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Photo: Christopher Carlson

## Changing Roles, Shifting Risks: *Livelihood Impacts of Disarmament in Karamoja, Uganda*

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This report is available online at [fic.tufts.edu](http://fic.tufts.edu).

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## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a research study to examine the role of disarmament policies in changes in livelihood systems of the population in the Karamoja region of northeastern Uganda. The study and report are based on a research partnership between Save the Children in Uganda (SCiUG) and the Feinstein International Center (FIC) at Tufts University. FIC researchers (hereafter called the Tufts team) are working with SCiUG in 2009-2010 on a series of discrete studies to investigate areas of mutual interest in Karamoja. The research findings from these studies are designed to inform programming and planning in the area of livelihood interventions.

The topic for this report emerged out of a series of conversations between the Tufts team and the SCiUG staff in Kampala and Karamoja in February 2009. We discussed areas in which we felt there was a knowledge gap and that were of interest to both SCiUG and the Tufts team. Both parties developed the terms of reference for this study. Field work was conducted in Moroto and Kotido Districts in April 2009. Briefings of initial findings were made to SCiUG staff in Moroto and Kampala in May 2009. A first draft of this report was shared with SCiUG staff members for comments and feedback, which were incorporated into the final version.

The authors hope that members of the national and international community working in Karamoja find the results of this study useful and informative.

## METHODOLOGY

The research presented in this report is based primarily on field work conducted in April 2009 by the authors and their research assistant, with field support provided by the SCiUG offices in Moroto and Kotido. We collected qualitative data in semi-structured focus group interviews in six locations in Moroto and four locations in Kotido. In Moroto we collected data in Nadunget, Rupa and Lokopo Sub-Counties and in Kotido we collected data in Rengen, Kacheri and Panyangara Sub-Counties.

Our study population intentionally includes a greater number of men than women, as we hypothesized that disarmament had brought greater changes to male than to female livelihoods. We interviewed young men, young women, and young boys in both kraals and manyattas in a total of 27 focus group interviews. More specifically, we conducted:

- 59% of focus group interviews in Moroto, 41% in Kotido;
- 69% of focus group interviews in manyattas, 31% in kraals;
- 69% of focus group interviews with males, 31% with females;
- Of the focus group interviews with males, 47% were with “older” male youth

(defined as ages 20 and above), 32% were with teens (early and late teens in separate groups), and 21% were with younger boys.<sup>1</sup>

We had hoped to talk to young girls as well as young boys but were unable due to time constraints. In addition, we conducted key informant interviews with several district officials in each district.

Field sites in April 2009 were selectively sampled and intended to be typical of broader trends and patterns in the area. For instance, we sought to balance locations far from towns or trading centers with those nearby, and to balance locations close to and far from barracks. Even so, the data presented here and the overall findings cannot be extrapolated to all of Karamoja or even to all of Moroto and Kotido: our study population is limited to the locations we visited and the people we spoke with. That said, based on our team's years of work in the region, our ongoing research on these and similar topics, and extensive conversations with multiple actors, we feel confident that our findings are indicative of similar patterns and trends that would be found at other similar locations.

We visited several kraals at barracks<sup>2</sup> in Kotido and Moroto and interacted with military personnel at these locations. The current study does not include the perspective of the military due to constraints of time and access. A future study on the perspective and experience of the military regarding issues of disarmament would be very enlightening, but would need to be carried out by individuals with access to the military command structure.

In addition to the data collected in April 2009, the authors drew on data collected by the Tufts team in Kotido, Kaabong, Moroto and Nakapiripirit between May 2005 and May 2009. Semi-structured individual and focus group interviews with approximately 1000 respondents in this period focused on livelihoods, human security, and traditional leadership structures. Key informant interviews with local and national authorities, civil society and community-based organizations, and national and international humanitarian agencies and organizations in Karamoja and Kampala were also conducted. Although not the specific focus of the work in this period, experiences of disarmament were frequently raised by respondents in reference to protection strategies, shifts in security, and changes in livelihoods over time. These data provide background information and have helped to frame our analysis and provide context for our findings.

1 Establishing exact ages in Karamoja is difficult due to stunting and the absence of knowledge regarding birth years. In most cases we allowed the males to divide themselves into groups based on their own understanding of the categories such as "older karacuna", "young karacuna" and "boys." To note, although commonly used in both Ngakaramojong and English, we do not use the term *karacuna* in the body of this report because it has mistakenly come to be synonymous with "warriors" in English parlance in Karamoja. The term actually refers to uninitiated youth. See Ben Knighton, *The Vitality of the Karamojong Religion: Dying Tradition or Living Faith?* Hants, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005, pp. 134-135.

2 The terminology regarding these kraals is a source of contention according to district level and NGO respondents in Moroto. Most people use the term "protected kraals," but the military reportedly objects to this name, as it implies the military's active engagement in protection. The military reportedly prefers the term "security kraals" which does not imply an obligation to protect. The authors will use the term "kraals at barracks" for the purpose of this report.

Due to the sensitive nature of topics discussed we do not identify our research locations by name.<sup>3</sup> Sites are identified by sub-county and interview date alone. Similarly, some of our interviews with district officials were conducted off-the-record because of controversial and politically sensitive topics. We withhold the names and positions of the district officials in these cases.

No military or official personnel were present during any of our interviews except at a barracks in Nadunget Sub-County in Moroto. At our interviews at two other barracks (in Lokopo Sub-County and Kacheri Sub-County), military personnel were in the vicinity but not within earshot. Local councilors were interviewed separately when present at interview sites and were asked to excuse themselves from group discussions.

This study is about the perceptions and experiences of local communities and individuals. We sought to triangulate all data, and this report only includes information that we heard from multiple independent sources at different locations. Individual accounts or reports that could not be verified are not included regardless of the nature of the information. When quotations from individuals or focus groups are provided, this information is representative of patterns we witnessed or heard repeatedly and in multiple locations.

## **BACKGROUND**

There are multiple causes of change to livelihoods in Karamoja and across agro-pastoral and pastoral communities in East Africa and beyond. Population growth of both agrarian and pastoral communities, environmental degradation, increased climate variability and climate change, restrictions on mobility, tension with settled communities, and the lack of pro-pastoral government policies have negatively affected animal-based livelihoods. Insecurity among and between groups has undermined livelihood strategies, destroyed assets, and increased vulnerability of communities across the region. This section provides a brief overview of livelihoods in Karamoja, examines the role of insecurity, and introduces the current disarmament campaign as a factor in livelihoods change.

### ***Livelihoods in Karamoja***

Karamoja comprises five districts of 10,550 square miles and is home to an estimated 1.2 million people.<sup>4</sup> Although generally referred to as ‘the Karamojong,’ there is no one unified political entity or identity but rather a cluster of different tribal and ethnic groups engaged in shifting alliances.<sup>5</sup> The three main ethnic groups are the Dodoth, the Jie and the Karimojong, and within these main groups are nine

3 The exception is Koculut Dam in Bokora in Moroto District, which we identify as a positive example of the military command structure working in support of pastoral livelihood strategies.

4 The 2002 census put the estimated population at just under 1 million people, but this is widely considered to be an underestimate. The World Food Programme is using a revised figure of 1.2 million for the population estimate.

different tribal groups.<sup>6</sup> The Karimojong, for instance, once a unified ethnic entity, now identify primarily with their separate tribal affiliations of Matheniko, Bokora and Pian. Ngakaramojong is the language common to the region, but minority groups such as the Tepeth and the Ik, among others, have separate languages as well.

Although largely semi-arid, ecological diversity exists in belts of higher rainfall and more arable land in the western, southern and mountainous areas.<sup>7</sup> Livestock remain central to the livelihood strategies of a large percentage of the population in Karamoja. Today, however, few people practice a purely pastoral way of life; most engage in cultivation when and where possible and are better described as agro-pastoral. Many people have moved to the towns and trading centers across the five districts and are engaging in business, trade and casual labor including construction, brick-making, ferrying goods for local businessmen, beer brewing and domestic labor. The extraction of marble from the slopes of Mount Moroto for sale to cement factories is a relatively new livelihood activity.

