

Karamojong Cluster Peace Newsletter

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The Karamoja Cluster

The term “Karamoja Cluster” (KC) is in common use and has been employed for many years to describe the pastoral and agro-pastoral ethnic groups, most of whom share a common language, culture, and land area encompassing northeastern Uganda, northwestern Kenya, southeastern Sudan and southwestern Ethiopia. Many of these ethnic groups live in what was the old Karamoja District in northeastern Uganda, and the people of the area are thus popularly referred to as “Karamojong”, in both Kenya and Uganda. Another term used by anthropologists and others to refer to these Nilotic-related peoples with shared linguistic and cultural traditions is “Ateker”. The languages of the Ateker peoples are mutually intelligible. The communities that constitute the KC include: Turkana, Matheniko, Bokora, Pian, Dodoth, Nyangatom, Didinga, Merille, Toposa, Jie, Tepeth, Acholi Labwor and Upe.

The drylands of the KC, like many arid to semi-arid lands of Africa, have a diversity of ecosystems tuned to a seasonal but highly variable pattern of rainfall. Access to resources, primarily pasture for livestock and water human and animal consumption, is closely linked to the annual dry and rainy seasons. ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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Peace and Security

Oxfam GB Releases Funds for Peacebuilding

Oxfam GB through its office in Turkana - the Turkana Pastoral Development Project - has released 1.4 million Kenya shillings to fund peacebuilding and conflict reduction activities in the district for an initial one year. The amount is part of the 3.6 million shillings earmarked for the next three years.

The Turkana District Peace and Development Committee (TDPDC), with Oxfam taking a facilitatory role, will spearhead the programme for the first one year. After the initial one year, the committee is expected to co-ordinate all the peacebuilding and conflict management activities in the district.

In addition to supporting community-based and grassroots-driven conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes and harmonizing approaches to peace and responses to conflicts in the district, the programme also aims to create effective and strong grassroots institutional structures for peace. The programme further aims to strengthen networking and improve co-ordination among local actors working on conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Lastly, the programme will enhance communication between the local communities and the TDPDC at the district level so as to effectively respond and prevent the occurrence of potentially violent and destructive conflicts, especially at the border areas. This will be done through the provision of radio equipment at the border areas so as to facilitate effective and prompt relay of information for conflict early

warning and early response. By so doing, the programme will strengthen cross-border peacebuilding processes between the Turkana and the other Karamojong Cluster communities in Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda.

The committee will work out to put in place effective community based institutional structures for peace and conflict transformation as a means of achieving lasting peace and sustainable development in Turkana district.

By giving communities a chance to take an active role in peacebuilding, community ownership and sustainability of the programme will be enhanced. This is pertinent because "inculcating a culture of peace and positive attitudes that contribute to harmonious co-existence between communities would be more entrenched in the communities' psyche if they are the direct owners and beneficiaries of the peacebuilding process" explains Mr. Eris Lothike, the Oxfam Project Co-ordinator in Turkana.

KTN Journalists Honoured

KTN television station photojournalist Dennis Mwangombe and reporter Carol Tomno were awarded the inaugural KensMedia Hot Shot Award administered by the Free Press Advocacy Department (FPAD). The two journalists were honoured for exhibiting bravery and excellence, amidst hails of bullets, in their footage on an attack on a team of Kenyan and Ugandan MPs, government and civil society officials by livestock rustlers in Moroto district, Uganda. The team was from a livestock exchange and dialogue meeting between the Turkana of Kenya and Matheniko of Uganda.

We wish to congratulate the two journalists for their effort to highlight the conflict situation and peace initiatives in the Karamojong Cluster!

Peacebuilding Updates...

Turkana District, Kenya

The CAPE-Unit of AU/IBAR organized an internal follow-up meeting from 22nd –31st July at Natamakarwo region of Elemi triangle to reconcile self-styled hardliners who have been divided by the scarcity of resources that has rocked their marginalized area for ages. This meeting involved facilitating the chiefs of Lokichoggio location to move round Lotikipi plains reiterating the government's stand on rustlers who have persistently continued to strike the neighboring Toposa. The Toposa have not retaliated thus far as they promised in February at Naliei during their *Akidamd* ceremony –“a traditional session whereby the Toposa elders reflect on the performance of the previous year and also pray for more rain and pasture for the following season”.

