Sub County

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a conflict and climate risk assessment for the Karamoja cluster that includes the Turkana and West Pokot Counties in Kenya, the Omorate and Nyangatom *woredas* (districts) in South Omo, Ethiopia, Kapoeta East and South counties in South Sudan and Amudat, Moroto, Kotido and Kaabong districts in Uganda. First, the conflict assessment systematically analyzes the dynamics of peace, conflict, stability, and instability in the Karamoja cluster. In so doing, the assessment supports the Cross-Border Community Resilience (CBCR) Activity in understanding the context, drivers, and dynamics of conflicts, as well as the key actors or parties to the conflicts. The assessment also identifies the formal and informal conflict governance bodies and procedures currently in place. Second, the climate risk assessment explores the common and differentiated climate risks in the cluster, impact of climate change on livelihoods, the coping and adaptation mechanisms used by individuals and communities, and the barriers in and opportunities for addressing climate risks.

Collectively, the conflict and climate risk assessment provide the technical evidence base for identifying the main conflict and climate trends, dynamics, and drivers, as well as opportunities for furthering social cohesion and climate risk adaptation initiatives. The assessment incorporates Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) considerations from the outset and proceeds to identify plans for participatory frameworks and interventions that prioritize the needs, experiences and perspectives of women, young people, and traditionally marginalized groups within the Karamoja cluster.

For this purpose, the study adopted a systematic review of existing literature on conflict and climate dynamics in the Karamoja cluster. Additionally, primary data was collected through field research in Kacheliba and Alale in West Pokot County, Loima and Turkana West in Turkana County, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto and Amudat districts in Uganda, Kapoeta South and Kapoeta East counties in South Sudan, and Nyangatom and Omorate *woredas* in Ethiopia. The research team used open-ended key informant interviews (KIIS) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community representatives (men and women, elders and youth, urban and rural residents), government officials, religious and cultural leaders. The research team also reached out to individuals with specialized knowledge in diverse fields such as agriculture, peace, environment and natural resource, security, administration, immigration, and livelihoods working in the Karamoja cluster. A total of 24 FGDs and 160 KIIs were conducted from 1st to 20th February 2023.

According to the study findings, there are various types of conflicts in the Karamoja cluster, such as cattle rustling, natural resource-based conflicts, banditry and road ambushes, violent and armed confrontation between pastoralists and government forces, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), human and wildlife conflicts and land-based border conflicts. Across the cluster, the most prevalent is cattle rustling which has increasingly evolved over time from a cultural practice to a more violent and commercialized economic activity. The activity has been captured by criminal gangs and business networks involving a wide range of perpetrators that often span communal and across borders within the Karamoja cluster. Moreover, the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) has been a game-changer in enhancing cattle rustling by tilting the balance of power in favor of those who have access to, and control of the most powerful weapons, resulting in immeasurable suffering to those who cannot defend themselves.

The study identified actors in the conflict chain with each playing a critical role that helped fuel it. The main players included children of ages 12-17 years, male youth and men aged 18-35 years, *kraal*¹ leaders (35-60 years) and elders (60yrs and above). At an early age, children are indoctrinated into their culture and used as herds' boys who would later be used as spies to report on possible raid targets. The young men are the lethal attack force and provide the bulk of the warrior armies. Each community across the cluster depends on an agile young force to execute or repel an attack from a rival community. Others with a lot of influence and are certainly consulted include sorcerers, traditional leaders and fortune tellers who advise the warriors before an attack and predicted outcomes. Businesspeople, brokers, and middlemen help in the quick disposal of conflict loot especially livestock which is quickly loaded onto waiting tracks and ferried across borders.

Development partners who include Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) play peacebuilding roles in the conflict incidents. Other actors such as the central and local governments are accused of not adequately responding to the conflicts, besides their non-responsiveness in the provision of critical services such as education and security that could contribute to conflict mitigations.

The conflict assessment identified triggers and drivers to conflict within the cluster of which climate change and environmental stressors sat at the top of the pile. Being traditionally an arid and semi-arid land, the Karamoja cluster is faced by a changing climate that is worsening the environmental conditions that help exacerbate an already fragile situation. Other triggers included persistent socio-economic and political inequalities and marginalization, proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs), conflict legacies and disarmament inadequacies, commercialization of cattle rustling, emergence of conflict alliances for distribution of cattle, poverty, unemployment, and the influence of illicit alcohol, changing land use, management and development policies and interventions in the region, mineral exploration, oil discovery and extractives.

The conflicts have several impacts, such as changes in social roles in the community. For example, more and more women have taken up traditionally male roles as household heads. More women and youth (male and female) have migrated to urban centres where they are engaged in formal businesses and provision of informal services.

There are notable existing efforts to address conflict and opportunities to promote peace among the ever-warring communities across the cluster. The emerging role of women and their experiences in times of conflict have powerful implications for peacebuilding and conflict transformation. They influence a lot of decisions that go into activating a conflict and possible deterrence of the same. Positive cultural perceptions of Karamoja cluster identity and oneness in diversity is an aspect that enhances cohesiveness through cultural events such as the famous *Tobong'lore* held annually in Turkana County. There is an existence of customary resource management regime and a presence of positive interdependent and complementary actor roles in the Karamoja cluster.

Climate change and variability presents new risks and vulnerabilities. Climate related risks such as prolonged dry seasons are becoming more frequent and intense with negative impacts on community livelihoods such as nomadic pastoralism and agro-pastoralism. Other risks include heavy rains causing

¹ *Kraal* is a rural African village consisting of several homesteads and families under the immediate rule of a headman responsible for the conduct of the members.

catastrophic flooding which increases the levels of the rivers and lakes within the cluster, numerous animal and human diseases and physical infrastructure washed away.

The impact of climate change on livelihoods includes rising land temperatures, frequent droughts, reduced rainfall, loss of pastoralist land to developmental infrastructure like schools, hospitals, sedentary living, flash floods, livestock diseases, and aggravated food security.

Management of climate risks has been structured at three levels. Traditional short-term coping mechanisms of harvesting immature food crops and selling off a small number of cattle. As adaptation or coping mechanism with climatic anomalies, households are using other long-term adaptation strategies which include diversification of livelihood sources, livestock mobility to track forage and water resources, diversification of herd composition to benefit from the varied drought and disease tolerance, fertility of diverse livestock species, sending children to school for formal education as a long-term investment expected to pay back through income from employment. Policies and development interventions that reduce risks, diminish livelihood constraints, and expand opportunities for increased household resilience to drought are critical complements to the existing pastoralists coping strategies. At government level, free primary and secondary education is promoted, promotion of irrigation agriculture and enhancement of food storage facilities. There are initiatives by the government on dryland farming techniques and deployment of agriculture and livestock extension staff to rural areas of the Karamoja cluster. The civil society sector also supports access to free primary education, and provide school feeding programmes, food supplements for the management of malnutrition, irrigation agriculture, management of humanitarian services and facilitation of cross-border resource sharing initiatives.

There are critical barriers to decision-making on climate change which the assessment investigated. These include lack of adequate climate change information, low capacity of actors, institutional red tape, duplication of roles and responsibilities due to poor coordination, changes in timing and duration of seasons' effects on seasonal management activities, constraints from national and regional budgets, policies, or processes on altering or supplementing current management practices to enable adaptation to climate change, and general decline in staff resources and capacity.

On the other hand, several opportunities exist for more effective integration of climate change adaptation within development activities. These include making climate information more available, relevant, and usable, developing, and applying climate risk screening tools, using appropriate "entry points" for climate information, shifting emphasis to implementation rather than developing new plans, encouraging meaningful co-ordination and the sharing of good practices and review timing of management activities, and taking advantage of seasonal changes that provide more opportunities to implement beneficial adaptation actions.

Based on the findings of this report, there are key areas where the CBCR Activity can take actions with the potential of minimizing the risks of conflict and climate change in the Karamoja cluster. These include the following:

Given the history of marginalization across the clusters, and the contributions of NGOs, CBOs, and faith-based organizations (FBOs) to development in the cluster, these actors enjoy higher trust and respect among the populations in the cluster. Therefore, for any meaningful development or entry into the Karamoja cluster, it is imperative that CBCR partners engage with the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar, Catholic Diocese of Torit, Catholic Diocese Kotido, Moroto and Kaabong through the cross-border evangelization programme, Agency for cross Border Pastoralists Development, Acme Development Organization, SAPCONE, Integrated Community Peace and Development Organization, Organization for Peace and Relief Development (OPRD), Initiative for Pastoralists Communication (IPC), Karamoja Peace and Development Agency (KAPDA) and Sikom Peace Network for Development.

Moreover, informal power structures especially the *kraal* are important in overall peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Karamoja cluster. To bolster and attain sustainable peace, there is a need to support and build the capacity of *kraal* leaders, and support some of their activities across borders.

Support for women and youth in business. Conflict and Climate change has affected more women than men, decimated more households and forced more women out of pastoralism. Many women have migrated to urban centres to seek new ways of survival. Most of them are cash strapped with little or no capacity for meaningful engagement in business. Therefore, development partners need to channel support to build the capacity of women in business and provision of business grants.

Support for diversification of sources of livelihood. One of the consequences of climate change and conflict is that many households have lost livestock. Over dependence on livestock has rendered many households more food insecure than ever before. In addition, livestock numbers have continued to decline. It is therefore imperative that development partners support and build capacity of the communities in agricultural production. Some areas of Karamoja cluster are ideal for rainfed and/or irrigation agriculture. Support for activities for water harvesting, training in farming techniques, dryland farming and food handling and storage will greatly build the food security of the community and reduce or eliminate the need for humanitarian food aid. Partnership with the civil society organizations and respective ministry of agriculture will produce a better synergy.

The CBCR could support behaviour change programming targeting children and youth of the cluster. In the Karamoja cluster youth are the main perpetrators of conflict, undertaking all the raiding and other decadent cultural practices. These are done in the context of very low access to formal education and non-existent schools. The value placed on livestock as the only source of social recognition remains high. Therefore, development partners need to support activities such as awareness creation, mop up of children of school going age, programmes of alternative rites of passage, school feeding and the engagement with government and education officials in policy reviews.

Climate change and conflict have a regional dimension, thus a need for regional intervention. Therefore, development partners need to support collaborations within the international donor community and the cross-border governments to adopt and implement policy frameworks that are both conflict-sensitive and climate sensitive, and that recognizes and supports pastoralism as a livelihood in transition that remains valuable and viable in Karamoja cluster. Work with the government to implement priority projects around natural resource management of pasture and water, noting, the potential for dialogue, conflict mitigation, and peacebuilding in Karamoja cluster.

It is also recommended that the CBCR partners with respective ministries in charge of Water and Environment to strengthen Natural Resource Management systems especially with respect to documentation and conflict-sensitive dissemination of accessible, easily understood, and reliable climate change data. Other expectations will be to support adoption of gender transformative approaches in conflict and climate management for cross-border development. This will include aspects such as social inclusion in community natural resource-based committees and peace building committees all of a cross border nature.

The development of well-designed contextualized youth and women focused empowerment programs for cross border communities will go a long way in changing the impact of programs. This include capacity building for income generating activities for alternative and/or diversified livelihood in the areas of agriculture where there is natural flowing permanent rivers such as the Turkwel in the border between the Turkana and Pokot (Kenya and Uganda); between the Nyangatom, Dassanech and Turkana within the Kibish area within the Ilemi triangle and around river Omo, and provision of fishing gear to the Turkana and Dassanech to manage the attendant conflicts. There can also be support towards marketing, packaging and management of the Apiary business between the Turkana and Pokot; Turkana and the Ik (Turkana West and Kaabong districts).