The most important assets for the largely pastoral and agro-pastoral populations of Karamoja have traditionally been natural resources, financial resources in the form of livestock, and the social capital inherent in a close-knit system of clans, sub-groups, extended families and alliances across ethnic and political borders.<sup>8</sup> Most households prioritize human capital in the form of offspring and labor potential.<sup>9</sup> Girls and boys are both highly valued for their contributions to household

5 The authors of this paper follow the lead of Ben Knighton and other scholars in delineating between the “Karamojong” (the inhabitants of Karamoja) and the “Karimojong,” the formerly unified ethnic group consisting of the Pian, Matheniko and Bokora. Based on the same sources, the shared language is Ngakaramojong. These spellings are used intentionally and should not be taken as errors. See Ben Knighton, 2005, p 19.

6 These ethnic groups are the Matheniko, the Tepeth and the Bokora of Moroto district, the Pian and Pokot of Nakapiripirit district, the Jie and Tobur (sometimes called the Acholi Labwor) of Kotido district, and the Dodoth, Nyangia (sometimes called the Napore) and Ik (sometimes called the Teuso, but distinct from the Teso to the west) of Kaabong district. All these groups speak Ngakaramojong at school and in administrative offices. For more information on different groups, see, *inter alia*, Ben Knighton, 2005; Sandra Gray et al., “Cattle Raiding, Cultural Survival, and Adaptability of East African Pastoralists,” *Current Anthropology*, vol. 44, December 2003.

7 The recent *Karamoja Action Plan for Food Security* released by the Office of the Prime Minister (March 2009) characterizes Karamoja as having three livelihood zones: i) the Wet-Agricultural Zone in the west, ii) the Agro-Pastoral Zone in the center of the region, and iii) the Arid-Pastoral zone on the far eastern border of Karamoja. Certain variations between these delineations exist at the level of sub-county.

8 Livestock could also be considered physical capital, but are most appropriately described as financial capital in this context due to the role of animals in establishing wealth, status, and resilience to shock.

9 Health is important to human capital largely as it determines or hinders productive labor capability. Poor health is closely linked to vulnerability if a household is unable to afford medical care. Education appears to be increasingly valued by members of the study population, but enrollment remains low and attrition rates are high.

livelihood strategies – boys are essential as shepherds, but girls will eventually bring in bridewealth, thereby increasing a family's wealth and status.<sup>10</sup>

The authority and governance structure in Karamoja occurs at multiple and sometimes contradictory levels. Customary authority is based on a strict patriarchal hierarchy of generation and age-sets. Official authority follows the Ugandan system of local councilors (LCs) at the village, parish, sub-county and district levels. The extent of interaction and recognition between these authority structures differs from one location to the next. National attention to the region has been minimal from colonial times to the present with the exception of regular disarmament campaigns.<sup>11</sup> Infrastructure, social services and economic development lag behind the rest of the country, including the war-torn north central region.

### **Manyattas and Kraals**

The people of Karamoja traditionally split their time and population between villages and mobile cattle camps, widely called 'manyattas' and 'kraals' respectively.<sup>12</sup> Mobility of the kraals allowed access to water and pasture in the dry season, and the kraals historically moved across both district and national borders. Alliances with neighboring groups and close ties between individual families enabled people to return seasonally to the same locations for generations. The host families or communities benefited from fertilizer in the form of dung, animal products, and demand for trade of grains, brew and non-food commodities. They also benefited from the use of Karamojong oxen for plowing their gardens and other heavy tasks.

Elders in Bokora and Matheniko counties explained that the population of manyattas falls by roughly one-third in the dry season as people move with their animals to the kraals.<sup>13</sup> Many people assume that the kraals are inhabited only by men,<sup>14</sup> and in particular by young men often referred to as *karacuna*.<sup>15</sup> The male-to-female ratio is usually higher in kraals than manyattas, but children and women are

10 See Stites et al, "Angering Akuj: Survival and Suffering in Karamoja," Medford, MA: Feinstein International Center, December 2007, p. 53. Available at <http://fic.tufts.edu>

11 See James Bevan, *Crisis in Karamoja: Armed Violence and Failure of Disarmament in Uganda's Most Deprived Region*, Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2008.

12 For the purpose of consistency we used these terms in this report. The correct Ngakaramojong terms are *ere* for manyatta (plural: *ngireria*) and *awii* for kraal (plural: *ngawujoi*).

13 Interview with Matheniko elders, Rupa sub-county, December 2-3, 2006; interview with Bokora elders, Lopei sub-county, December 9-10, 2006.

14 For instance, the belief that the kraals were inhabited exclusively by men was raised in several Tufts team interviews with key informants in Kampala, as well as with the UPDF commander charged with guarding Bokora cattle at the Lopei barracks.

15 The term *karacuna* is widely used by English speakers to refer to male youth and, in particular, to male youth assumed to take part in armed cattle raiding. The word *ngikaracuna* (sing: *ekaracuna*) translates as 'they of the apron' and refers to young men who have not been initiated and thus have the same relative status as women. The Ngakaramojong word has no connotation of warrior. Knighton, op. cit., p.135.

in fact present in traditional kraals at all times.<sup>16</sup> Females have specific labor roles in the kraals, and may remain in the kraals for extended periods with their husbands or male relatives. Other women went to the traditional kraals with their children if they were particularly vulnerable or malnourished because the kraals provided much better access to animal protein than the manyattas in the dry season.<sup>17</sup>

As discussed in detail below, as of April 2009 the traditional kraal system had all but disappeared in most parts of Karamoja due to the combined effects of disarmament, insecurity, animal disease, restrictions on mobility and prolonged drought. Where possible, communities are engaging more heavily in cultivation, but this option exists only in limited areas in the western and southern parts of the region, and will remain highly tenuous if recent drought patterns persist or worsen. Communities are intensifying their collection of and trade in natural resources to cope with repeated failed harvests and the loss of animal assets. Some diversification of livelihood strategies is also occurring, particularly across the traditional gendered divisions of labor. Increased intensification and diversification carry with them increases in security risks. These aspects are discussed in more detail in the section on findings.

### ***Insecurity in Karamoja***

Outside actors and policies have contributed to and exacerbated insecurity in Karamoja for decades, but it is those within Karamoja who bear primary responsibility for the disintegration of the security environment and the deleterious effects on the lives and livelihoods of the population of the region and adjacent areas. Even in periods when the rate of incidents of raids or attacks is low, the threat of insecurity is pervasive and limits the active pursuit of livelihood strategies.

Cattle raiding has gone on for generations among pastoral groups throughout the Karamoja Cluster. Traditionally, and to some extent today, raided cattle were used to redistribute wealth and food, rebuild herds after shocks, acquire bridewealth, and to form alliances across families and communities.<sup>18</sup> Major shifts in power, governments and armies in Uganda, the relatively unimpeded flow of weapons and ammunition from Sudan, periods of repeated and prolonged drought, the spread of livestock diseases – among other significant factors – have influenced and shaped

16 Interviews with Matheniko elders, Rupa sub-county, December 2-3, 2006 and March 11, 2007; Interview with Matheniko girl shepherd, Rupa sub-county, March 11, 2007; Interview with four Matheniko girls, Rupa sub-county March 10, 2007; Interview with 14 Matheniko women, Rupa sub-county, March 11, 2007; Interview with seven Tepeth and Pokot girls, Katikekile sub-county, March 13, 2007; Interview with six Tepeth and Pokot women, Katikekile sub-county, March 13, 2007; Interview with four Tepeth women, Rupa sub-county, December 6, 2006; Interview with five Tepeth women, Rupa sub-county, December 7, 2006; Interview with two Matheniko women and one Matheniko girl, at kraal, Rupa sub-county, December 8, 2006.

17 Interview, Matheniko elders, Rupa sub-county, December 2-3, 2006; interview with Bokora youth, Lopei sub-county, December 10, 2006.