During the follow-up meeting, it was clear that there was need to clean the mess at home so that the Kwatela could be negotiating a wholesome peace as one people. Two follow-up meetings have already been held and these have yielded positive results. More meetings will follow as the situation might go out of hand if not cubed on time.

The CAPE-Unit of AU/IBAR also facilitated the return of 17 donkeys stolen from Turkana by the Matheniko of Uganda. This was held at Moroto on 5th – 6th August. This was a reciprocal gesture by the Ugandan government to the Kenyan government as promised during the return of stolen calves at Lokiriama in July 2002.

The CAPE-Unit wishes to thank VSF-Belgium and Oxfam GB for their continued logistical and financial support for building peace in the Karamojong Cluster communities. The CAPE-Unit was able to undertake the last three activities through full funding from the two partner NGOs.

Karamoja Region, Uganda

A broad-based stakeholder workshop was held in Mount Moroto Hotel, Moroto in August 2002. The objectives of the workshop were:

- 1) To share experiences with participants on concepts and methodological approaches in early warning and conflict prevention;
- 2) To introduce participants to FEWS NET products essential for conflict early warning in the Cluster;
- 3) To share and discuss with the participants the first issue of the *Karamojong Cluster Peace Newsletter (KCPN)*;
- 4) To design and agree on modalities for future collaboration in the production of the KCPN

The workshop used an Output-oriented participatory approach. The content of the workshop were structured around three complementary themes consisting of participatory lectures, group discussions and plenary discussions.



Participants for the Karamoja workshop pose for a photograph at the end of the workshop

The main themes included: conflict early warning systems, livelihood-related

changes, FEWS NET/LEWS technological information and networking dynamics.

Participants were drawn from diverse backgrounds and organizations: government, community representatives, community-based organizations, International NGOs and religious institutions. This was meant to ensure that the workshop captures the ideas and experiences of this diverse group and translates them into viable recommendations to improve peacebuilding initiatives and for establishing a network-based conflict early warning system in the Karamojong Cluster of Uganda and Kenya. The workshop was therefore customized to meet the particular needs of the participants and the demands for establishing a sustainable information network.

The following were the main Outputs of the workshop:

- ◆ a dynamic network-based conflict information and data management system for Karamoja was initiated;
- ◆ Institutional structures for conflict early warning were identified and committed;

- ◆ Clear information collection and dissemination channels and links were established;

- ◆ Ways of strengthening links with Turkana district in Kenya were explored and agreed;
- ◆ Agreements on practical modalities of working collectively as members of a peace network were designed.

The participants made important recommendation on how KCPN can be improved. Some of the pertinent recommendations were:

- ✎ The need to have a logo capturing the lifestyle and source of livelihood of communities in the Karamojong Cluster
- ✎ The newsletter's title to be "Karamojong Cluster Peace *and Development* Newsletter" (KCPDN)
- ✎ Apostrophe in the word "Karamojong" to be removed
- ✎ The principal colour of the newsletter to be green, symbolizing the main source of livelihood for the pastoralist communities in the Cluster
- ✎ There should be a column on the Culture of the communities in the Cluster in every edition
- ✎ The need to qualify terms such as "below normal", "above normal" and "Prices" in the FEWS NET inputs
- ✎ Prospects to be explored to produce a quarterly edition of the newsletter in the Karimojong language
- ✎ The slogan of the newsletter to be "*Ee nakomoli nangoria*", the anthem for the communities in the Cluster!!
- ✎ Letters to the editor, opinion and poems columns to be provided
- ✎ More pictorials.

Editor's Note:

The above recommendations will be discussed and agreed by participants from Karamoja and Turkana during the project's feedback workshop in October 2002. Meanwhile, more progressive ideas are highly encouraged and would be gladly received.

Culture and Peace

1. KISP Promoting the Role of Councils of Elders in Peacebuilding in Karamoja

Over the years, there has been a growing need to promote the role of traditional institutions in peacebuilding and conflict management. The Karamoja region of Uganda is not an exception to this cutting edge new approach to peacebuilding.