I. INTRODUCTION

Karamoja cluster is a mass of borderland that falls between Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia covering approximately 150, 000 km². The countries share approximately 8,382kms of borders, stretching from the southwest Ethiopia, northwest Kenya, southeast South Sudan and northeast Uganda².

Figure 1. Map of the Karamoja cluster-Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia border



Source: Catley et. al³

Approximately 14 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities occupy the region. All or most of them have strong linguistic and other cultural affinities. The ethnic groups in the cluster include: the Dassanech and Nyangatom of Ethiopia, the Nyangatom, Buya, Didinga, and the Toposa of South Sudan, the Pian, the Ik, the Bokora, the Dodoth, the Jie, the Matheniko, the Pokot, and the Tepeth of Uganda, and the Turkana and the Pokot of Kenya. While most of the communities are pastoralists, the Ik, the Pokot and the Nyangatom are agro-pastoralists.⁴ The Turkana and the Dassanech also practice fishing in Lake Turkana. All the communities keep large herds of livestock, especially cattle. Generally, the communities also engage in trade activities around food crops, cereals, livestock, pulses, honey and bee products, gums and resins, fodder, among others. Pastoralism contributes approximately 19

² Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 'IGAD Cluster I (Karamoja Cluster),' 2023, <https://resilience.igad.int/clusters/igad-cluster-I-karamoja-cluster/> (accessed 12 June 2023).

³ Andy Catley, Elizabeth Stites, Mesfin Ayele and Raphael Arasio, 'Introducing Pathways to Resilience in the Karamoja Cluster', *Pastoralism* 11 (1) (2021): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-021-00214-4>.

⁴ FGD, Turkana West, Turkana, Kenya, 04 February 2023.

percent, 13 percent and 8 percent of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda respectively.⁵

Water availability is a major challenge in the Karamoja cluster. Rainfall is unreliable and sparsely distributed, causing long extreme dry spells, and at other times flooding. The mean annual rainfall in the region is 200 mm, and ranges from 150 mm to 250 mm on the Turkana side, and slightly higher (600mm) on the Karamojong side.⁶ Climate change has further altered the rainfall patterns and the rains tend to appear earlier or later and over a limited duration compared to normal years. Heavy downpours cause flash floods that bring about destruction of lives, livelihoods and property and are exacerbated by lack of trees and other vegetation ground cover on rangelands that would otherwise help reduce the flow and allow for more soil absorption. Most water sources in the cluster are seasonal. Therefore, these challenges result in serious water shortage for livestock and human use in the cluster, leading to internal and cross-border conflicts over limited resources.

Generally, conflict between the Turkana of Kenya and the Dassanech and Nyangatom of Ethiopia, the Nyangatom, the Buya, the Didinga, the Toposa of South Sudan, the Pian, the Ik, the Bokora, the Dodoth, the Jie, the Matheniko, the Pokot, and the Tepeth of Uganda, as well as the Turkana and the Pokot of Kenya is to a great extent resource based. The conflict revolves around the competition over water and pasture, whose scarcity is exacerbated by climate change. In addition, poor communication, dishonored peace and natural resource sharing agreements and emerging mining activities along the common borders are pertinent issues causing conflict.⁷ Cattle rustling remains a historical and persistent cause of conflict. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons held by civilians in the Karamoja cluster exacerbates the dynamic and scope of conflict. Rearmament by Uganda's Dodoth and the Jie, the Turkana of Kenya and the Toposa of South Sudan has made the situation worse. Another emerging issue leading to conflict is the unresolved cases of unrecovered livestock. This is very vexatious and remains a teething issue in the Karamoja cluster. All Karamoja cluster communities have a case of stolen but unrecovered livestock against each of the neighboring community.

In the entire cluster, especially in the Nyangatom, Dassanech, Turkana, Toposa, Pokot there has been a remarkable decline in rainfall over the years, but at the same time there has been an increase in rainfall in Karimojong section of Moroto and Kaabong districts. In the entire Karamoja cluster, there is more flooding in the Turkana section towards Lotikipi plains and Lake Turkana. The occasional rise in the water levels in Lake Turkana which affects fishing and adjacent grazing lands is also a consequence of climate change. Climate change risks are more prominent within the Turkana section which experiences the highest temperatures and more aridity compared to the other sections of the cluster. The cluster has only two permanent rivers (River Turkwel and Omo) which are on the periphery. All other rivers are semi-permanent and unlike before, they hold water for a much shorter period because of climate change. It is no coincidence that the cluster is also affected by climate change. Climate change manifested by drought and flooding among others remains an incontrovertible challenge in the

⁵ Dorothy A. Amwata, Dickson M. Nyariki, and Nashon R. K. Musimba, 'Factors Influencing Pastoral and Agropastoral Household Vulnerability to Food Insecurity in the Drylands of Kenya: A Case Study of Kajiado and Makeni Counties', *Journal of International Development* 28 (5) (2016): 771–87, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3123>.

⁶ Intergovernmental Authority on Development, *supra* n 2.

⁷ *Ibid*
usaid.gov

cluster. It threatens to derail or even roll back hard-earned development gains of the past decades and jeopardise the progress towards development goals across sectors and contributes to cycles of loss and vulnerability at all levels. Within the cluster, climate change is about more than just the weather in the sense that, its distinct impacts connect to some of the most pressing issues humanity currently faces, including conflict as shown above and extreme poverty that cumulatively creates conditions of social-economic and ecological vulnerability. Importantly, while it is an undeniable fact that climate change burdens all of humanity, there is evident indication which shows that its impacts are not felt equally; instead, vulnerabilities related to climate change and its impacts on communities are deeply gendered and have historically affected the poorest echelons of society especially women and children.

Thus, the combination of the impacts of conflict and climate change negatively impacts livelihoods of the communities within the Karamoja cluster. It not only overburdens their adaptive capacities, but they also must rely on humanitarian assistance for survival. There is, therefore, a need to understand the underlying issues through a conflict and climate sensitive analysis. Thus, this conflict and climate risk assessment sought to lay the knowledge base for the CBCR Activity that is designed to enhance resilience and thus reduce the need for humanitarian assistance among communities in the cross-border cluster of Karamoja.

First, the conflict assessment analyzes the dynamics of peace and conflict in the Karamoja cluster. This will support the CBCR Activity in understanding the context, drivers, and dynamics of conflicts, and the key actors to the conflict in the cross-border region. The findings will help in designing evidence-based, context-sensitive social cohesion projects and ensure conflict sensitivity under the 'Do No Harm' Framework – which emphasizes minimizing the negative impacts of conflict and maximizing on the positive impact. Second, the climate assessment investigates the common and differentiated climate risks in the Karamoja border cluster, the impact of climate change on livelihoods, the coping and adaptation mechanisms used by individuals, households and communities and the barriers in and opportunities for addressing climate risks. The assessment considers the formal and informal procedures currently in place in confronting climate change risks in the cluster.

Accordingly, this report establishes that the Karamoja cluster has a long history of marginalization that dates to the colonial administrations, which has created viable conditions for conflict escalation and various types of conflicts to thrive. These include cattle rustling, natural resource-based conflicts, banditry and road ambushes, violent and armed confrontation between pastoralists and government forces, human and wildlife conflicts, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and land-based border conflicts. Cattle rustling is the most prevalent across the cluster, and it has increasingly evolved over time from a cultural practice to a more violent and commercialized economic activity. The activity has been captured by criminal gangs and business networks involving a wide range of perpetrators that often span communal and across borders within the Karamoja cluster. The main players in cattle rustling are children of ages 12-17 years, male youth and men aged 18-35 years, *kraal leaders* (35-60 years) and elders (60yrs and above).

Among the major climatic episodes in the Karamoja cluster are prolonged periods of drought that are becoming more pronounced to the level of a humanitarian catastrophe with some respondents alluding to year-round drought. Insufficient and highly variable rainfall precipitation is a defining feature of climate change in the region. Importantly, there is broad consensus across the study respondents that rainfall remains erratic in the cluster, with some areas experiencing short rains between the months of March and October, dating as far back as 2009. The security implications of climate change include pastoralists' activities to recoup their decimated stock by raiding cattle from neighboring communities.

Due to the animals' economic and social value, the theft represents a severe loss to the families involved. The social tension because of raiding further leads to a surge in displaced populations associated with extreme events such as floods and drought not just within nations, but often across borders.

Organization of the report

After this introduction (which opens with a background to the study and the assessment objectives), the next section presents the study methodology, which is followed by the findings section. The findings are broken down into the following sub-sections: socio-political and ecological context of the Karamoja cluster, the conflict assessment and the climate risks assessment. The report ends with conclusion and recommendations.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This conflict and climate risk assessment is based on qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Moreover, the conflict assessment draws upon the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Framework⁸ and Conciliation Resources Gender Conflict Analysis tool.⁹ The USAID conflict assessment framework underscores a process of collecting information relevant to a specific context in relation to its internal conflict dynamics ranging from their policies, interests, personal and cultural dynamics to language and logistical constraints. The climate risk assessment analyses how climate change and extreme weather events interact with socio-economic factors to determine the overall risk for the affected population. Additionally, both the conflict and climate assessments incorporate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) considerations.

2.2 Data collection

Data was abstracted from both secondary and primary sources. This involved a systematic review of secondary literature related to the conflict and climate dynamics in the Karamoja cluster. The secondary sources of literature were journal articles, commissioned research reports on conflict and climate change in the Karamoja cluster, media, and online sources. Besides the review, data was collected through key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) bringing together local government officials, political leaders, opinion leaders, traditional leaders, leaders from civil society organisations (CSOs), and ordinary citizens.

2.3 Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy was purposive. The criteria for their selection was determined based on membership in respective groups, knowledge of specific or general information on conflict and climate change events, residence in the area, participation in events or experience of events or activities in the cluster, and occupation of certain formal positions. Respondents were contacted as key informants or as a team (FGD) to obtain diverse information from a common sitting for triangulation purposes.

2.4 Data Collection

Prior to the start of data collection in all the study locations, introductory meetings were held with the respective country leadership i.e., offices of County Commissioners, Resident District Commissioners, *woreda* administrators and County Secretaries or Executives. The meetings were useful in introducing the planned research, agreeing on the scope, outlining the ethical considerations and support requirements. The country level entry meetings were held between 30th January and 1st February 2023. The data collection phase commenced on 2nd February 2023 and ended on 9th February 2023, running concurrently in all the four countries. The research team and the research assistants (RAs) conducted the FGDs and the KIIs using open ended interview schedules. The research support team monitored and verified the incoming data to ensure a high degree of quality and undertook necessary research adaptation and modification to improve the data collection in collaboration with the RAs in the field. Photographs of interview sessions were taken as well as the GPS locations of the sessions. These were submitted alongside the data sets.

⁸ United States Agency for International Development, 'Conflict Assessment Framework Application Guide', 2023, https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADY740.pdf (accessed 30 January 2023).

⁹ Sanne Tielemans, 'Gender and Conflict Analysis Toolkit for Peacebuilders,' Conciliation Resources', 2015, <https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/CR%20Gender%20Toolkit%20WEB.pdf> (accessed 30 January 2023).

Twenty-Four (24) FGDs were organized in the districts of Amudat, Moroto, Kotido and Kaabong in Uganda; Kapoeta East and Kapoeta South Counties in South Sudan; Nyangatom and Omorate *woredas* in Ethiopia, and Turkana West and Loima Sub-Counties in Turkana County and Poko North Sub-County in West Pokot County. The study also conducted 160 KIIs in the respective counties, sub-counties, districts and *woredas* stated above.

A stakeholder validation meeting was convened on the 21st of March 2023 in Lodwar, Turkana County, Kenya, to share the draft findings. The meeting sought stakeholders' insights on the assessment and the same was incorporated into a revised report.