18 Knighton op. cit.; Kennedy Agade Mktutu, "Small arms and light weapons among pastoral groups in the Kenya-Uganda Area," *African Affairs* 106, no. 102, 2006, pp. 47-70.

practices of raiding and have been discussed in depth by a number of authors.<sup>19</sup> Historically and today, raiding has caused tensions between the Karamojong and their neighbors, as well as within Karamoja itself, and these tensions have a direct impact upon livelihood systems.

Controlling the region's insecurity took on political import as the effects of violence spread to other parts of Uganda. Karamojong raids into the neighboring regions of Lango and Acholiland intensified in the mid-1980s, with the estimated cattle population in the combined area falling from 685,000 head of cattle in 1980 to 72,000 in 1989.<sup>20</sup> During the period 1980 to 1989, cattle numbers in Karamoja increased by an estimated 692,000 head of cattle.<sup>21</sup> The failure of the new NRM government and army to stop the Karamojong raids<sup>22</sup> and the following two decades of civil war in the north have resulted in a heightened political imperative for the government to take visible steps to protect the Langi, Acholi and Teso people from Karamojong raids today. The most visible possible policy response on the part of the national government is disarmament.

### ***Disarmament in Karamoja***

The attractiveness of disarmament as a policy solution to the problems in Karamoja and neighboring areas is obvious – without guns, people cannot perpetrate gun violence, therefore the guns should be removed. As realized by donors and other actors, however, a strategy of disarmament alone cannot address key factors that underpin the violence, such as poverty, marginalization, and livelihood loss. The Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP) presents a combined strategy of disarmament and development and reflects a collaborative effort between multiple stakeholders. Since 2006, however, the government has shown a much greater commitment (in terms of both financial and human resources) to the disarmament than to the development component of the KIDDP plan. Most

19 See D. Akabwai and P. Ateyo, "The Scramble for Cattle, Power and Guns in Karamoja," Medford, MA: Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, December 2007; Knighton op. cit.; Mustafa Mirzeler and Crawford Young, "Pastoral Politics in the Northeast Periphery in Uganda: AK-47 as Change Agent," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 38, no. 3 2000, p. 416; Gray op. cit.; Nene Mburu (2001) *The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkana Districts: the Case for Appropriate Disarmament Strategies*, Peace Studies Journal, available at [www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/docs/Guns.pdf](http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/docs/Guns.pdf); Mkutu op. cit.; Walker op. cit.

20 Charles Emunyu Ocan, *Pastoral Crisis in North-Eastern Uganda: The Changing Significance of Cattle Raids*, Kampala, Centre for Basic Research, Working Paper 21, June 1992, p. 23. The 1980 statistics are from the then Ministry of Animal Industry and the 1989 estimates were drawn from district veterinary officers.

21 Ibid, p. 23. To note, however, the total numbers of cattle in the combined districts of northern, eastern and northeastern Uganda decreased by an estimated 356,000 over the decade. Ocan posits that this overall decline is due to animal diseases, trade and internal raids. In our analysis, herds were also likely to be moved across international border for protection.

22 Robert Gersony, *The Anguish of Northern Uganda: Results of a field-based assessment of the civil conflicts in northern Uganda*, submitted to the USAID Mission, Kampala, August 1997, p. 32.

communities in our study population have an impression of the government based almost entirely on their experiences with disarmament.

Disarmament in and of itself is not inherently negative. As detailed in the next section, people throughout Karamoja want peace and they see disarmament as the best way to end the insecurity. The problematic aspects of disarmament we discuss in this report do not, therefore, reflect problems with disarmament per se; rather, they are indicative of a) the way disarmament has been carried out from 2006 to present, and b) the unintended consequences of disarmament.

Disarmament since 2006 has centered on the removal of weapons from communities in Karamoja. Regardless of the initial intent, this has been carried out largely through forceful means with negative consequences for communities as well as for civil-military relations. The aspects discussed in this report reflect the *process of disarmament* as it has been practiced in Karamoja rather than the conceptual goal of disarming those who have illegal guns. This intentional distinction recognizes the difference between disarmament as it has happened to date and disarmament as it could ideally occur.

Regardless of the process involved, the act of disarmament in Karamoja has had what might be called unintended consequences, including increased insecurity for communities; stripping of essential and productive assets; the erosion of traditional mechanisms to cope with vulnerability and food insecurity; shifts in gender-based labor roles, responsibilities and identities; transfer of animal management responsibilities; and the collapse of the dual settlement and migratory systems central to the success of pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods.<sup>23</sup> These consequences may have been unintended but not unpredicted; many occurred as recently as the 2001-2002 disarmament campaign which saw a sharp increase in attacks on communities following disarmament.<sup>24</sup>

In examining the impact of disarmament on livelihoods in Karamoja, we viewed disarmament as one of many potential factors in livelihood change. We did not assume a causal relationship, and only ascribe this when represented as such by the respondents. In most cases, respondents themselves recognize the myriad causes of change in their lives, and many listed conditions such as extended drought as the main factors.

23 Many observers of Ugandan politics would argue that the Government of Uganda is interested in radically transforming Karamoja society through a process of sedentarization and that the consequences listed above are by no means accidental. Parallel national debates lend credence to this argument, including the recurring discussion on forcing Karamojong children into boarding schools and the various enticements to draw people into large (and largely unsustainable) 'resettlement' sites to practice agriculture. Those who believe that the government is intentionally engineering a transformation of Karamoja society through its disarmament campaign will be proven wrong if the government adopts a series of pro-pastoral policies and funds programs to promote livelihood diversification (as opposed to livelihoods eradication) accordingly.

24 The Ugandan government has launched at least nine disarmament operations since 1945. The need for repeated campaigns is indicative of their level of success. Bevan, *Crisis in Karamoja*, p. 54-55.

## **FINDINGS: EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF DISARMAMENT**

It is impossible to examine the impact of disarmament on livelihoods without first discussing the study population's experiences with disarmament itself. We gathered information on information on experiences of disarmament, the impact of disarmament on people's lives (discussed in the next section), and their perceptions of disarmament as a goal in and of itself. Importantly, although experiences of disarmament and its impact vary from one community to the next, *perceptions* of disarmament as a goal were almost entirely uniform.

### ***Experiences of Disarmament***

Human rights abuses associated with disarmament have been documented and analyzed elsewhere,<sup>25</sup> including improvements in important indicators of detention and abuse committed by the UPDF. Our team has witnessed trends that might be contributing to these improvements during our work, including increased political will and better outreach by high-level military officials, local commanders seeking more engagement with local communities, and increased training and dialogue between civil society groups (including international non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, and national bodies) and the UPDF. In addition, we can hypothesize that the expansion of international and national agencies into Karamoja, including those focusing on human rights, may be decreasing the sense of impunity among some rank and file UPDF soldiers.

Respondents in our study population also recognized improvements in the conduct of the UPDF. This recognition can be implicit – as evidenced in comparative statements such as “that was happening at the peak of disarmament” or “that only occurred when cordon and search operations were really violent” – or explicit, as in the following remark by young men in Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto:

*Cordon and search started here in 2001 and it was continuous. It has now been reduced in recent days because there is a new commander at the detach... We think this shift is because of the new commander... [he] has initiated community dialogue and has suggested that the youth be more involved in grazing.<sup>26</sup>*

The overall trend in areas where we have worked to date is one of improvement in terms of abuses perpetrated by the military against community members. That said, community members and in particular male youth had negative experiences to recount in all areas, including ongoing abuses and arbitrary detention. While com-

25 See, inter alia, Human Rights Watch, “Get the gun!” Human rights violations by Uganda's National Army in law enforcement operations in Karamoja region. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2007; Bevan, *Crisis in Karamoja*; and the regular situation reports by UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

26 Focus group discussion with young men (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto District, 2 April 2009. For readers not familiar with Ugandan parlance, “detach” is frequently used as a noun and is synonymous with “military outpost” or “barracks.” The colloquial plural is “detaches.”

mending the UPDF for improvements, we feel it is important to point out that ongoing problems continue so that they can be addressed accordingly.