Karamoja Initiative for Sustainable Peace (KISP) is an initiative of Karamojong elders that aims to bring about sustainable peace (*ekisil ngolo ruba*) and economic transformation of Karamoja through promotion of locally generated economic development initiatives. KISP was formed on the 16th August 1998 by a group of Karamojong elders from the 42 sub-counties comprising the 3 districts of Karamoja region (Moroto, Kotido and Nakapiripirit). KISP area of coverage includes not only the 3 districts of Karamoja but also other groups of the Karamojong cluster in Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan.

KISP has established its networks from the region to district branches that extend down to County and sub county levels. Each sub-county is represented by one senior elder (*emoruoit*-mountain age-set) assisted by one technical youth as secretary. Each sub-county has one senior elder, 1 woman elder and 1 technical youth. The networks work very closely and communicate on a weekly basis.

KISP's main objectives include promoting sustainable peace and locally-generated sustainable socio-economic initiatives, encouraging the use of traditional peacebuilding approaches through the councils of elders, promoting the participation of youth and women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution and mobilization of the Karimojong for constructive community economic development initiatives such as adoption of short-maturing varieties, resettlement in the greenbelt/fertile areas of Karamoja, livestock trade, as strategies for poverty

reduction. In addition, KISP advocates for development of technical capacity among the Karimojong in fields that strengthen agro-pastoral livelihoods. In this regard, Karimojong youth are trained in subjects that strengthen agro-pastoral livelihoods such as animal husbandry, water harvesting, agriculture for dry lands, veterinary services, veterinary services and land.

To achieve its objectives KISP emphasizes the use of dialogue, consensus building and consultation with the Karimojong people through traditional institutions that have existed for centuries and which have accumulated knowledge in managing conflict between the Karimojong and similar pastoralist groups in Kenya and Sudan.

Modern approaches are also employed where they are deemed to be able to deliver viable solutions to peacebuilding efforts. District Local Council Governments, civil servants, foreseers and area members of parliament are invited when needed to peace forums. In brief, KISP emphasizes the application of an integrated approach that involves senior elders, youth and women, district local governments, churches, politicians and senior civil servants of the Karamoja cluster spread across the international borders of Uganda-Kenya and Uganda-Sudan.

KISP identifies elders, youth and women as the major target groups for its peace efforts since they are the ones who often suffer the brunt of conflict. This integrated approach to conflict resolution has not been used before as formal administration did not recognize the invaluable role played by senior councils of elders play in this process.

2. Rich Partnership for Peacebuilding

Traditional seers and community scouts are already becoming promising partners in conflict early warning and

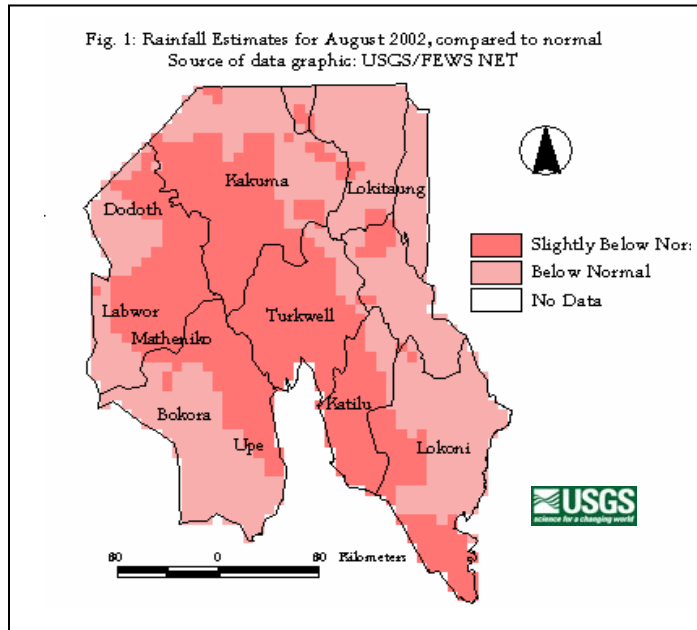
peacebuilding. Throughout July and up to August this year, two Turkana traditional seers Apa-a-ngimwa of Kataruk and Ekara of Lokichar area vehemently refused to “bless raids” by their *Adakar* warriors. When an Intra-Turkana raid occurred on 21st May 2002 at Lokori area, and the stolen 48 head of cattle driven to his *Adakar* Apa-a-ngimwa refused to accept them. He further made a secret follow-up to their destination and recollected them back. He reported the information to the area administration. The cattle were up to the time of reporting waiting to be returned to the owners.