2.5 Data Analysis

The raw research data from the field was cleaned then uploaded to the excel data sets for analysis. The audio recordings were transcribed to form texts and typed into field notes. Processing of data entailed review of transcripts and notes relevant to the study objectives and for quality assurance. To improve the data quality, triangulation was applied as necessary. Analysis also involved review of data for each specific issue of investigation to develop insights, inferences and draw conclusions and recommendations.

2.6 Informed Consent

The research teams held introductory meetings with respective country authorities and received consent to undertake the research. In the field, the research team adhered to the research protocols and the requirements of the ethical consent. In conducting individual interviews and FGDs, informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The KIIs and FGDs each lasted approximately one and a half hours. To preserve the identities of the various individuals who participated in the research, all data is anonymous.

2.7 Limitations

The research team noted a reluctance from some informants to speak openly about sensitive topics especially around cattle raids, issues around guns, and gender-based violence. However, this was mitigated by assuring the respondents of privacy and confidentiality, as well as anonymity in data processing and information presentation.

Some of the sampled government officials required the research team to reach out to their seniors before they could give their opinions, despite agreements during entry meetings. Although this led to delays in undertaking scheduled interviews, the study team complied with the requests and was able to complete the KIIs.

Moreover, some of the key informants at the time of field research were unavailable. This was mainly brought about by the papal visit in Juba and a referendum in Ethiopia meant that some initially identified key informants were unavailable. In mitigating this challenge, alternative KIIs were sourced and replaced.

There were also logistical challenges brought about by poor transport and communication infrastructure. These challenges called for advanced planning and coordination with the field contacts.

Additionally, insecurity, in Ethiopia and South Sudan presented security considerations that required more on-the ground support and significant advance planning with the local security agents.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

Like elsewhere, the political, economic, ecological, and socio-cultural dimensions of the Karamoja cross-border cluster are inter-linked in many ways and provide the context in which the various types of conflicts and climate risks across the cluster emerge and are understood. First, the conflict assessment discusses the various types in the cluster, key trends and actors, and capacities for peace. Second, the climate assessment discusses climate change manifestation through sudden and slow-onset events affecting the border cluster, the main causes and drivers of sudden and slow-onset events, the impact of these hazards, in terms of health, economic, and social impacts as well as mobility and displacements, gendered dimensions of climate change impacts, the management of climate risks (formal and informal mechanisms) and the opportunities for climate change mitigation.

3.2 Political, economic, ecological, and socio-cultural context of the Karamoja cluster

3.2.1 Political Context of the Karamoja Cluster

Cattle are a status symbol in Kapoeta South and, like the situation in neighbouring counties, cattle raids and conflict related to competition over resources are common. The Karamoja cluster areas of Amudat, Moroto, Kotido and Kaabong districts in Uganda, Kapoeta East and Kapoeta South Counties in South Sudan, Nyangatom and Omorate *woredas* in South Omo, Ethiopia, and Turkana West and West Pokot Counties in Kenya have a long history of marginalization that dates to the colonial administrations¹⁰. The South Omo region was neglected because the people were perceived to be sympathetic to the Oromo Liberation movement. Overall, districts within the Karamoja cluster were referred to as frontier districts by their respective immediate post-colonial governments. They were placed under military and/or police administration for long, a presented challenges to post-colonial governments because of their indifference to government control.¹¹ It is only recently, from the 1990's that these regions are now being integrated into the mainstream development process of national governments.

In Kenya and Uganda in particular, the Karamoja communities have often been victims of forceful disarmament by police and armed forces from the 1980s.¹² The operations were/are often accompanied by violence, torture, confiscation, and other human rights abuses by the state.¹³ In Kenya, for example, this exercise is currently ongoing for the last two months in Pokot and Turkana.¹⁴ In these communities, the police have been objects of attack by disgruntled people. In West Pokot for instance, respondents reported that the deadliest and horrendous government violence was in mid 1980s and is referred to as *Loturiri*. Thousands of cattle were rounded up and driven away by the army while the villages were bombed by helicopters.

Following the civil wars in South Sudan from the early 1980's, Ethiopia from the 1980's, and the overthrow of the government of Idi Amin of Uganda in the late 1970's and the insurgency thereafter, there has been a free flow of guns and other ammunition into the Karamoja cluster. Each community armed itself to defend and/or acquire livestock from the neighbouring communities. The acquisition

¹⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Kakuma, Turkana West, Kenya, 04 February 2023.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Personal interview, key informant, Katanga, Moroto, Uganda, 06 February 2023.

¹³ Personal interview, key informant, Katanga, Amudat, Uganda, 07 February 2023.

¹⁴ Personal interview, key informant, Alale, Pokot North, Kenya, 06 February 2023.

and relatively free flow of guns and other light weapons has made the Karamoja cluster more volatile and confrontations more lethal.

3.2.2 Ecological Context of the Karamoja Cluster

The Karamoja cluster is a region that receives low and unreliable rainfall and experiences high temperatures most of the year. The aridity and drought in the entire cluster makes food security precarious and exacerbated by drought therefore making it difficult for communities to survive. The communities remain net beneficiaries of humanitarian food aid. As such, hosts the highest number of refugees from Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, Somalia at Kakuma and Kalobeyei refugee camps in Turkana County.

Within the cluster there is little effort towards promoting agricultural production as pastoralism remains dominant. The large herds of cattle are wholly dependent on climate, and therefore, any change in climate has substantial implications for the cluster communities. The nexus between climate change and conflict is evident in the Karamoja cluster. There is a strong view that climate change – prominently marked by prolonged and more frequent drought, reduced pastures and water, elicits migrations to far-flung areas for pasture and water. In the process, this increases the clusters' susceptibility to conflict due to competition over dwindling resources. In the process of migration, the Pokot, the Turkana and the Toposa for instance come dangerously close to the Karamojong, the Jie, the Matheniko of Uganda, and the Dassanech and the Nyangatom migrate to Kibish area of Turkana making it easier to conflict.

The linkage between the region and urban markets in other parts of the country are extremely limited or do not exist due to insecurity and lack of infrastructure. The modern abattoir that was in Lokichoggio section of Turkana collapsed when the United Nations closed the refugee assistance programming in Lokichoggio.¹⁵ The donor supported abattoir also faced a myriad of challenges including conflicts and insecurity, livestock marketing challenges, land rights contestation, inadequate provision of services and infrastructure, drought and dependence on food aid.¹⁶

Access to government services remains limited and the presence of government is minimal in all districts of Kaabong, Amudat and Kotido, Loima, Kapoeta East and Kapoeta South. In the Ugandan case, the government created a special Ministry for Karamoja affairs which has ensured more focus on this part of the country. In the case of Kenya, a constitutional review in 2010 created the Equalization Fund to invest in the development of the area to enable it catch up with the rest of the country. In Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia such an initiative does not exist. Therefore, the Karamoja cluster is an area that lags in development and therefore in need. To meet these needs, NGOs and churches play a leading role in provision of services ranging from health, food, education, livestock and now peace building. They enjoy more respect from the people than their governments.

¹⁵ United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 'Socio Economic Development in Turkana West, Kenya Research Briefing: Businesses and the Local Economic Development', October 2021, https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2022/06/research_briefing_volume_2_june_2022.pdf (accessed 28 May 2023).

¹⁶ Commission on Revenue Allocation, 'Survey Report On Marginalised Areas/ Counties In Kenya', 2012, <https://www.devolutionhub.or.ke/file/baba07911c2d298f01703d2ac33d7099.pdf> (accessed 28 May 2023).

3.2.3 Cultural context of the Karamoja cluster

For the cultural domain, the rites of passage encompass the full life of an individual. Transitioning from one stage to the next is collectively marked with pomp, jubilation, and celebration.¹⁷ Young men are required to demonstrate bravery and acquisition of cattle wealth. Attack on other communities is often sanctioned and expected. The moral economy of cattle theft as a group is strong.

The traditional notion of ownership of cattle as a measure of wealth and respect/social recognition remains a key motivation for conflict over livestock. This places a very high value on cattle. The strong mentality passed on from generation to generation that cattle define one in the community still persists especially among the youth. The strong attachment to cattle is referred to as the cattle complex.¹⁸

The Karamoja cluster communities have a strong adherence to payment of bride wealth¹⁹. All young men are socialized to obtain livestock to marry, often times early marriages despite the reduction in traditional kraal-based marriages²⁰. Similarly, girls are socialized only to marry only men who demonstrate and with ability to pay bride wealth. Therefore, the demand for cattle remains high and it fuels a considerable proportion of cattle raids. The bride wealth remains expensive, often in form of hundreds of cattle. The motivation to raid for livestock therefore is high in order to satisfy this obligation.

Additionally, cattle as a source of social recognition creates a motivation to demonstrate bravery and ability to appropriate the livestock of others. There is a strong mood for competition among youth to demonstrate superiority over others. This notion is associated with the mentality that they are the first community to own cattle and other communities are not entitled to cattle. The pride associated with ownership of cattle is strong motivation for staging raids.

Overall, in the Karamoja cluster, livestock and access to land-based natural resources is a key livelihood factor in defining and shaping individual and community relations- political, socio-cultural, political, and economic organization, including local security substructure. Consequently, any alteration in these factors certainly triggers conflict as the entire security configuration is primarily for the protection of livestock and resources around which the livelihood of the community revolves.

3.3 Understanding the Conflict Dynamics

Despite sharing fundamental aspects of socio-political and economic context, there is evidence that the communities suffer from intolerable stress because of conflicts. In this regard, key informants revealed that the community livelihood (pastoralism and agro-pastoralism) is intrinsically linked to conflicts. Evidence shows that the conflicts are predominantly about livestock assets and its related competition over water and pasture.

3.3.1 Types of Conflicts

There are various types of conflicts in the Karamoja cluster. These include cattle rustling, natural resource-based conflicts, banditry and road ambushes, violent and armed confrontation between

¹⁷Personal interview, key informant, Kakuma Turkana West, Kenya 04 February 2023.

¹⁸ Melville Herskovits, 'The Cattle Complex in East Africa', *American Anthropologist* 28 (1) (1923): 230–72.

¹⁹ Personal interview, key informant, Kaabong, Uganda, 20 February 2023

²⁰ FGD, Kaabong Town Council, Uganda, 20 February 2023.

pastoralists and government forces, human and wildlife conflicts, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and land-based border conflicts.

The most prevalent conflict type is cattle rustling which has increasingly evolved over time from a cultural practice to a more violent and commercialized economic activity across the cluster. Cattle rustling is deemed traditional and cultural and is part of what these communities have known since time immemorial. However, changes in the conflict dynamics have spurred a culturally viewed conflict type to a multifaceted one consuming whole community in its wake. It is hydra headed now and has taken the form of livestock raiding for restocking after raids or droughts have depleted the original stock. As shared by study participants, cattle rustling is common among communities in the cluster, with the Turkana at the center of such kinds of conflicts since they border all the other communities.²¹ Years before, the Nyangatom and the Turkana were not enemies but now conflict has reared its ugly head because of cattle rustling, pasture and water²². Other dimensions of the conflict include those between the Pokot of Kenya and the Karamojong of Uganda, between the Pokot of Kenya and the Turkana, and the Jie conflicts with the Acholi.