The two main areas of concern in regard to livelihoods are detention, including in barracks, and physical abuse while in detention. Detention has a negative impact on the livelihoods of household members, particularly women who must provide food for their male relatives when detained in nearby barracks. Men must often take responsibility for multiple women and children when their brothers are in detention. Families often have no information as to the location of their men or the charges against them. Physical abuse in detention ranges from general beatings to more severe punishment such as the practice called “castration,” involving twisting the testicles over a small stick.<sup>27</sup> These incidents undermine civil-military relations and stand to undo the progress that has been made to date in weapons collection and improved security.

A problem specific to Kotido is the absence of amnesty in exchange for turning in weapons. This appears to be in contrast to the policy in Moroto District. A young man in Rengen Sub-County in Kotido explained the obvious disincentive of this arrangement: “If you turn in a gun then both you and your gun are detained!”<sup>28</sup> A woman in Panyangara Sub-County commented that “people are very fearful about turning in guns,” and felt that whether you kept your gun or took it to the barracks, “either way you are in trouble.”<sup>29</sup> We do not have sufficient data to know the extent of this pattern or the source of this policy (i.e., Division Command or local military officials). Either way, the actual or perceived absence of amnesty in Kotido is a clear deterrent to an effective disarmament campaign.

### ***Perceptions of Disarmament***

We gathered data on people’s perceptions of disarmament as a goal in and of itself. This topic came after discussions of experiences with the process of disarmament and the resulting elevated insecurity experienced by most communities (discussed below). We were expecting a degree of spillover from these topics and potential difficulty among respondents in separating their personal experiences from the larger conceptual goal of disarmament. To our surprise, views on disarmament as a goal were overwhelmingly positive. Disarmament was cited as the most important way to ensure peace and security throughout Karamoja. Respondents in 18 out of 19 focus groups in which the topic was discussed spoke strongly in favor of *uniform and complete disarmament* for all people of Karamoja and adjacent areas.<sup>30</sup>

27 This experience was relayed in multiple study sites in Moroto and Kotido as well as in Nakapiripirit in February 2009.

28 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rengen Sub-County, Kotido District, 6 April 2009;

29 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido District, 6 April 2009.

30 11 out of the 19 focus groups were with young men. We did not ask questions about perceptions of disarmament in interviews with children (4 focus groups) or with those in their early teens (2 groups). The topic was not raised in several other cases due to time constraints or interruptions to the interview. We have found similar responses on the overall utility of disarmament in Nakapiripirit as well.

Experiences of gun violence and decades of insecurity motivated the overwhelmingly positive view of disarmament as an end goal. Both men and women in both Kotido and Moroto strongly supported complete disarmament. Respondents were clear in the differences in their views on disarmament as a goal and their personal negative experiences with the process of disarmament. The following quotation from a group of young men in Kotido highlights this nuance:

*The guns have killed us ever since we started keeping them. We go to raid Dodoth and we die. The Dodoth come here and they die and some of us also die. Small quarrels also end up in a gun fight. So we want to give the gun out, but when we go to give it out we are detained and tortured.*<sup>31</sup>

Some respondents considered how disarmament might benefit their economic well-being. A group of young men in Moroto said:

*So let's remove this gun so that we can get other alternative ways of living. The gun is negative and it is a cause of death. We have lost so many relatives because of the gun. It has brought poverty. Instead of sticking with the gun we would be able to develop alternatives. It is bad for the Karamojong to have guns. We have seen this. If there was a government that could remove all the guns from all the people we would even become rich.*<sup>32</sup>

There is a caveat to this perhaps surprising finding on the overwhelmingly positive view of disarmament. Respondents in 13 out of the 18 'pro-disarmament' focus groups stated without prompting that disarmament had to be uniform, complete, and balanced across all tribal and ethnic groups. However, no group visited at any point since 2005 is free from the threat of armed attacks on their homes, livestock, and families. Insecurity has *increased* in most areas in the past three years. This reality has created the perception that the military and the government are *unwilling or unable* to disarm all population groups in a balanced manner. This fuels mistrust towards the institutions of the state and resentment towards neighboring groups that have been "allowed" to retain their weapons.

People are able to separate their negative experiences of disarmament from the end goal of removing weapons, but respondents feel strongly that their current experiences are not in line with achieving this desired outcome. We were told repeatedly that "disarmament is okay, but this is not disarmament, this is something else." This sentiment is particularly strong in Kotido where there is no amnesty for turning in weapons. A man in Panyangara Sub-County expressed this clearly:

*Taking the gun away alone is okay...but when you go with a gun to turn it in you are detained. We were not given this amnesty they are talking about. We still have guns but we cannot take them there because you will be detained. We fear this!*<sup>33</sup>

The continuing problems with disarmament and the lack of protection provided after surrendering guns are leading to a growing sense of desperation and helplessness.

31 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rengen Sub-County, Kotido District, 6 April 2009.

32 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rupa Sub-County, Moroto District, 1 April 2009.

33 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido District, 6 April 2009.

Both men and women report that men have become “like women” because they are unable to protect their families.<sup>34</sup> A number of respondents made a case for being re-armed in the absence of a solution that involves adequate protection. A group of men in Moroto said:

*If they can't [disarm all groups], let's have them give a licensed gun or two to the man-yatta so that we would be able to protect ourselves. At present we are being tortured. We are tortured by the army; we are then tortured by the Jie. What is the long-term solution? We are so desperate.*<sup>35</sup>

This gap between people's reality and the life they desire poses a serious challenge to policymakers. In all likelihood, continuing insecurity coupled with the lack of protection will ultimately lead people to re-arm in order to protect their families and property.

We end this section with the somewhat discouraging thoughts of a district official in Kotido who highlighted the challenges of achieving security through disarmament. To paraphrase, he believes that disarmament's initial successes have reached an impasse. Disarmament is now increasing poverty because people cannot protect their assets after being disarmed. Furthermore, he believes that disarmament will never be complete for several reasons. First, more weapons will continue to flow into Karamoja; second, hard-core criminals will never give up their guns; third, the lack of protection for those who have disarmed will ultimately lead to a loss of faith in the state. People will eventually rearm in order to protect themselves, furthering the flow of weapons. Lastly, he believes that in any situation where a military force is located among the populace for an extended period the military will eventually turn to the same survival strategies as the population – in this case, raiding and selling animals for personal gain.<sup>36</sup> Many respondents firmly believe that this is already occurring. Whether founded or not, these perceptions threaten to undermine the cooperation needed between civilian and military actors to ensure long-term stability and peace in the region.

## **FINDINGS: IMPACTS OF DISARMAMENT**

### ***Impacts of Disarmament on Livelihoods***

To gather data on disarmament and livelihoods we asked respondents to first discuss how their livelihoods had changed over time. We then asked for their views on the reasons behind these changes. (Prior to this point in the interviews we had not mentioned disarmament.) In almost all cases, respondents listed drought,

34 Young men cite 'castration' in detention and resulting impotency as contributing to their status as 'like women.'

35 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rupa Sub-County, Moroto District, 1 April 2009.

36 Interview with a district official, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

disarmament and increased insecurity/raids as the factors of change, though not necessarily in that order. We then examined each of these causes and associated effects in greater depth. This report focuses primarily on the role of disarmament but we stress the connections and mutually reinforcing aspects of these causal factors. The most recent disarmament and the period of extended drought have been concurrent; increased insecurity at the local level is linked to both disarmament and the rise in criminal coping strategies in response to growing hunger and poverty exacerbated by extended drought.

We asked all adult respondents to first list and then rank the reasons they felt livelihood change had occurred. In most interviews in Moroto District, respondents ranked the extended drought as the primary reason for changes in livelihoods, followed by either disarmament or increased insecurity. In contrast, in Kotido District nearly all focus groups ranked disarmament as the primary reason for change.