At another occurrence, a meeting of Turkana and Tepessi elders at Lokiriama in early August, allowed the former access to pasture and water on the border ranges. Tepesi scouts also warned the Turkana of regroupings and movement of pokot warriors towards Kataruk or Turkana south areas, this warning was indicative of impending raids. This proactive involvement and participation of the cluster communities in early warning will go a long way in augmenting peacebuilding initiatives.

Climate and Environment

Agroclimatic, Livestock Conditions and Pastoralist Food Security

Although figure 1 depicts mostly below normal rainfall during August, actual cumulative rainfall during August is normally insignificant. Most grazing, livestock and pastoralists fundamentals are within normal ranges for this time of the year, except in localized areas in the eastern part of the Karamojong cluster where vegetation conditions are substantially below normal levels. Figure 2 depicts mostly near normal vegetation with localized areas of poor vegetation.



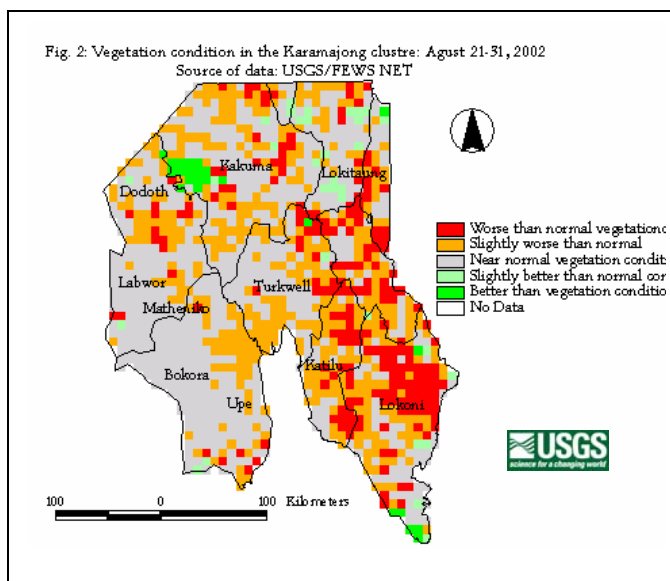
Pastoralists in nearly all areas of the cluster are now seasonably resident in the dry season grazing areas, most of them having migrated during July and August, in response to diminished water, pasture and browse. The absence of water and in some instances heightened insecurity have limited the utilization of pasture and browse in traditional dry season grazing areas, leading to secondary migration into other districts. The areas most vulnerable to raids include areas bordering West Pokot District in Kenya and the northern border with Uganda.

The body condition of the livestock is fair and closely consistent with normal, though milk availability has seasonably declined. Rates of child malnutrition

are generally stable in Turkana District but may increase, since most pastoralists and livestock have now migrated away from the 'manyattas' to the dry season grazing areas, thus reducing milk access to sedentary household members who are traditionally the most vulnerable.

Livestock prices declined across most of the cluster markets, attributed principally to increased supply of livestock to markets as pastoralists seek to finance cereal purchases following the downsizing of emergency food distributions. In addition, pastoralists are unwilling to continue re-building herds during the middle of the dry season.

Although, positive improvements in the food security of Karamojong pastoralists during the 2002 long-rains season have provided widespread relief among the severely drought affected pastoral households, the negative impacts of the three-year drought continue to current moderate gains. The number of destitute pastoralists has grown significantly during the three-year drought. In the eastern part of the cluster, current household herd sizes are unable to support the food security of pastoralists as defined by the Arid Lands Resource Management Project.



Livestock Migration Patterns

The *Adakars* in the Lotikipi plains are moving from Lochore apua towards Nakalale and Ng'eu, while those in Songot ranges are on a westward migration towards Loteteleit and Nalapatui. Other *adakars* in the northwestern parts of the district are in Musug, Kokorio and

Loteere towards the Ugandan border.

In the north, livestock have crossed into neighbouring Sudan while others are moving to the east. Insecurity in this area has led to unplanned migration of livestock. A factor that can further heighten tension and strain community relations. The livestock in Loima, Turkwell and Lokiriama are moving westward towards the border of Kenya and Uganda. Some of the cattle are however still grazing on the Loima hills and the Loteere ranges. The browsers can still be found on the plains.