Natural resource-based conflict refers to the struggle over access to pasture and water which is met by resistance from the host community.²³ The Nyangatom, the Turkana and the Dassenach have been locked in regular conflict majorly over water, pasture, livestock, and recently over fishing grounds in Lake Turkana.²⁴ The conflicts are primarily caused by competition over access to the natural resources, and aggravated by cultural variations among the communities, and state neglect evident in the lack of institutions to enable the people to meet their basic human needs and actualize their potentials.²⁵ These underlying causes and subsidiary factors have not been significantly transformed and continue to persist in the Turkana-Nyangatom-Dassenach conflict environment.²⁶

The Dassenach and the Turkana conflicts over fishing rights in Lake Turkana are mainly concentrated in the Omo River delta in the north of the lake. The conflict is caused by the Dassenach's claims that they have a right of access to the lake, which, in their view, belongs to them as much as the Turkana. Additionally, pastures are fertile in this region due to the subtle blend between the saltwater of the lake and the fresh water of the Omo²⁷.

Moreover, in some parts of the cluster, banditry and road ambushes which invite security forces into the fray are becoming prevalent across the cluster.²⁸ It is a frightening form of conflict perpetuated by the Pokot mainly against the Turkana and travelers who have nothing to do with cattle or their differences with their neighbours. Similar incidences have been witnessed in the Nadapal-Lokichoggio border with skirmishes and confrontations with security forces turning violent and causing border closure²⁹. This one has seen the Kenyan Government deploy the army to try and contain the acts of

²¹ Joshia O Osamba, 'The Sociology of Insecurity: Cattle Rustling and Banditry in North-Western Kenya', *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 1 (2) (2000): 11–37.

²² Personal interview, Administrator Advisor, Turmi Ethiopia, 2 February 2023

²³ Anne Gakuria, 'Natural Resource Based Conflict Among Pastoralist Communities in Kenya' (MA Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2013).

²⁴ Marine Le Ster, 'Conflicts over Water around Lake Turkana Armed Violence between Turkana and Dassenach's', HAL, 2011, <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01206597/document> (accessed 15 May 2023)..

²⁵ Austin Ngacha, 'Diminishing role of Traditional Mechanisms in the Management of Pastoralist conflict', 5 November 2020, <https://shalomconflictcenter.org/briefing-paper-no-2-an-analysis-of-turkana-dassenach-conflict/> (accessed 12 June 2023).

²⁶ Personal interview, Administration advisor, Turmi, Ethiopia, 8 February 2023

²⁷ FGD, Turmi, Ethiopia, 8 February 2023

²⁸ Personal interview, District Education Officer, Amudat, Uganda, 21 February 2023.

²⁹ Personal interview, Border Patrol Officer, Nadapal, South Sudan, 18 February 2023.

terror visited upon innocent civilians by the so-called warriors. The Pokot are fighting back the Kenyan Government's forced disarmament exercise. This was because of persistent killings and livestock theft by the Pokot against the Turkana and highway banditry which rocked the Lodwar – Kitale highway. As a study participant noted,

In the past six months, several civilians and police officers have been murdered with schools, churches and police vehicles burnt by bandits who have stepped up their attacks on civilians and security personnel.

The new anti-banditry force, known as the Land and Air Team (LAT), targets to drive out the bandits from their hideouts in gorges and valleys in the affected region.³⁰ There are also land related conflicts based uncontented boundaries and borders. Most importantly, the Ilemi triangle is a thorn in the flesh among the Nyangatom of Ethiopia, the Toposa of South Sudan and the Turkana around the greater north.³¹ The Nyangatom believe that the Ilemi region belongs to them while the Turkana at the same time say Ilemi triangle is theirs. War experience and self-determination of the Dassenach in the conflict-ridden area of Northeastern Africa gives a clear explanation of the Ilemi triangle issue. It remains unresolved to this day with Kenya having annexed a huge swathe of land³². A PAX research report on Ilemi triangle refers to Ilemi as a territory larger than Israel or about the size of Rwanda (c.25 000qkm), which runs from the northern end of Mogilla Mountains near the Nadapal South Sudan-Kenya border crossing to the old Anyuak village of Ilemi at the confluence of river Achuma with the Akóbo much further north on the Ethiopian border³³. It includes much of the Boma Plateau (roughly 85%), the vast Kàuto highlands with the basin of the upper Kuròn River and the Nanyangachór Valley, Moruangipi and parts of the plains west and south of them³⁴.

This area has witnessed and continues to witness conflicts pitting any of the three communities against each other. There have been numerous inter-community peace settlements and agreements which are quickly disregarded especially during the times of severe drought and livestock need to access water and pasture which may be in the other community's area of occupation at the time.

There is also conflict over Nadapal border between the Turkana and the Toposa. The point of contention is ownership and accessibility to the rich pastures around Nadapal that the Kwatela clan of the Turkana who live around Lokichoggio and Nanam in Turkana West in Kenya and the Toposa of Eastern Equatoria state in South Sudan both lay claim to³⁵. The region under contest ranges from Nadapal, Losolia and Logolei at Mogilla range that is known as a veritable war zone for the Turkana (Kwatela) and the Toposa. Apart from conflicts over access to grass and water, the communities have recently extended violence to road construction projects funded by the World Bank³⁶. As a result, road construction projects expected to link East African countries have been halted following attacks on the workers by the Toposa militia³⁷. As a study participant opined,

³⁰ ACLED, 'Situation Update', *Kenya: Government Operation Against Pastoralist Militias in North Rift Region* (blog), 31 March 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/03/31/kenya-situation-update-march-2023-government-operation-against-pastoralist-militias-in-north-rift-region/>.

³¹ Al Chukwuma Okoli, 'Ilemi Triangle Spat: How Resources Fuel East Africa's Border Conflicts,' *The Conversation*, 16 February 2023, <https://theconversation.com/ilemi-triangle-spat-how-resources-fuel-east-africas-border-conflicts-199656> (accessed 15 June 2023)..

³² Personal interview, key informant, Kangaten Ethiopia, 9 February 2023

³³ Eliza Snel and Lotje de Vries, 'The Ilemi Triangle: Understanding a Pastoralist Border Area', https://paxforpeace.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/import/2022-03/PAX_REPORT_ILEMI_FINAL_digi_single_page.pdf (accessed 13 June 2023).

³⁴ FGD in Kajamakin, Nyangatom, Ethiopia, 5 February 2023.

³⁵ Personal interview, key informant, Nadapal Village, Turkana West, Kenya, 8 February 2023.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Personal interview, key informant, Lokichoggio, Turkana West, Kenya, 8 February 2023

Several of the workers have been shot dead by suspected Sudanese Toposa militia at the road site forcing the suspension of the road works. We have observed that there has been constant disruption of the road construction at Nadapal border. We appeal to our neighbours to allow the work to continue and stop killing road construction workers. This road is of economic benefits to both countries.³⁸

Additionally, SGBV is more pronounced and perpetuated in times of conflict and inter community cattle raids. During this time, women are raped, abducted, tortured, and remain in fear of the unknown as they go about their daily work³⁹. Sexual harassment exposes women to HIV/AIDs and psychological torture⁴⁰. For example, at Narus in South Sudan, women are commonly sexually harassed during conflicts which occur with a frequency that one loses count⁴¹.

The Uganda Wildlife Authority was cited as an affected entity due to livestock over grazing in Loroo Sub- County and Nabilatuk that are reserved for wildlife, and this has heightened the human-wildlife conflicts⁴². In a region where most of the community members depend on livestock which in turn depends heavily on water and pasture, the abundant availability of grass ostensibly reserved for wild animals irks the livestock keepers and the next most obvious action would be use of violence to access it.

3.3.2 Conflict Actors and Trends

The various types of conflicts in the Karamoja cluster tend to consume and affect all age groups, both male and female, and each gender contributes to it differently. Children between the ages of 12-17 years, male youth and men aged between 18-35 years are the most active combatants across the cluster.

Children are conscripted at an early age ostensibly as a cultural way of life. They grow up to defend what they believe is rightfully theirs; livestock and pasture⁴³. Their exploits in raids and counterraids are celebrated and extolled as heroic deeds of valor. In the Karamoja cluster, the fighting youth are warriors and not mere criminal perpetrators of violence. They are the most mobile and travel long distances to spy and raid other neighbouring communities for livestock to enhance societal obligations that include social esteem, acquisition of wealth, payment of the ever-high bride price and revenge camouflaged as restocking⁴⁴.

The women are not left behind. Among the Pokot of Kenya, they women perform rituals when men go out to raid. The rituals involve the tying of a string of cloth or herbal strings around their waists tightly during the period of the raid.⁴⁵ This they believe ensures the success of the raids and safe return of their husbands.⁴⁶ It means they fully understand the benefits accruing from such escapades and the need to observe certain rituals that ensure safety and prosperity of their homesteads and as a people⁴⁷.

Women also celebrate their men with song and dance when they return from cattle raids showing the way they support these excursions. When their communities are on the receiving end however,

³⁸ Personal interview, Nadapal Payam, Kapoeta East County, South Sudan, 10 February 2023.

³⁹ Personal interview, Catholic Priest, Turkana West, Kenya, 11 February 2023.

⁴⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Moroto, Uganda, 5 February 2023.

⁴¹ Personal interview, Narus, South Sudan, 4 February 2023.

⁴² Personal interview, key informant, Amudat, Uganda, 7 February 2023.

⁴³ FGD respondents, Pokot, Kenya, 7 Feb 2023

⁴⁴ Personal interview, key informant, Kacheliba, West Pokot, Kenya, 9 Feb 2023.

⁴⁵ Personal interview, key informant, Alale, West Pokot, Kenya, 9 February 2023

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Personal interview, key informant, Pokot, Kenya, 9 Feb 2023.

women bear the brunt of these attacks.⁴⁸ They are brutally raped, sometimes maimed and carried off as trophies and benefits of war. When their husbands are victims and die during raids, they become widows and are helplessly consigned to a life of destitution. Traditionally there were support systems within cultural settings, but as the communities within the cluster face harder options with the onset of harsher climatic conditions, more scarce water, pasture and food, the situation becomes critical⁴⁹.

Male *kraal* leaders (35-60 Years) and traditional elders (60yrs and above) are the pillars that hold most of the Karamoja cluster communities together. They lead by offering guidance and strategic advice before, during and after most conflicts. As one study participant “elders from the different communities here influence the youth to raid⁵⁰”.

Across the cluster, men are the most accused as the perpetrators whose role in conflicts surpasses all the other groups. At an age where sagely wisdom and peace should override material gain through conflicts, we see a completely different view.

The leaders at *kraal* level and the traditional elders fan the attacks against neighbours most times to increase their wealth but at times to encourage revenge attacks on neighbours. Revenge attacks by the Toposa against the Turkana are very popular and may be carried out against perpetrators several years after⁵¹. Seers famously known as *Ngimuruok* sanction and predict the outcomes of attacks thus fueling conflict among the communities within this vast cluster. They are trusted and over eons of time are cultural institutions within the communities. They not only ensure success but may advise against a particular raid if they feel there are possible signs of failure during execution.

New modern actors have entered the fray. They are the astute businessmen, brokers and middlemen who are turning out to be funders of rustling in the name of communal conflict over the twin natural resources within the cluster of pasture and water.⁵²The FGD participants at Nakapelimoru, Kotido district in Uganda, Dassenach area near Turmi in Ethiopia, Narus in Kapoeta East and Alale in Kenya reported that lorries collect livestock immediately after raids are conducted. The conflicts seem engineered for the benefit of the business class and a number of them actually accompany raiders up to safe places nearer the identified target communities⁵³.