Many topics could be included in a discussion on livelihoods and disarmament. Here we focus on select priority issues, including livestock management, food security and coping with vulnerability, and peace processes. Security is addressed in the following section. Changing gender and generational roles cut across all of these topics and are discussed throughout.

### **Livestock Management**

The traditional kraal system in Moroto and Kotido Districts has disappeared in the past two to three years. Most remaining animals are now in kraals adjacent to UPDF barracks. The loss of the traditional kraals is due to a variety of factors with differentiations from one area to the next. For example, the Matheniko lost access to their traditional kraals in the grazing area of Nakonyen<sup>37</sup> in Katikekile Sub-County in late 2008–early 2009 due to large raids by the Pokot. Matheniko respondents explained that they were unable to protect their animals after disarmament and were easy targets when the Pokot turned against them. Kraals in other areas such as Rupa Sub-County and the Bokora sub-counties in western Moroto were disbanded because of inadequate security and continuous raids.

Animals in Kotido have also moved into kraals at barracks due to continued insecurity. Respondents in Kotido reported receiving pressure from the military to put their animals into kraals. This factor was not raised by respondents in Moroto, but a district official explained that keeping substantial numbers of animals outside of kraals at barracks raises suspicions of gun ownership. He said that the UPDF will ask, “How can you keep these animals without protection?” and will then target that community for cordon and search activities. This official estimated that, in part because of this underlying pressure, 80–90% of animals in Moroto are currently housed in kraals at barracks.<sup>38</sup>

37 The Nakonyen grazing area by the Omaniman River has traditionally been home to large kraals of mixed groups of Pokot, Tepeth, Matheniko, Pian and some sections of Bokora. The presence of these mixed kraals – called *arigan* – are a sign of peace between these groups. At present, the Tepeth and Pokot are reported to still have animals in kraals at Nakonyen.

38 Interview with district official, Moroto, April 1, 2009.

Livestock owners lose much of their decision-making power once their animals are in kraals at barracks. This loss of decision-making is the most apparent in regard to animal mobility. Mobility is a central element of pastoral livelihoods and is particularly important in dry periods or droughts. Livestock owners and shepherds normally consider multiple factors in animal migrations, including security, reports of disease, access to different types of pasture and the location of allies. A group of young men explained: “We can no longer herd our animals according to our system. It is now a foreigner who is herding our animals.”<sup>39</sup>

Once animals are at the barracks, the soldiers decide if and when kraals will move to a new area. Shepherds are involved in day-to-day grazing decisions, but in most areas must receive clearance from soldiers before taking their animals to a given area. The range of daily movement is constrained by the release and return times set by each barracks.<sup>40</sup> Many shepherds report that the animals do not have sufficient grazing time in this limited window, sometimes as little as a few hours. Problems with grazing are compounded by the large number of animals originating from a given barracks and the poor quality of grass due to several years of drought.

Shifting decision-making power to the military has repercussions for relations with communities. A group of young men in Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido expressed clearly the frustrations voiced by many:

*Herding is shared with the army, but the army makes the decisions about where to be. Hopeless decisions that have made us lose a lot of the animals! We tell them “let’s go here” and they say, “no, we will stay.” We tell them “it is time to move, this grass is finished,” and they say “no it is not.” For instance, we have already been here for longer than we would be in a normal dry season based on the availability of grass. During the dry season we would not stay in one place until it is bare like this.*<sup>41</sup>

This is a clear example of the military and the shepherds prioritizing different aspects in decision-making, but lack of communication and understanding creates tensions. In turn, this leads to mistrust between the military and community members, especially the young men whose roles have been subsumed by the soldiers.

There are positive examples of the UPDF working to address communities’ concerns about access to natural resources. A kraal in Kacheri, for instance, had moved a few days prior to our arrival. Respondents considered the new location an improvement in terms of both natural resources and security. In many cases, however, even these adjusted locations are not the appropriate sites for grazing at the height of the dry season or in intense drought, and are not meant to house large

39 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009

40 Although some community members felt that soldiers were intentionally limiting grazing hours to punish or create hardship for communities, district official in Moroto explained that the delay in releasing animals in the morning was likely due to a variety of factors, including the mandatory roll call and military inspection of the soldiers each morning. Any overnight security incident will likely also result in a delay in release the following morning. Interview with district official, Moroto, April 1, 2009.

41 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009.

numbers of animals for extended periods.<sup>42</sup> Other respondents at the kraal in Kacheri felt that the move to the new location was ‘too little, too late’ and pointed out that their animals were already dying in large numbers due to poor grazing and disease.

The most positive example of innovative and cooperative action by the UPDF as witnessed by the Tufts team was found in western Bokora. Commander Edward Kaddu oversaw the movement of kraals that had been housed at multiple sites – including Lokopo, Lopei, and Matany – to Koculut Dam, a traditional grazing area that had been off-limits for many years due to insecurity.<sup>43</sup> The views of the young men and boys at Koculut regarding the military are marked in contrast to those at other locations:

*All the kraals from Lorenowra, Lopei, Matany and Lokopo have come here. They have left those barracks behind and have come to our friend Major Kaddu... We are now happy that we have been brought to Koculut where the army is taking care of our animals day and night. At these earlier detaches there was not adequate pasture and there was not enough protection. We were just neglected.*<sup>44</sup>

Both soldiers and shepherds voiced some problems and complaints, but overall the move to Koculut Dam should be seen as a positive example of the UPDF working with communities in support of their livelihood systems.

Shepherds and livestock owners reported that animal health was a serious problem in the kraals at barracks. The density of animals contributes to the spread of disease, and animals are more susceptible to disease after multiple seasons of poor grazing. The permanent nature of the stock pens is also problematic, as animals are penned in muddy areas for extended periods.<sup>45</sup> Shepherds and livestock owners complained of high death rates in birthing periods, as newborn animals are frequently inadvertently trampled in the crowded kraal.

### **Food Security and Coping Mechanisms**

One of the most important factors in food security in Karamoja is the viability,

42 The loss of access to these traditional sites is due to a variety of factors and the inclusion of the military in livestock management is only one such aspect.

43 Institute of Policy Research and Analysis (IPRA), *Agro-pastoral Livelihood in the Greater Horn of Africa: Assessment of the Food Security in Karamoja*, a report funded by the World Food Programme Kampala, Uganda, IPRA, January 2006, p. 13.

44 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Koculut Dam, Lokopo Sub-County, Moroto, 4 April 2009. To note, Major Kaddu was also extremely helpful to our team and assisted us in gaining access to Koculut in both February and April. He also insisted that his men move out of earshot of our team during interviews, which is a first in the authors’ experience and improves the quality of the information gathered.

45 For more information on conditions and diseases at specific kraals, see the unpublished report available from the Office of the District Veterinary Officer, “Protected Kraal Livestock Assessment Report Moroto District,” October 2008. The DVO in Kotido said he was unable to carry out a similar study due to lack of transport and facilitation.

size and management of animal herds.<sup>46</sup> The traditional dual system of manyattas and kraals helped to smooth food consumption among the human population and across the seasons.<sup>47</sup> Rotation to different kraals provided livestock with access to fresh pasture and water which extended the period of milk production and the presence of dairy products in the human diet. Today the dual kraal-manyatta system has been disrupted by the shift to kraals at barracks. People have less regular and reliable access to their animals, their animals are generally weaker and more susceptible to disease, and decision-making on herd management – with implications for managing food security – has been lost. Furthermore, the lack of livestock rotation contributes to overgrazing and erosion, leading to longer-term ecological problems for communities.<sup>48</sup>

### **Exploitation of Natural Resources**

The extended drought is the main factor in food insecurity in Karamoja. A greater reliance on markets in the absence of cultivation has worsened terms of trade for barter, increased exposure to risk in the bush or on the roads, and extended the hours per day spent by individuals – mostly women – seeking subsistence for their families.