The migration trend in the southern part of the district is principally eastward to Katilia, Suguta and the Nakukulas and Kailongkol ranges. Threats of raids continue to limit movement southward to Lomello.

Gender

In the last issue of the *Karamojong Cluster Peace Newsletter*, the 3Ps were pinpointed as an essential element of women empowerment. The concept of Presence was highly achieved this month. In many of the workshops organized this month there was a high representation of women participants.

The recent workshop of all CBOs and Local NGOs facilitation training organized and conducted by SNV-K as a result of the request by Tonyoutu consultancy, women were well represented. Compared to one representative or none that is often the case in most workshops in the district, this five-day workshop had six women representatives. Kudos ladies keep it up!

The five-day seminar was an intense training of facilitation skills that had the objectives of making the locals take the initiatives of being development facilitators in the district. The seminar also aimed to improve the facilitation skills of the resource persons in the district. This workshop deepened the networking of community based organization as it involved members from West Pokot district. As people concerned about the gender representation we urge member of PADO from Pokot to carry

female representatives to such functions in the future.

Development

Need for Information Flow on Natural Resources Management in the Cluster

At the beginning of this year, ASNV/Kenya facilitated a strategic planning workshop with the Turkana County Council. The main problem related to natural resources management raised during this workshop was the fact that the arising competition over scarce resources leads to conflicts of varying intensity. In this context, the participants strongly raised the importance to obtaining consensus on the sharing of natural resources and to create awareness on their sustainable use. Proposed activities that have to be undertaken to reach these objectives included the sharing of information on NRM and encouraging cross-border negotiations on how to achieve sharing of NR. It may be clear that this has to be a shared effort by all kinds of people (the community and their representatives, Governments, NGOs and religious organizations) at both sides of the border. Needless to say, for the proposed activities to be successful, information between stakeholders must flow.

The Karamoja Cluster

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The predominant mode of food production of KC groups is an occupational continuum with those groups inhabiting drier climates relying primarily on livestock, to those in wetter climates relying primarily on cultivation, although all groups keep some livestock and all groups at various times plant crops.

Over the centuries, pastoral, agropastoral, and agricultural societies in the cluster acquired and defended territory, in which they lived, farmed, and raised livestock. Systems of natural resource management

(NRM) evolved generally based on common tenancy of land organized for the efficient utilization of available resources, primarily for livestock herding.

Present day conflict in the KC revolves around many issues. Traditional pastoralism over the last century and a half has received a series of blows from which it is still attempting to adjust. Violent cattle raids, perhaps the most well known and obvious form of conflict, are one symptom of much deeper conflicts and fractures. Colonialism; disease and famine; the emerging post-independence state; the introduction of new systems of religion, business and private property; the struggle for political control in the face of changing regimes and distant powers not inclined to invest in marginally productive land, all stand behind cattle rustling, restricted pastoralist mobility and declining cattle per capita.

While conflict in the KC is frequent, it is also unpredictable and intermittent. It is not steady and unrelenting. Instead, peaks and valleys characterize it, by periods of relative calm and then sudden outbreaks of violence. The periods of peaceful relations may be punctuated by small episodes of cattle raiding, and after a series of such raids, one group may mount a major response and violence will escalate. In some cases, there is no escalation. For these reasons, conflict between groups, can be described as recurrent rather than continuous. Intergroup relationships are characterized by ever-shifting alliances. For all of these reasons, conflict in the Cluster is very difficult to pin down and even more difficult to predict.

The “hot spots” of today may be peaceful tomorrow. Monitoring is needed to determine whether small tensions are emerging and could under certain conditions give rise violence.

The existence of widespread conflict is a major hindrance to effective development. It interferes with normal trade and local development efforts, and greatly reduces the willingness of Government officials and NGO staff to work in the areas. The climate of insecurity is a serious impediment to improving economic and social conditions, which are essential to effective, long-term reduction of poverty. Large areas of the Cluster have become abandoned because of conflict. (Source: Halderman, M et al (2002): *Assessment and Programmatic Recommendation: Addressing Pastoralist Conflict in the Karamoja Cluster of Kenya, Uganda and Sudan, March 2002 USAID/REDSO Draft Report*)

Appreciation for Contributions

ALRMP, Turkana
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FEWS NET
CAPE UNIT, AU/IBAR
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KISP

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