Government administrators and members of the security forces are also involved in both fanning and containing conflict in their areas of jurisdictions⁵⁴. In certain places, there are situations that are more of omission than commission when the administrators fail to act to stem rising conflicts among communities.⁵⁵ Most border points are conflict flash points, as pointed out earlier, and the communities that are at these borders rarely get help to fend off attacks from cross border communities⁵⁶. This is primarily because of the expansive porous borders which raiders take advantage of. The administrators and law enforcement agencies are hopelessly inadequate. The Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) is however the exception⁵⁷. They have managed to have a felt presence every ten kilometers along the common border stretch ensuring rapid responses to cries for help from the ethnic communities which get attacked anywhere along the border regions with the Turkana. ⁵⁸

⁴⁸ Personal interview, Katanga, Moroto, Uganda, 11 February 2023

⁴⁹ Ali Raza, Ali Razzaq, Sundas Mehmood, Xiling Zhou, Xuekun Zhang, Yan Lv and Jinsong Xu, ‘Impact of Climate Change on Crops Adaptation and Strategies to Tackle Its Outcome: A Review’, *Plants* 8 (2) (2019): 34.

⁵⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Turmi Omorate, Ethiopia, 3 February 2023.

⁵¹ Personal interview, key informant, Nadapal, Turkana West, Kenya, 04 February 2023

⁵² FGD participants, Nakapelimoru, Kotido, Uganda 04 February 2023.

⁵³ KIL, in Pokot, Kenya; Turmi, South Omo; Narus, Kapoeta East, South Sudan, Feb 2023

⁵⁴ FGD, Lokichoggio, Turkana West, Kenya, 8 February 2023

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Personal interview, key informant, Nadapal Village, Turkana West, Kenya, 4 February 2023

⁵⁷ Personal interview, key informant, Moroto, Uganda, 5 February 2023

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Local politicians in each of the cluster member countries are the designate cultural beneficiaries of a system bestowed upon them by their ethnic communities⁵⁹. They thus reflect warrior-like tendencies that seek to encourage conflict instead of peaceful resolution of disputes as they arise. Politicians themselves always influence conflict for their own benefit and it cuts across the Karamoja cluster⁶⁰. South Sudan is a veritable example of politicians dabbling in conflict and fanning the flames to cart away minerals found within the Toposa area in Kapoeta East⁶¹. Politicians are knowledgeable and represent their communities in the government. Hence, they are then bestowed with a lot of trust which they in turn exploit to their own benefits. Several politicians caught in scandals rarely do so for the benefit of the people but rather for their own personal benefit and that of their families⁶².

3.3.3 Effects and Impacts of Conflict

Loss of lives and a heightened orphan burden is one of the effects of conflict⁶³. Families battle with rustlers from the various areas in Karamoja cluster and the worst hit are the young families who are orphaned. Most of the families become female headed and they must fend for themselves⁶⁴. Several community documented events that ended up in the killing of suspected rustlers always ignite revenge killings and counter raids⁶⁵. Some of the differential effects of conflicts on men, women and youth include rise in female headed households, loss of livestock and other property, displacement of populations, changing livelihoods and environmental degradation.

Rise in female headed households.

Prevalent cross-border conflicts have led to deaths and injuries of civilians (women, men, girls and boys) and armed men (youthful warriors and security officers). There is an emerging reality in which gendered power relations have been redefined by conflict. The study revealed that rural women of Karamoja cluster have been rendered even more powerless and helpless in fulfilling their basic roles. During an FGD in Loima and Alale, several women narrated their experience of the “triple widow tragedy after losing three husbands to raids”.⁶⁶ One woman in Alale, West Pokot narrated that she has suffered psychological trauma from conflict. She narrated that⁶⁷

“My first husband married me when I was 13 years old. It took me two years for me to conceive my first child. A year later my husband acquired a gun which made him crazy and a renown warrior every woman and man alike admired him. A year later he was killed in a raid in Turkana, but his gun was recovered which was passed on to his young brother who also later inherited me. Because of the anger to revenge the death of his brother, he too was killed in Loima, but the gun was again recovered and handed to the last son in that family. Because I was still young and beautiful with only 2 children, the clan decided that he inherits me. Although he promised not to raid, the Turkana raiders killed him from home while defending the family wealth”.

Loss of livestock and other property.

⁵⁹ FGD, Alale, West Pokot, Kenya 8 February 2023

⁶⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Amudat District, Uganda, 4 February 2023.

⁶¹ Personal interview, key informant, Narus, Kapoeta East, South Sudan, 11 February 2023.

⁶² Personal interview, key informant, Nadapal Village, Turkana West, Kenya, 4 February 2023.

⁶³ Zachary Wagner, Sam Heft-Neal, Paul Wise, Robert Black, Marshall Burke, Tiese BornaZulfiqar Bhutta and Eran Bendavid, ‘Women and Children Living in Areas of Armed Conflict in Africa: A Geospatial Analysis of Mortality and Orphanhood’, *The Lancet Global Health* 7 (12) (2019): 622–31.

⁶⁴ Personal interview, key informant, Lokiriama, Loima, Kenya, 9 February 2023

⁶⁵ Rachael Onyango, ‘Participation of Children in Armed Conflict: A Case Study of Marsabit District, 1991-2005’ (M.A Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2012).

⁶⁶ FGD with women, Loima and Alale, Kenya, 8 February 2023

⁶⁷ FGD, Alale, West Pokot, Kenya, 9 February 2023

Cattle rustling, undercover livestock business using violence to fend off any economic stresses and eventual conflicts disrupt local economies, affect livelihoods, and reportedly fuel insecurity related to livestock theft and raids across the region. For example, in Katanga, Moroto, the cutting off of the livestock trade markets due to conflicts lead to reduced access to income and an increase in counter cattle raids, counter thefts, loss of property and lives. For example, in Alale, it is alleged that the Pokot community traders (mainly men) buy stolen animals from the Turkana community rustlers and sell them through the border to Loroo and Moroto districts in Uganda.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, due to the vast borders, the slow response of the armed personnel and complicity of the various cross border ethnic groups in Kenya and Uganda, tracking and recovery of the stolen livestock is particularly problematic. The mutual sharing agreements on scarce resources along the border lines have also been disrupted and are a recipe for conflict and tensions.⁶⁹

Displacement of populations, changing livelihoods systems and environmental degradation

Conflict has forced some of the Toposa youth to migrate to towns, as some others carry out businesses (traders), burn charcoal and sell to traders. Some operate small scale business compared to pastoralism which they had engaged in⁷⁰. Other instances of diversified forms of livelihood include the wage labor in the mining and quarrying activities by the youth⁷¹.

Persistence of negative cultural tendencies and practices

The Karamoja cluster is isolated from the political, social, and cultural processes taking place in major towns and cities across the cluster as a direct consequence of the conflict and insecurity associated with the region. For many people from the wider regions outside the Karamoja cluster, Karamoja remains a 'no go' area because of the conflict and insecurity⁷². They keep away from the region and the people out of fear.

As such, there is little opportunity for other communities outside the cluster to understand the Karamoja cluster and their way of life. Apart from the fact that this only serves to feed the stereotyping that characterizes any discussion of Karamoja at the national levels, it also limits interaction between the Karamoja cluster populations and the rest of the country. Yet, such interaction is needed for the free flow of goods and services that would help spur the Karamoja cluster economy and create opportunities for positive change in lifestyles and livelihoods.

3.3.4 Formal and Informal Initiatives

Peace accords and agreements between several ethnic groups such as the Lokirama Peace Accord between the Turkana and Matheniko has lasted for quite a while since signing in 1973⁷³. The Turkana and the Matheniko do not raid one another to date. There was a declaration following a peace caravan in the Nyangatom woreda in the South Omo region in December 2023 which was dubbed the Kibish declaration (Nyangatom and Toposa)⁷⁴.

Festivals and commemorations such as Tobongu' lore festival and Moru Anayeche are held annually with support from the Turkana County Government and NGOs in the cluster ⁷⁵, Moru Anayeche⁷⁶ is a celebration of the initial dispersal point of the Toposa, Karimojong and the Turkana in Letea ward,

⁶⁸ Personal interview, key informant, Katanga, Moroto, Uganda, 9 February 2023.

⁶⁹ Personal interview, key informant, Amudat, Uganda, 9 February 2023.

⁷⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Narus, South Sudan, 15 February 2023.

⁷¹ Personal interview, key informant, Kaabong District, Uganda 11 February 2023

⁷² Personal interview, key informant, Lokichoggio, Turkana West, Kenya, 8 February 2023.

⁷³ FGD, Lokirama, Loima, Kenya 09 February 2023

⁷⁴ FGD, Aypa Kebele, Nyangatom, Ethiopia, 04 February 2023

⁷⁵ KII, Lokirama, Loima Kenya 04 February 2023

⁷⁶ Nayeche is the mother to all the respective ethnic communities in the cluster.

Turkana West. The celebrants are people from across the cluster region. Lokiriama peace accord festival, Peace caravan in nyangatom, Karamoja Cultural festival in Moroto are additional government led initiatives to foster peace and reconciliation and celebration of the culture of peace and management of peace dialogues and resource sharing agreements among the cross border Karamoja cluster ethnic groups.⁷⁷

NGOs and foundations host various sports events and competitions. One such organization is the Tegla Loroupe Foundation which is supported by the Athletics for a Better World social responsibility programme and organizes the annual 'Loroupe Peace Race'⁷⁸. The events/competitions target mainly the youth and aim to foster friendship networks among the warring communities on the Kenyan-Ugandan border. The focal point of the event is the warriors' 10km road race where rivaling factions put aside their differences and unite in the spirit of sport. High-profile dignitaries from Uganda and Kenya have also supported and attended the race since the inaugural edition in 2003⁷⁹. The race has provided a much-needed platform to reflect and talk about peace and development, while some guests even ran alongside each other in the dignitaries' 2km road race in a mark of improved diplomatic relations.

Since then, there is still palpable evidence of a soothing of relations since the foundation set up a series of Peace Races across Kenya. One group of warriors from Kainuk in South Turkana district, who took part in the Moroto Peace Race, has remained a staunch advocate of peace, helping to improve community relations between the Pokot and the Turkana along Turkwel, Amolem and Kasei areas⁸⁰. *Kraals* are known to have individuals who can participate in the various sports especially athletics. The youth engaged in raiding are strong and since raiding requires energetic and healthy individuals, practice will for sure see them change their ways. All it requires for their talent to be recognized and nurtured.

At the *kraal* level, the informal institutions through the *kraal* leaders, seers, and diviners (Ngimuruok) are engaged in various cross border initiatives on resource sharing of water and pasture. Their discussions especially with cross-border neighbouring *kraals* enables the peace accords, festivals, and celebrations to take place. Even the main NGO and CBO activities do take place once an entry is made, and they provide the platform for the youth and their respective women and children to participate. Some of the communities do host the celebrations, for instance the Moru Anayeche celebrations are held in Letea Ward of Turkana West, in Turkana Kenya.⁸¹ These celebrations could attract support from various Government and Non-Governmental agencies where support in the form of provisions to the respective host venues could be extended. This can include social amenities with attendant services including water, health, education, and related services. This would extend benefits to the community. Other areas hosting festivals and celebration include Lokiriama ward in Loima Sub County.

In the cluster, the prominent women peace actors are Lodwar based Friends of Lake Turkana undertaking work in governance and peacebuilding across the border between the Turkana and the Karimojong; I REP (I am Responsible Organization) working on peace and FGM between the Pokot, the Tepeth and Karimojong; Karamoja Initiative for Sustainable Peace (KISP) in Moroto working between the Karimojong and Turkana. Peace choirs such as Kosuroi in Oropoi, Kalobeyi peace choir⁸² and St. Monica women group in Kaabong⁸³ that have continued to be useful towards convincing the karachuna to abandon cattle raiding and take up other non-violent ways of livelihoods.

⁷⁷ KII, Moroto, Uganda, 09 February 2023

⁷⁸ <https://teglapeace.org/>

⁷⁹ FGD, Lokiriama, Loima, Kenya 09 February 2023

⁸⁰ <https://worldathletics.org/news/feature/teglaloroupe-champion-peace-in-sport>

⁸¹ KII, Kakuma, Turkana West, Kenya 09 February 2023

⁸² FGD, Oropoi, Turkana West, Kenya, 4 February 2023.