Impoverishment has increased reliance on natural resource exploitation. The worsening terms of trade mean that more resources must be collected to generate the same amount of cash or food in kind.<sup>49</sup> (Barter is most common when exchanging firewood for residue, or *adakai*, the cereal dregs left after making traditional beer, which is commonly consumed by people of all ages.<sup>50</sup>) Most of the additional time burden falls on women, but men in the study population also reported engaging in previously strictly female activities such as carrying firewood.

Disarmament has increased risks associated with foraging for wild foods and other natural resources. People perceive their protection threats to have increased with the removal of the weapons, and in particular in the peripheral areas where women and children collect natural resources. Women explained:

*In the past our men were armed and there was no problem in getting these resources because the others knew that our men were armed. This led to better security.*<sup>51</sup>

46 Although animal ownership is individual, the presence of healthy animals within a community allows for consumption-smoothing for community members beyond the immediate household that owns the animals.

47 Interview with key informant #1, April 24, 2007. The ways in which the dual system helps to smooth food security among inhabitants is discussed in more detail later in this section.

48 See the discussion in Robert Walker, *Anti-pastoralism and the growth of poverty and insecurity in Karamoja: Disarmament and Development Dilemmas: A Report for DFID East Africa* (unpublished), March 2002, on the effects of permanent water points – designed to stop migration – on overgrazing.

49 For example, in most locations visited, women report that a bundle of firewood that would have sold for 1000 US\$ a year ago is today selling for 200-300 US\$.

50 The prevalence of residue in the diet is discussed more fully in Stites et al, “Angering Akujũ.” Available at <http://fic.tufts.edu>

51 Focus group discussion with women (ES), Rupa Sub-County, Moroto, 1 April 2009.

Women complain that they are facing sharply increased risks when they venture into the bush, but stress that they have no choice but to collect these resources, as they are surviving off sale or barter of firewood and consumption of wild greens.

*Insecurity in the bush is escalating! It is terrible! But it all the same – here we will die of hunger; there [in the bush] we will die of insecurity. So we just have to go looking for food.*<sup>52</sup>

The collapse of the ability of men to protect their families has shifted risks towards women and children who are the most heavily engaged in natural resource exploitation. The negative environmental impacts of increased exploitation are extreme, especially around trading centers. These ecological impacts impact livelihoods over time due to desertification, erosion, and loss of grazing environments.

### **Managing Vulnerability**

Regular and extended periods of drought are common in Karamoja, and households, communities and entire ethnic groups have developed ways of managing these risks over time. Multiple factors have disrupted these systems in recent years, resulting in shifts in the nature of traditional coping strategies.<sup>53</sup> Disarmament has emerged as one factor with specific impacts on local systems for managing vulnerability. We have already discussed how shepherds and livestock owners used herd management to avoid potential threats, including through mobility and splitting herds. Here we examine three examples of the effects of disarmament on household, community, and group mechanisms to manage vulnerability to food insecurity.

1) *Household Level:* The sale of animals is a traditional means of coping with shock at the household level. A goat or cow could be sold or bartered for grain or sold for cash for an emergency medical expense. (Animals might also be sold to acquire cash for recurring expenses such as school fees.) Men controlled the sale of animals, but in times of hunger at the manyatta a woman could send a request to her husband requesting that he sell an animal to buy the family food.<sup>54</sup> Animal sales would be most common in the dry season or in drought periods, and ideally kept to a minimum through careful management of a household's granaries.

Households in the study population have greater difficulty selling animals easily and quickly now that herds are housed at barracks. The exact details vary from one barracks to the next, but in most cases livestock owners must receive permis-

52 Focus group discussion with women (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

53 For a specific discussion on shifts in out-migration as a coping strategy, see Stites et al., "Out-migration, Return, and Resettlement in Karamoja, Uganda: The case of Kobulin, Bokora, County," Medford, MA: Feinstein International Center, June 2007. Available at <http://fic.tufts.edu>

54 In earlier field trips, male youth among the Matheniko said that in extreme hunger a woman could sell a goat without her husband's permission if she was unable to contact her husband. She would then send a message explaining her actions and he would understand. Focus group discussion with male youth (ES), Rupa Sub-County, December 3, 2006.

sion from the soldiers before removing an animal from the herd for sale. In many cases, men reported that they have to give a reason for selling their animals, and people reported delays in some areas depending on the type of reason provided. The following quotations provide a few examples of the nature of interactions with the military as explained by respondents:

*To sell an animal you get a letter from the LC1 [village level local councilor] and take it to the soldiers, but they take a long time in their decision and question you in the sale. 'Why do you want to sell? Is it because you want to buy a gun or bullets?' They only release the animal later. . . . Forceful disarmament has set us against the soldiers, so much so that these days if you want to sell a cow they suspect you are selling it to buy bullets or guns.<sup>55</sup>*

In some locations requests to sell animals due to hunger were approved without a problem, but respondents in many areas reported delays. The following response comes from Rupa Sub-County in Moroto:

*You cannot mention hunger. If you say that you want to sell an animal for hunger they dodge you and tell you to wait. So we have to create credible stories, like that the 'old man wants to perform a ceremony for his deceased wife and this is why we want to sell an animal.' Or we say that someone at home is very sick and that we need money to get medicine. We have to do this to show the 'owners' who are now herding the animals [i.e., the UPDF] why we are selling the animals. All of the animals have been registered and they do not want to remove these from the list unless you make it a very urgent story.<sup>56</sup>*

The perception of the soldiers as the “new owners” of the animals came up throughout our field work, as did the notion that the military is benefiting financially from the current arrangement. Both of these themes are captured in the following remark from Panyangara Sub-County:

*They refuse to let you sell unless you pay the commander. He will then let you release your animals. They say this is to compensate the soldiers who have been grazing the animals.<sup>57</sup>*

As illustrated by some of the above quotations, the nature of this transaction contributes to mistrust between both sides. From a food security perspective, hesitation in approaching the soldiers combined with the forfeiture of the ability to sell with ease will affect how efficiently households are able to cope with vulnerability.

Households also cope with food security by diversifying livelihood roles. Men in the study population reported (and were witnessed) engaging more heavily in traditionally female tasks such as cultivation (all phases) and collection of natural

55 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009.

56 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rupa Sub-County, Moroto, 1 April 2009.

57 Focus group discussion with young men (ES), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

resources, including carrying resources into town.<sup>58</sup> UPDF policies restricting mobility in Panyangara Sub-County have limited diversification in this regard. This, in turn, affects how households cope with drought-induced food insecurity. Both men and women in the study population in Panyangara reported that men are harassed and often detained if they are found in the bush collecting natural resources or even in fields not immediately adjacent to the village. A group of young men explained the situation:

*Firewood, charcoal, grass – when we try to go collect these things we are chased away by the army, and then even the women who remain are harassed – ‘Where is your husband? Does he have a gun? Did he escort you here? Is he hiding?’<sup>59</sup>*

This information was corroborated by a second group of young men interviewed separately:

*Only women are allowed to burn charcoal. If the soldiers find any man in the bush they suspect you and punish you. In the bad years past, men would have burned charcoal, cut grass and even cultivated the gardens near the forest. But now we are not allowed. Even if they find you planting with oxen alongside your wife you will be detained and your wife will be just left in the fields.<sup>60</sup>*

When asked if they were selling charcoal in the trading center, young women in Panyangara explained that they were not burning charcoal on a large scale because the men were not able to assist them in felling the large trees. “We would go with our husbands but the soldiers are in waiting and then the men get detained.”<sup>61</sup> Respondents in Panyangara believe that these restrictions on their survival strategies are entirely intentional and designed to punish the Jie for attacks on UPDF personnel.

2) *Community level:* The traditional dual settlement system of manyattas and kraals allowed for managing risk for both animals and humans. Livestock herds rotated throughout the dry season or were split between different locations. Community members moved back and forth from the manyattas to the kraals to deliver food and information and relieve each other of duties, but also to access animal protein. Going to the kraals was particularly important for those who were the most vulnerable to food insecurity, including young children (especially orphans) and pregnant and nursing women. Elders at a given manyatta would call a meeting (*ekokwa*) to identify the most vulnerable who should be sent to the kraal. A woman in Kotido explained:

58 The extent of these shifts in gender roles varies from one location to the next. Men reported carrying firewood to town in some areas but were shocked at the question in others.

59 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

60 Focus group discussion with young men (ES), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

61 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

*We would always go the kraals – with our children. We went there for food because once the cows go far away our little ones must be near to the milk!*<sup>62</sup>

The shift to a system of kraals at the barracks has greatly reduced regular access to the kraals by those who are food-insecure. Few community members, regardless of gender, sleep at the kraals at barracks that are in populated areas. In instances where kraals are more remote, such as Koculut Dam in Bokora and kraals in Kacheri in western Kotido, women and children are reportedly present only for brief periods while dropping off or picking up food.<sup>63</sup> Community members in multiple locations reported that they no longer had the option of sending the weak to the kraals to access animal protein. As young men in Nadunget Sub-County explained:

*Now there is no traditional kraal [for us] in all of Matheniko. This kraal used to help us because we could send the weak people there. Some women have died of hunger in the manyatta. These are the types of people we used to take to survive at the kraals, as there was plenty of milk and wild fruits and food at the kraal.*<sup>64</sup>

In several locations women stressed that the soldiers did not allow women in the kraals, and would try to prevent them from staying if they did arrive. The concern on the part of the UPDF is understandable: the kraals at the barracks are part of military establishments, and there are always risks in military facilities, especially those sites located in insecure areas. From a food security perspective, however, the loss of access to the kraals by women and children has removed an important means of coping with vulnerability.

3) *Group Level:* Population groups also have established means of addressing food insecurity, such as traditional alliances allowing access to shared grazing grounds and water sources. Insecurity, deterioration of relations due to raiding, policies preventing cross-border movement, and limitations on mobility as part of disarmament all stand as potential obstacles to these group-level mechanisms.

The long-standing alliance between the Jie of Kotido and the Nyangia of Kaabong helped the Jie to manage vulnerability in lean years. The Nyangia, who live in the hills of Karenga Sub-County in Kaabong, are a minority group engaged primarily in agriculture<sup>65</sup> and are subject to frequent attacks by the Dodoth. The Jie traded animal products to the Nyangia and provided them protection from the Dodoth.<sup>66</sup> In turn, the Jie received food from the Nyangia. Jie would traditionally

62 Focus group discussion with women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

63 At Koculut Dam, for instance, where Save the Children in Uganda estimates there to be 700 men and boys, there were no women and children visible on the day we visited. The shepherds reported that females usually only come to drop off or pick up food.

64 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

65 Walker, *Anti-pastoralism*, p. 8.

66 Interview with key informant #1, June 17, 2006.

cross to Karenga to trade or to work on Nyangia farms in exchange for food. Young women in Kotido described the interaction between the two groups:

*The Nyangia are our traditional friends – like our clan. We have no problems with them, and we intermarry back and forth with them. This is why at times if they have food or money we just go there to look for some assistance.*<sup>67</sup>

Jie respondents in Kacheri Sub-County admit that traveling to visit the Nyangia has always been risky. People usually moved through Kaabong in large armed groups. Today the UPDF has placed strict limitations on the movement of Jie outside of their home areas. According to respondents in the study population, to cross into Kaabong a man must get a movement permit from his LC and then present this permit to the UPDF before crossing the border. Young men in Kacheri Sub-County explained the process:

*We tried to cross over to our friends at Karenga – the Nyangia, who are like our brothers – but we have to get a letter from the LC1 and then get it stamped by the army to go to Nyangia. We have to show this letter at the army barracks at Karenga. If they find that this letter has no stamp from the army we are detained. They suspect that we are going to raid. . . . Our place of survival would have been with the Nyangia in Karenga, but this is now a no-go zone without a stamped letter.*<sup>68</sup>

The young men distrust the soldiers and are reluctant to go through the process of getting the required permit to move into Kaabong. But the severe drought, deterioration in animal health due to grazing restrictions, and delays in selling animals makes the alliance with the Nyangia all the more important as a coping strategy. The pressure falls to women – who don't require movement permits – to make the journey to the Nyangia alone. A group of young women described the situation:

*It is very insecure to get there, but it has always been this way. But they have much better food there than here. Even though it has always been insecure we used to go with our men who had guns which made us much safer. . . . Women still go as it is our survival strategy. Some women are even there right now, and have not yet come back. It takes up to 24 hours to walk there. If you have a friend you might stay there a while, otherwise only 2-3 days. We usually go in a group, though sometimes alone or just in a pair if you feel hunger. Either way it is unsafe.*<sup>69</sup>

Respondents noted that the Dodoth often wait to attack people until after they have left Nyangia territory and are heavily loaded with food. As discussed in more detail below, women traveling through Kaabong also face risk of sexual assault.

67 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

68 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

69 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

## **Peace Processes**

Hostile or peaceful relations among groups in Karamoja have implications for livelihoods as well as security of local communities. Communities at peace are able to access natural resources, engage in regular commerce, and move freely across each other's territories. Joint kraals in traditional grazing areas allow for shared access to scarce dry season water sources (such as the Omaniman River in Katikekile Sub-County in Moroto) and improve security against external attack.

Relations between communities – even those with long-standing allegiances or traditional enemies – fluctuate regularly. Leaders of two groups will negotiate a peace that lasts for months or even years. According to informants, such agreements are usually broken bit by bit through a process of repeated small-scale thefts. These thefts are usually assumed to be conducted by young men without the sanction of their elders. Eventually one group will launch a retaliatory strike and larger-scale raiding begins, leading to a collapse of the peace agreement.

Peace agreements and their eventual demise may be between entire ethnic groups or between sub-groups.<sup>70</sup> International and national actors are occasionally involved in brokering peace agreements, but most peace deals are made at the local level and on the basis of community outreach and dialogue.

The removal of guns from Karamoja will ideally lead to fewer attacks between groups and improved overall relations. This has reportedly occurred in some areas, such as between the long-standing enemies the Pian of Namalu and the Pokot of Karita. In this instance, sub-county officials ascribe this peace to improved security brought by disarmament.<sup>71</sup> In Kotido, however, respondents spoke of two incidents in which the policies of disarmament had interfered with local peace processes that would allow for shared access to important natural resources. According to one group of men:

*The Bokora organized with Jie in Panyangara to meet to talk peace in January, but the division commander in Moroto warned the Jie, 'If you go to that meeting you will be gunned down with helicopters.'<sup>72</sup>*

In the same interview it was reported that the Jie of Kacheri had planned a peace meeting in Kotido in December. The Jie believed that the Dodoth elders had allegedly been prevented from crossing into Kotido by the military. Field work in Kaabong in May, however, indicated that the Dodoth leaders had lacked funds and facilitation to make the journey.

It is impossible to verify these accounts and in particular the role of the military in preventing these encounters. Ultimately, however, the *belief* on the part of the

70 For instance, the Magos Matheniko may view the Lotome Bokora as their enemy while the Loputuk Matheniko sees the Lotome Bokora as their ally. This may have no bearing on the relations between the Loputuk and the Magos Matheniko.

71 Interview with Honorable Ojao Joshua, LC III Chairman, Namalu, Nakapiripirit, 12 May 2009. The existence of this peace was confirmed by local Pian communities.

72 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009.

communities that the UPDF is actively preventing peace agreements is as important as the factual details, as this belief undermines the relations between the military and the local communities. This civil-military trust is as critical to long-term stability in Kotido as is peace between the Jie and neighboring groups.

### ***Impacts of Disarmament on Security***

Insecurity for rural communities in Karamoja has increased unequivocally over the past three years.<sup>73</sup> The causes of this increase are multiple and interlinked and it is impossible to ascribe complete causality to any one facet. Respondents themselves are quick to point out these connections when discussing the increased insecurity in and around their homes and grazing areas.