⁸³ FGD, Kaabong Town Council, Kaabong, Uganda, 11 February 2023

3.3.5 Disarmament programmes

After an almost 15-year hiatus in active engagement in the region, the early 2000s brought a profound shift by the Ugandan government towards the region. The Office of the Prime Minister and the UPDF implemented a short-lived forced disarmament program in 2001, followed by a more comprehensive campaign beginning in 2006⁸⁴. Violence and insecurity initially increased following the start of the 2006 disarmament campaign due to the loss of firearms for protective purposes. Human rights violations by the Ugandan military were also widespread, including gender-based forms of abuse such as requiring young men to lie naked in the sun with bricks on their chests and intentional injuries to male genitalia.⁸⁵ The current government management of the conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot in the land-based border conflict is a replica of the colonial strategies. The colonial State was able to reduce the frequency of occurrence of Pokot-Turkana violent conflict through four strategies: heavy handed political violence, socially systemic fear, rifle disarmament, and undermining of their economic base.⁸⁶

In summary, the conflicts in the Karamoja cluster region are cyclic in nature and are mainly caused by the cultural affinity livestock as the mainstay of the economy in the cluster and the existing environment that is in the region. The nature of the climatic conditions prevailing in the region have made conflicts worse. The study thus goes further to assess the climate risks that exacerbate the conflict conditions in the cluster.

3.3.6 Migration to Towns

One of the impacts of conflict has been rapid women and youths migrating to the towns within the cluster. Most of the migrants have no special skills therefore engage in informal business activities and provision of services to the urban residents. The increase in urban population is observed in the rise of informal settlements in Lodwar, Kakuma, Moroto, Amudat, Kotido, Kaabong, Narus, Kapoeta, Kangaten and Omorate towns.

In summary, the conflicts in the Karamoja cluster are cyclic in nature and are mainly caused by the cultural affinity of livestock as the mainstay of the economy and the existing environment in the region. The nature of the climatic conditions prevailing in the region have made conflicts worse. The study thus goes further to assess the climate risks that exacerbate the conflict conditions in the cluster.

3.4 Understanding Climate Risks in the Karamoja cluster.

Among the major climatic episodes in the Karamoja cluster are prolonged periods of drought that are becoming more pronounced to the level of a humanitarian catastrophe with some respondents alluding to year-round drought. Land use changes through industrial and agricultural development have

⁸⁴ KII, Katanga, Moroto, Uganda. 09 February 2023

⁸⁵ Elizabeth Stites, 'Conflict in Karamoja: A Synthesis of Historical and Current Perspectives, 1920- 2022,' USAID, 2022, https://karamojaresilience.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/TUFTS_2254_KRSU_Conflict_knowledge_synthesis_V2_online.pdf (accessed 17 June 2023).

⁸⁶ Patrick Devine, 'Persistent conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana: causes and policy implications,' (PhD Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2016).

increased substantially across the cluster; the rise in global temperatures and overgrazing are the causes of desertification in the cluster. The major impacts include increased migration of women and youth to urban areas, reduced reliance on pastoralism and changes in traditional gender roles.

3.4.1 Climate change Manifestations

An Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report⁸⁷ presents strong evidence that climatic disasters and disruptions are becoming more common and catastrophic across the globe. Hence, the Karamoja cluster seems not to be an exception. From Ethiopia's Kangaten, South Sudan's Kapoeta, Kenya's Loima and Kacheliba all the way to Uganda's Moroto, it is safe to state that climate change is an indisputable challenge that characterizes life across the Karamoja cluster, an arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) ecological zone. So how does climate change manifest itself within the cluster?

Among the major climatic episodes in the Karamoja cluster are prolonged periods of drought that are becoming more pronounced to the level of a humanitarian catastrophe with some respondents alluding to year-round drought. Insufficient and highly variable rainfall precipitation is a defining feature of climate change in the region. Importantly, there is broad consensus across the study respondents that rainfall remains erratic in the cluster, with some areas experiencing short rains between the months of March and October, dating as far back as 2009. As of the time of the assessment, the greater region had been experiencing drought conditions since late 2021.

Historically, it was noted that the dry period or what the Nyangatom call "Lokuang" or "akamu" in Turkana goes hand in hand with increased temperatures during both day and night, with serious implications on the availability of water in the region. Moreover, there was considerable evidence from FGDs that the brief rainfall precipitations come with violent storms resulting in flash floods or "Lotima" and "Lochoto" among the Dassanech.

There are months when floods would occur, especially during the months of July–September on the banks of River Omo as it drains into Lake Turkana, thus damaging the livelihoods of thousands of people and destroying homes. While severe flooding is rare, with the latest being 2019 and 2020 periods, it is feared that increased climate change may make flooding to become more regular, negatively impacting the local communities as shown below.

For Turkana, going by the latest April 2023 bulletin from the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), above average rainfall was recently received resulting to flooding in a number of wards including Township, Kanamkemer, Songot, Kangatotha, Kakuma, Lokiriama/Lorengipi, Lokichoggio among other areas.⁸⁸ Generally, flush floods were reported along major rivers including River Omanmani in Moroto, Uganda, River Turkwel and Suam in Kenya, Kamion, Nadapal, Kuron and Lokoyot Rivers in South Sudan, and Kibish and Omo rivers in Ethiopia.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Hans-Otto Pörtner, Panmao Zhai, Priyadarshi R Shukla, and Debra Roberts, 'Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems', 2019, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/4/2022/11/SRCCL_Full_Report.pdf (accessed 17 June 2023).

⁸⁸ National Drought Management Authority, 'Turkana County: Drought Early Warning Bulletin,' April 2023, <https://ndma.go.ke/index.php/resource-center/early-warning-reports/category/2-early-warning-bulletins> (accessed 17 June 2023).

⁸⁹ FGD, Nadapal, Turkana West, Kenya, 9 February 2023.

Climate change is also manifested by increased temperatures. Being an ASAL area, temperatures are characterized by a warm and hot climate with temperatures ranging between 20°C and 41°C, with a mean of 30.5°C⁹⁰. In Turkana County alone, minimum, and maximum air temperatures have increased by between 2 and 3°C (3.5 and 5.5°F) between 1967 and 2012.⁹¹ This temperature increase has been observed across all seasons, but mainly from March to May.⁹²

Other manifestations include the desert locusts. Since early 2020, the region has been battling with swarms of desert locusts. Available literature links the recent intense outbreaks to anthropogenic climate change and the increased frequency of extreme weather events⁹³. Scientists believe that locusts outbreaks are subject to prevailing favorable conditions which include a combination of weather, soil and vegetation conditions that favour the reproduction and aggregation of otherwise solitary individuals.⁹⁴

From the respondents' description and what could be seen as an after effect of the prolonged rains, thousands upon thousands of tons of soil or debris on the mountain slopes, which have been loosened by prolonged rains, simply give away and fall into rivers causing a mudslide. While not so common, incidents of mudslides were reported in areas such as Kapoeta, Kaabong, and West Pokot.

Being a predominantly pastoral community, a significant association of livestock diseases with pastoral production was reported, and this was attributed to movements for grazing and trade, that increases the contact of susceptible animals with infected animals.

3.4.2 Causes of Climate Change

There is compelling evidence, as presented across the field findings that human activities are causing climate change in the Karamoja cluster. Along with other human activities, such as deforestation, cutting down trees for timber, firewood, and charcoal releases heat-trapping pollution called greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, warming the planet, and destabilizing the climate.

Available data from the global forest watch shows that in 2010, Kapoeta had 5.81kha of tree cover, extending over 0.17% of its land area.⁹⁵ In 2021, it lost 1.76ha of tree cover, equivalent to 557t of CO₂

⁹⁰ John Nyangena, 'Assessment of Meteorological Drought in Main Climatic Zones of Kenya,' KIPPRA, 2020, <https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/3007/Assessment%20of%20Meteorological%20Drought%20in%20Main%20Climatic%20Zones%20of%20Kenya%20-%20DP244.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (accessed 17 June 2023).

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Kristie L. Ebi, Jennifer Vanos, Jane W. Baldwin, Jesse E. Bell, David M. Hondula, Nicole A. Errett, Katie Hayes, Colleen E. Reid, Shubhayu Saha, June Spector and Peter Berry, 'Extreme Weather and Climate Change: Population Health and Health System Implications, *Annual Review of Public Health*, 421 (1) (2021): 293-315.

⁹⁴ Jane Qiu, 'Global Warming May Worsen Locust Swarms', *Nature*, 7 October 2009, <https://doi.org/10.1038/news.2009.978>.

⁹⁵ Global Forest Watch, "Kapoeta," 13 June 2023, <https://shorturl.at/ampE8> (accessed 15 May 2023).

emissions⁹⁶. Similarly, in 2010, Moroto had 9.48kha of tree cover by 2010, extending over 1.1% of its land area.⁹⁷ In 2021, it lost 7.15ha of tree cover, equivalent to 2.26kt of CO₂ emissions⁹⁸.

While fuelwood and charcoal are important sources of energy for households needs, there is no doubt that charcoal burning is becoming an increasingly popular source of income across the cluster for people who can no longer survive purely from pastoralism due to factors such as recurrent drought.⁹⁹ During the field process, piles of charcoal and split firewood amounting to many tonnes could be observed along the roads and villages in mainly woodland areas of Alale and Kacheliba in West Pokot. Furthermore, inadequate fuel alternatives perpetuate charcoal burning activities which have low returns and high costs on the environment, thus threatening adversarial climate change.

Land use changes through industrial and agricultural development have increased substantially across the cluster. For instance, over the past several years, Ethiopia has embarked on a massive plan for dams, water-intensive irrigated cotton and sugar plantations, and irrigation canals and other infrastructure along the Omo River basin, which drains into Lake Turkana.¹⁰⁰ These developments are predicted to dramatically reduce the water supply of Lake Turkana, especially through irrigation. Reduced water levels will increase levels of salinity in the lake and raise water temperatures, decimating fish breeding areas and mature fish populations. The higher air temperatures will increase rates of evaporation, further increasing salinity while reducing biological productivity.

Overgrazing and prolonged poorly managed grazing have become prevalent and widely considered to be major causes of desertification in the cluster.¹⁰¹ With lack of an alternative, respondents frequently mentioned how they continually and closely feed their animals on the most palatable plants until those plants are stressed so much they fail to reproduce and/or die. The reduction of plant matter and cover modifies the soil microclimate, which alters soil-water-plant relationships and exposes bare soil to erosion. Given that soils in ASALs are inherently weak, overgrazing corresponds with soil compaction or disruption of soil crusts resulting in decreased water infiltration and increased wind and water erosion. Changes in climate variability will make addressing these problems more complicated as areas where water erosion occurs and where wells exist, sand dunes may fill up the wells. This assertion is closely shared by Claudia Carr¹⁰² who avers that the high concentration of livestock caused by the governments' policies in the Ilemi forced the Nyangatom (and Dassanech) to crowd their herds into lands between the Kibish River and the Omo River. Therefore, these pastures became severely overgrazed and ecologically degraded, causing major new livestock mortality and herd decline.¹⁰³

3.4.3 Impacts of Climate Change

The cluster has suffered several long and devastating impacts of climate change in the past decades, that cut across diverse aspects of society, the economy, and the environment. As earlier mentioned,

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹ FGD, Narus, Kapoeta South, South Sudan, 11 February 2023

¹⁰⁰ FGD, Turmi, Omorate, Ethiopia 10 February 2023

¹⁰¹ FGD, Aypa, Nyangatom, Ethiopia, 11 February 2023

¹⁰²Claudia J. Carr, 'Nyangatom Livelihood and the Omo Riverine Forest', in *River Basin Development and Human Rights in Eastern Africa — A Policy Crossroads*, ed. Claudia J. Carr (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 145–56, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-50469-8_8.

¹⁰³ Ibid

the available field findings point to the fact that communities in the cluster mainly rely on pastoralist and agro-pastoralism as sources of livelihood.

As dictated by the dry conditions, that in turn advances desertification and ecological degradation of the region, communities are forced to migrate from one place to another in search of pasture and water. In the process of migration, as a result of increased climate change manifestations such as drought, livestock morbidity and mortality increase because of reduced availability of forage, increased disease incidences including anthrax, tick infestation, sheep and goat pox are common diseases observed during the drought and at the beginning of the rainfall after drought, leading to decimation on one's herd. Traveling across the field, one could not help but realize a group of vultures hovering over livestock carcasses.

Closely related to respondents raised concerns about the security implications of climate change. People recoup their decimate stock by raiding cattle from neighboring communities. Due to the animals' economic and social value, the theft represents a severe loss to the families involved. The social tension because of raiding further leads to a surge in displaced populations associated with extreme events such as floods and drought not just within nations, but often across borders.

Climate change manifestations such as drought events have changed the environment across the cluster, as the prolonged dry spells kill otherwise long-lived acacia trees, resulting in a general reduction of the vegetation cover, leaving land more susceptible to overgrazing and soil erosion. On the same note, reduction or disappearances of rangeland species have given room to bush encroachment and invasive species such as 'mathenge' tree, scientifically known as *Prosopis Juliflora*.

Like elsewhere, study findings point to the climate associated disasters, especially flash floods, that have led to destruction of road and communication networks. Further, the heavy floods hamper access to markets, hospitals, and schools. Unfortunately, such disasters are becoming more frequent in the cluster.

The cluster has a high degree of risk from climate-sensitive infectious diseases such as food or waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever.¹⁰⁴ Vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and Rift Valley Fever are also common.¹⁰⁵ High temperatures and intense rainfall, which are some of the effects of climate change, are known to be critical factors in initiating malaria epidemics.

There was almost unanimous recognition by the study respondents across the cluster of the current negative effects of drought and unpredictable rains on community's livelihoods. Respondents noted that climate change is already causing suffering and death because of food insecurity. The weight of field findings indicates that the small harvests are not enough to cover the food needs of the population, rendering the communities to be population chronically food insecure, worse off for children who suffer from hunger and malnutrition. When stocks run out, they find themselves feeding on leaves and wild fruit. As such climate change has exposed the communities in the cluster to loss of livelihoods and subsequently, a life of desperation of waiting for humanitarian aid.

For the governments, climate risks create an increasing burden, given their limited resources, in their efforts to protect vulnerable populations, as most of the funding is re-directed towards humanitarian response at the expense of sustainable development. Furthermore, climate change has often been referred to as threat multiplier, accordingly, due to high poverty rates, changing socioeconomic and

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview, key informant, Moroto, Uganda, 10 February 2023.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

political circumstances and demographic growth, and ever-increasing frequency of climatic events does not allow communities to recuperate after such shocks, thus living in a perpetual state of vulnerability.

3.4.4 Gender Aspects of Climate Change

One of the most apparent field observations was that the adverse impacts of climate change however challenging to the general society continue to overly burden the poorest and the most vulnerable, especially poor women. Risks associated with climate change are not “gender neutral”.¹⁰⁶

Severe and frequent drought and floods in the region not only impact men and women differently but also threaten to amplify gender inequalities and even erode progress that has been made towards gender equality. This is due to the gender-differentiated relative powers, roles and responsibilities at the household and community levels. In this regard, the study noted numerous examples of this, such as walking long distances to fetch for water, which the drought has made near insurmountable, being left behind with children and small livestock to look after, when men move away in search of pasture and water in pastoralist communities, for example. Women have also borne the brunt of natural resource-based conflicts and mobilities that have increased in recent times because of climate change related hazards, mainly longer, more severe, and less predictable droughts.

For instance among the Pokot, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for herding the few cattle that remain after big herds are taken away to greener regions within the cluster to access water and pasture, and fence cowsheds and homesteads in men’s absence.¹⁰⁷ In the face of harsh climatic conditions, the women in South Sudan’s Kapoeta area, especially in Kapoeta and the Turkana’s Kakuma turn out to charcoal burning, collecting firewood to sell in the refugee camp and undertaking casual jobs at the refugee camp thus have become bread winners of their homes.¹⁰⁸ With their knowledge, field findings have also shown that women they can shape adaptive mechanisms by engaging in alternative livelihood activities such as community savings groups where they register and make savings and loaning to facilitate their small businesses, to the level of engaging in cross border trade.

3.4.5 Management of climate risks

Reducing exposure and vulnerability to climate change is challenging. Complex processes have contributed to current exposures and vulnerabilities. Management of these risks is critical to reduce impact on the already vulnerable communities and efforts to mitigate these effects need to be harnessed for a greater impact towards lasting solutions. Choices made which exacerbate rather than reduce exposure to risk need to be avoided or they can further drive changes in these components that may be hard to reverse. Examples include expansion of urban and suburban developments, persistent inequality and increasing pressures on the environment such as water resources.¹⁰⁹ Within the Karamoja cluster, these choices are narrowed down in an environment that is already climate risk prone.

Management of climate risks has been structured to include preventive measures at community levels,

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview, key informant, Nadapal, Turkana West, Kenya, 3 February 2023.

¹⁰⁷ Personal interview, key informant, Alale, West Pokot, Kenya 04 February 2023

¹⁰⁸ Personal interview, key informant, Narus, Kapoeta East, South Sudan, 11 February 2023

¹⁰⁹ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, ‘Managing Climate Risks, Facing up to Losses and Damages,’ November 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/publications/managing-climate-risks-facing-up-to-losses-and-damages-55ea1cc9-en.htm> (accessed 18 May 2023).

such as the introduction of adapted, risk-sensitive building and land use regulations, and traditional adaptation strategies, such as better seeds and different farming techniques¹¹⁰. Others are short-term coping mechanisms of harvesting immature food crops and selling off a small number of cattle, as adaptation or coping mechanism with climatic anomalies, households are using other long-term adaptation strategies which include diversification of livelihood sources, livestock mobility to track forage and water resources, diversification of herd composition to benefit from the varied drought and disease tolerance, fertility of diverse livestock species, sending children to school for formal education as a long-term investment expected to pay back through income from employment¹¹¹. Policies and development interventions that reduce risks, diminish livelihood constraints, and expand opportunities for increased household resilience to drought are critical complements to the existing pastoralists coping strategies.¹¹²

In Ethiopia, communities within the South Omo regions felt that the Government should release the dammed waters of the Omo River to facilitate their participation in small scale agricultural activities that will be a source of alternative livelihood¹¹³. This is because the waters had been diverted upriver to produce the sugar cane for the sugar factories at the Omo Kuraz 5 sugar factories¹¹⁴. This was initially thought of as a game changer however only a few hectares of land were utilized while the water volumes drastically reduced to the chagrin of the communities down river. The local and international Non-Governmental Organizations operating within this South Omo region were exhorted to intervene through provision of programs that facilitate small trading businesses¹¹⁵. Both the NGOs and governmental institutions should support those wanting to engage in farming for food and for fodder for their livestock¹¹⁶. The need to increase forest cover was across the entire cluster with communities ranking it among the top initiatives that can help in the management of climate risks. This should get a shot in the arm through various inter community support initiatives and participation. A lot of buy in is needed from communities that traditionally do not see the need for tree planting in a land that is bare, vegetation is composed of scarce shrubs and drought resistant acacia.

Kenya exhibited the same climate risk management approach at the community level that displayed remarkable understanding of the risks. Community awareness of climate risk is a starting point. The importance of conservation and planting of trees through reforestation of depleted forest cover, practicing agroforestry especially in the Kachagalau and Karasuk hills in Pokot in Kenya was cited as a veritable example of mitigating climate risk. These are the water towers for the Alale area communities extending all the way to Pokot in Uganda.¹¹⁷ The contribution of donor agencies and non-state actors especially on forestry and agroforestry is a request to provide tree seedlings and seeds when providing emergency cash transfer support to climate affected communities.

Though South Sudan did not report a robust community participation on climate, the scant expressed opinions indicated a lack of awareness of climate risks. They nonchalantly went on about their lives without a care on the effects of climate change, but their Ugandan neighbours displayed an understanding of the need to manage these risks.

Piloting programs and creating awareness on climate risk management through resilience, building adoptive capacities through integrated resource management especially water and pasture and scale

¹¹⁰ Personal interview, key informant, Moroto, Uganda, 13 February 2023.

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Personal interview, key informant, Lokiriama, Loima, Kenya, 11 February 2023.

¹¹³ FGD participants, Turmi, Omorate, Ethiopia, 12 February 2023.

¹¹⁴ Personal interview, Turmi, Omorate, Ethiopia 11 February 2023.

¹¹⁵ FGD participants, Turmi, Omorate, Ethiopia 12 February 2023.

¹¹⁶ Personal interview, key informant, Kangaten Ethiopia, 5 February 2023.

¹¹⁷ Personal interview, West Pokot, Kenya, 4 Feb 2023.

up action planning on drought resilience and sustainable livelihood programs are suggestions of how to manage climate risk at community level. Within all this was a need to acquire more knowledge that then informs better decisions from and for the community. Other options were like those preferred within the cluster which included alternative livelihoods to improve rural incomes, climate adaptation for agro pastoralists that improve agricultural practices targeting drought, quick maturing and disease resistant crops¹¹⁸. Supporting and promoting innovative technology projects that inhibit greenhouse emissions while enhancing investment in clean energy like solar is also a suitable intervention. Wind energy, rural water supply, minimizing greenhouse emissions and forest cover all leverage climate risk management within the Karamoja cluster.

The promotion of irrigation agriculture and enhancement of food storage facilities constitute efforts to manage climate risk. Ethiopia's South Omo region promoted irrigation activities for the growing of Sugar cane for the sugar cane factories. There are initiatives by the government on dryland farming techniques and deployment of agriculture and livestock extension staff to rural areas of the Karamoja cluster. Innovative instruments that spread the (financial) risks between different actors or over a period risk sharing and climate risk insurance or that use a transformative approach (for instance as regards human mobility) complement the portfolio, in particular where residual risks remain despite adaptation efforts. The civil society sector lends support access to free primary education, provide school feeding programmes, provision of food supplements for the management of malnutrition, irrigation agriculture, management of humanitarian services and facilitation of cross-border resource sharing initiatives.

There are critical barriers to decision-making on climate change which the assessment investigated. These include lack of adequate climate change information, low capacity of actors, institutional red tape, duplication of roles and responsibilities due to poor coordination, changes in timing and duration of seasons' effects on seasonal management activities, constraints from national and regional budgets, policies, or processes on altering or supplementing current management practices to enable adaptation to climate change, general decline in staff resources and capacity.

On the other hand, several opportunities exist for more effective integration of climate change adaptation within development activities. These include making climate risk information more available, relevant, and usable, developing and applying climate risk screening tools, using appropriate "entry points" for climate information, shifting emphasis to participatory implementation rather than developing new plans. Other areas encouraging meaningful co-ordination and the sharing of good practices and review timing of management activities, while taking advantage of seasonal changes that provide more opportunities to implement beneficial adaptation actions. There could also be efforts through various capacity building measures and an exchange between experts for the pastoralists from different sectors, both public and private to discuss the benefit of integrated climate risk management in dealing with climate-related loss and damage. The interaction between different administrative levels is of key importance in fostering acceptance and ensure that implemented measures are sustainable which shows that effective climate risk management can also have a positive side effect on good governance. Monitoring and evaluating the measures implemented allows a continuous learning process to take place, which can then be drawn on current participatory mechanisms and in future decision-making.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

The Karamoja cluster is vulnerable to conflict and climate risks, and remains a net recipient of humanitarian aid because of its incapacity to provide food and security. It is a region of need in terms

¹¹⁸ Personal interview, key informant, Nakapelimoru, Kotido, Uganda 5 February 2023.

of access to social services and government services. Historically, and currently, the region remains largely behind which feeds into strong feelings of marginality. To uplift this region, the governments of Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia will require to craft a regional development approach to remedy the past. So far, the tarmacking of the Lodwar-Nakodok road, the ongoing tarmacking of the Moroto-Kenya border road are useful examples. South Sudan and Ethiopia will need to invest in the infrastructure to open these areas to trade. Therefore, development partner that champion infrastructure investments in the region will help to wean the communities from humanitarian aid.

From the recent past, there is an association between climate change, often marked by dry riverbeds, rivers flowing for a shorter time, permanent rivers drying up, grass failing to germinate etc, and the intensity of conflicts across the cluster. The net result has been more frequent migrations and often too far off areas. Pastoralists now move to close to each other hence increasing the possibility of conflict. Hence, there is now closer association between declining range resources, more migration and conflict. Therefore, development partners will need to support communities deal with the effects of climate change. Diversification of sources of livelihood would be an important entry point.

Historically and still in the contemporary, Karamoja cluster communities have low access to services and low engagement with national centres of power. In this void, NGOs and churches provide the bulk of social services. They are closer to the people. They are more trusted by the people. Therefore, development partners need to take note of this evidence in terms of entry into the community. The NGOs and churches remain the most important sources and avenues of development. Initial recognition of the civil society groups will be necessary for any development partner to make progress.

There are many actors who wield in the Karamoja cluster. These actors are at both agency and collective levels. They have great influence. The traditional leaders/elders, the kraal leaders, the youth and elected political leaders as well as national government officials hold the key to successful development. While kraal leaders enjoy overall support at community level, the youth are the active implementers of conflict. Politicians enjoy great influence are more associated with incitement and galvanizing support or opposition to development initiatives. Development partners will require to navigate the intricate relationship between the actors carefully to make positive impact'. It is imperative that development partners obtain their support.

There are hundreds of thousands of refugee's populations in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei settlement. The presence provides a huge market potential for agricultural crops. This provides an unexploited opportunity for local communities to diversify their sources of livelihood. Development partners can support this line of livelihood to reduce overdependence on livestock in the era of climate change occasioned by increasing and more frequent drought and more livestock death.

Although the Karamoja cluster communities are synonymous with never ending conflict there are useful formal and informal structures that now show hope for meaning conflict resolution. The two structures although useful in peacebuilding, frequently suffer from inadequate support and follow on peacebuilding activities.

The effect of conflict and climate change on gender relation has been noticeable in the entire Karamoja cluster. There is noticeable climate change effects and increasing conflict as pastoralists struggle to survive on dwindling range resources. Pastoralists now migrate more and further than usual and cover longer distances and spent more time away from their families. The net result is that many people

especially women have fallen out of pastoralism or out of pastoralist households and migrated to urban areas like Lodwar, Moroto, Kakuma to eke a living. Many women are now in the service industry as casual laborers, petty traders, sellers of charcoal, domestic workers etc. Therefore, climate change and conflict have enabled more women into unchartered territory, and forms of livelihood that are not traditional. The adaptive capacity of women in a resource strapped urban environments present another opportunity for engagement to diversify forms of livelihood and reduce dependence on humanitarian support. Women in business is a desirable way to go in the changing circumstances.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this report, there are key areas where the CBCR Activity can take actions that will reduce the potential for conflict linked to climate change in the Karamoja cluster:

- (i) Given the development history as well as the weak relationship with the respective national governments and subsequent marginalization, Civil Society Organizations (NGOs and Churches) continue to provide most services. They are closer to the communities and enjoy higher trust and respect. Pastors/priests are much respected. Therefore, for any meaningful development or entry into the Karamoja cluster it is imperative that partnership with civil society be obtained.
- (ii) The role of the informal power and peace building structures especially the *kraals* retain importance in the overall peace building and conflict resolution in the Karamoja cluster according to the conflict trends. *Kraals* exist on all sides of the border. In addition, their activities are complemented by low level national/regional government support. To bolster and attain sustainable peace there is need to support and build the capacity of *kraal* leaders, support some of their engagement activities across borders. This should be done in addition to supporting the facilitation of regular engagement activities by government officials in peace building.
- (iii) Support for women and youth in business. Conflict and Climate change has affected more women than men, decimated more households and forced more women out of pastoralism. Many women have migrated to urban centres to seek new ways of livelihood. Most of them are cash strapped with little or no capacity for meaningful engagement in business. Therefore, development partners need to channel support to build the capacity of women in business and provision of business grants.
- (iv) Support for diversification of sources of livelihood. One of the consequences of climate change and conflict is that many households have lost livestock. Over dependence on livestock has rendered many households more food secure than ever before. In addition, livestock numbers have continued to decline. It is therefore imperative that development partners support and build capacity of the communities in agricultural production. Some areas of Karamoja cluster are ideal for rainfed and/or irrigation agriculture. Support for activities for water harvesting, training in farming techniques, dryland farming and food storage will greatly build the food security of the community and reduce or eliminate the need for humanitarian food aid. Partnership with the civil society organizations and respective ministry of agriculture will produce a better synergy.
- (v) The CBCR Activity could support behaviour change programming targeting the children and youth of the cluster. In the Karamoja cluster youth are the main perpetrators of conflict. They undertake all the raiding and other decadent cultural practices. These are done in the context of very low access to formal education and non-existent schools. The value placed on livestock as the only source of social recognition remains high. Therefore, development partners need to support activities and programmes that wean children and youth away from decadent traditional beliefs and practices. Such programmes and activities include construction of schools, awareness creation, mop up of children of school going age, support programmes of alternative rites of passage, support a program of school feeding, engagement with government officials, education officials, pastors/priests.
- (vi) Climate change and conflict have a regional dimension therefore there is required a regional intervention. Therefore, development partners need to support collaborations within the international donor community and the cross-border governments to adopt

and implement policy frameworks that is both conflict-sensitive and climate sensitive, and that recognizes and supports pastoralism as a livelihood in transition that remains valuable and viable in Karamoja cluster. Work with the government to implement priority projects and natural resource management activities, noting its potential for dialogue, conflict mitigation, and peacebuilding in Karamoja cluster.

- (vii) Support adoption of gender transformative approaches in Conflict and Climate management for cross border development. This will include aspects such as inclusion in committees.
- (viii) Develop well-designed, contextualized, and focused youth and women empowerment programs for cross border communities. This include capacity building for income generating activities for alternative and/or diversified livelihood in the areas of agriculture where there is natural flowing permanent rivers such as the Turkwel in the border between the Turkana and Pokot (Kenya and Uganda); between the Nyangatom, Dassanech and Turkana within the Kibish area within the Ilemi triangle and around river Omo. Provision of fishing gear to the Turkana and Dassanech to manage the attendant conflicts. There can also be support towards marketing, packaging, and management of the Apiary business between the Turkana and Pokot; Turkana and the Ik (Turkana West and Kaabong districts).

5. ANNEXES

ANNEX I: Terms of Reference



Conflict and Climate
Assessment TOR.docx

ANNEX II: Key Informant Interview Guide and Focused Group Discussion Guides



KII for Conflict and
Climate Assessment 2



CCA FGD Guides
women men youth.dc

ANNEX III: List of Interview Participants

	KENYA	UGANDA	ETHIOPIA	SOUTH SUDAN
1	LOPEO-LOKI	KAPDA-KAABONG	TODONYATU	OPRD-NARUS
2	LOKADO-KAKUMA	KDF-MOROTO	IPC-ETHIOPIA	ICPDO-KAPOETA
3	SAPCONE-LODWAR	MADEFO	SAPCONE-JINKA	DOT-NARUS
4	SIKOM-KAPENGURIA	DADO-KAABONG	CARITAS	LRDA
5	DCC-TW	RDC-KAABONG	Admin-Kangaten	Commissioner-Kapoeta East
6	DCC-CENTRAL	RDC-MOROTO	Admin-Omorate	Commissioner-Kapoeta South
7	DCC-LOIMA	RDC-AMUDAT	Admin-Hamer	Executive Director-Kapoeta South
8	DCC-KACHELIBA	RDC-KOTIDO	Admin-Selemango	NSS Director
9	SCA-TW	LC5-KAABONG	Town Mayor-Kangaten	Mayor-Kapoeta Town
10	SCA-CENTRAL	LC5-MOROTO	Town Mayor-Omorate	Admin-Narus Payam
11	SCA-LOIMA	LC5-AMUDAT	Town Mayor-Hamer	Admin-Kapoeta Town Payam
12	SCA-KACHELIBA	LC5-RUPA	Town Mayor-Selemango	Admin-Kapoeta Town Payam
13	KRA-LOKI	URA-MOROTO	ERCA-Omorate	NRA-Nadapal
14	Immigration-Loki	Immigration-Moroto	Immigration-Omorate	Immigration-Nadapal
15	MP-TW	MP-KAABONG	National MP	National MP-IK
16	MP-N	MP-MOROTO	National MP	National MP-Kaabong
17	MP LOIMA	MP-AMUDAT	National MP	National MP-Kotido
18	MP-KACHELIBA	MP-KOTIDO	National MP	National MP-Moroto
19	MCA-LETEA	LC III -KAABONG	Regional MP	State MP
20	MCA-LOIMA	LC 3- MOROTO	Regional MP	State MP
21	MCA-Kacheliba	LC 3-AMUDAT	Regional MP	State MP
22	Chamber of Commerce-Chair	Chamber of Commerce	Office of Cooperatives-Dassanech	Chamber of Commerce
23	Chair Biashara Fund	CAO	Office of Cooperative-Nyangatom	Executive Director
24	Youth Council	Chamber of Commerce	Dep't of Investment Nyangatom	Youth Leader
25	IGAD	IGAD-Moroto	Dep't of Pastoralism-Dassanech	Office of Emergency
26	UNHCR-Kakuma	Director for Emergency	Office of Peace and Security-Dassanech	Customs Officer -Nadapal
27	RAS-Kakuma	DISO-Moroto	Peace and Security- Nyangatom	Executive Chief
28	Catholic Church	Catholic Church	Catholic Church	Catholic Church
29	Anglican Church	Anglican Church	SO4CM Church	Anglican Church
30	AIC	AIC	Jinka Medhaniyalem Church	AIC
31	Muslim-	Muslim-	Muslim-	Muslim-
32	National Police Service	Uganda Police	Ethiopia Police	Police Inspector
33	Kenya Army	Uganda Army	Ethiopia Army	Army Commander
34	ASTU-Nadapal	ASTU-Moroto	ASTU-Jinka	Border Police-Nadapal
35	KDF-Loki	UPDF-MOROTO	EDF-Jinka	SSDF-Nadapal
36	Media I	Media I	Media I	Media I
37	NDMA	NUSAF	DRM&FS	NDMA
38	Advisor-Economy	Advisor-Economy	Advisor-Peace	Advisor-Peace
39	Advisor-Political Affairs	Advisor-Political Affairs	Advisor-Political	Advisor-Political
40	Advisor- Administration	Advisor-Administration	Advisor-Administration	Advisor-Administration

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