Many people throughout Karamoja cite “hunger” as the primary factor behind increased insecurity. Respondents explain that desperation is pushing a growing number of people into criminal behavior, and that most incidents of theft are driven by the perpetrators’ need to support their own families. In many areas attacks are occurring on locations where there is no livestock – such as inside the manyattas or on women collecting natural resources in the bush. Such incidents were extremely rare in the past because animals were the main item of value for both commercial gain and to acquire social and political status. The increased targeting of non-animal assets indicates the role of basic survival as a motivating factor in crime. While increased hunger and poverty is largely due to the prolonged drought, as discussed above the management of food insecurity and the traditional ways of handling vulnerability have been heavily influenced by the policies of disarmament.

The other main factor behind increased insecurity is the loss of people’s defensive capacities as a result of disarmament coupled with the dearth of protection provided by the state. Animals have been moved to kraals at barracks where there is a degree of security, but protection for the manyattas is non-existent and protection in grazing areas (for people and animals) ranges from minimal to barely adequate with a few exceptions, such as the area around Koculut Dam.<sup>74</sup> People face increased security threats in nearly all areas of their lives – at their homes, in the bush, and at the grazing areas. The rise in crime has resulted in asset-stripping of productive and essential assets, including livestock, household items, relief food and farming implements.

73 This may come as a surprise to those in the international and national humanitarian community, as the message from UN, donor and government sources is that security has drastically improved. It is true that security on the roads has greatly increased—i.e., our security as the readers and writers of this report. As in all conflict situations, however, it is important to disaggregate analysis of security. Our data collected from December 2006 until May 2009 shows an overall downward trend in security for the communities.

74 Shepherds at Koculut Dam felt more secure while herding their animals than those at most other places, and attributed this to the constant presence of the soldiers who were with them in the grazing areas. Some security incidents were continuing, and they felt that this was because the soldiers were “too few”—in contrast to other areas where these attacks were blamed on soldiers “loitering or not trying to protect us.” The shepherds at Koculut also appreciated that the kraal and settlement had been moved south along the dam from Lonene to Lokorongole, which was less prone to Jie attacks. Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Koculut Dam, Bokora, 4 April 2009.

On a positive note, security has improved along roadways and the loss of traditional kraals has removed the risk of large raids and associated high mortality at these locations. If roads stay safe local purchasers will benefit from a rise in trade, which should bring lower prices for basic goods and a diversified selection of food and non-food commodities. Ideally economic development will increase and international and national partners will continue to implement programs in the region.

The rest of this section examines changes in insecurity in the kraals and grazing areas, in the manyattas, and the increase in gender-based violence.<sup>75</sup>

### **Insecurity at Kraals and Grazing Areas**

Perceptions of security at the kraals at barracks varied by location within the study population. Overall most discussion groups admitted that while there were still occasional security incidents at the kraals at barracks, the threat of large raids had declined compared to when the animals were housed in the traditional kraals. The current problems are on a smaller scale, as described by a group of young men in Lokopo Sub-County:

*There are no more raids. The UPDF has done a very good job, because you will never see a big [group of enemies] going to raid like you used to do. What is happening is an increase of desperate thieves moving up and down. They can be Bokora, Matheniko, Jie, etc. They will get finished eventually. We are happy that there are no more big raids, just cattle thefts.<sup>76</sup>*

The pattern of smaller-scale thefts replacing large raids was widespread, and is likely linked to the overall decrease in the availability and use of weapons at the community level.<sup>77</sup>

Threats to human life have also decreased with the end of large-scale raids on kraals. When asked about security threats in the past as compared to today, women at two separate locations gave similar depictions of the indiscriminate violence occurring in the past during raids on kraals. One woman explained:

*In a massive raid, women faced killing. Children would be thrown into the fires. This was so that they could not multiply or grow up. There is nowhere to hide at a kraal in a massive raid. They have surrounded you so there is nowhere to hide or escape.<sup>78</sup>*

Many people reported improved animal protection in the new kraals as compared to the past, but this response was not consistent across the study population,

<sup>75</sup> Insecurity in the bush – a major problem for those collecting natural resources – was touched on in an earlier section.

<sup>76</sup> Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Lokopo Sub-County, Moroto, 4 April 2009.

<sup>77</sup> For more information on the shift from large-scale raids to smaller thefts see Stites et al, *Angering Akuj*, 2007, Ch IX.

<sup>78</sup> Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009.

with some respondents complaining that their animals still faced extremely high threats when housed in the kraals at barracks.

Perceptions about security in the grazing areas were more uniform than in regard to security in the kraals. Overall, respondents felt that the security of their animals when grazing had dramatically worsened since the start of disarmament. They blamed this primarily on the soldiers who are now involved in grazing animals. The view of a group of shepherds in Kacheri Sub-County is indicative of wider sentiments:

*They [soldiers] intend to neglect you in helping to protect the animals. They sit under trees in the shade—you are alone with the animals and when the enemies come they even abduct shepherds. These soldiers have no value as protectors.*<sup>79</sup>

The question of the intention of soldiers in the failure to protect also came up repeatedly in regard to recovering (or ‘tracking’) animals after theft. Communities consider animals in the kraals at barracks to be under military protection, and respondents are extremely dissatisfied with efforts to recover animals after attacks on these kraals. Interviewees in some locations complained that their animals were being “finished” by virtue of being located at the barracks. The sentiment expressed by a group of young men in Nadunget Sub-County was repeated at multiple study sites:

*The soldiers are not doing a good job at protecting the cows. They are responsible for the cows but they do not recover them when they are raided. They have never successfully tracked an animal.*<sup>80</sup>

The value of livestock within these communities makes the livelihood impact obvious, but the failure of the UPDF to recover stolen animals is also a source of anger and resentment. As evident in the following remarks, some people in the study population are frustrated that the military is in their midst and, while having removed people’s defensive capacity, have not replaced this with effective protection of their livestock.

*The soldiers see our animals being stolen and we ask them why they don’t follow them. They say, “That is not our role.” We say, “But you are looking for guns! Those are the guns that just stole our animals! Go and get them!”*

*... The barracks near us has never returned any animals. They just stand there.*<sup>81</sup>

79 Focus group discussion with boys (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009. Original emphasis in interview.

80 Focus group discussion with young men, second group (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

81 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Rengen Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

An anecdote from Nadunget Sub-County in Moroto is illustrative of some of the issues at play. While visiting a village in a populated area, we heard of a recent daytime attack by Pokot warriors on a borehole where there were many animals, herders and some soldiers present, two of whom were killed. Respondents stressed the ferocity and speed of the attack, making sure we understood that it happened in the exact location where we were sitting between several large manyattas. According to a group of young men from the community:

*When the enemies came last month we would all have been finished [ie, killed] very quickly if we hadn't grabbed the guns from the soldiers and fought and chased the enemy. We returned the guns to the barracks later that night.*

*Were you punished for having taken the guns from the soldiers?  
No, the soldiers did not punish us; they were happy for the work we had done and surprised that we had returned the guns.<sup>82</sup>*

This account demonstrates that young men have little faith in the soldiers to effectively protect people (including their own men) or property, and that the young men remain willing to take measures into their own hands in desperate circumstances. The reported reaction of the soldiers when the men returned the guns indicates the soldiers' recognition of the superior ability of the men to track the animals, as well as the distrust existing towards the male youth of these communities in regard to weapons.

### **Insecurity at the Manyattas**

Karamoja has been insecure for decades, with attacks or the threat of attacks a serious hindrance to people's livelihoods. Settlements are heavily fortified with a series of fences and thorns blocking entrances. Only in the past few years have these barricades proven inadequate, and enemies now penetrate the manyattas with regularity.<sup>83</sup> People in all locations describe attackers armed "with torches" [flashlights] and a few guns. According to young men in Kotido:

*Insecurity has also invaded our homes. When the enemy comes there is an alarm but they find you anyway. They come to raid and loot – chickens, saucepans, relief food... They come inside over the fence. If a woman sounds an alarm she will become the target and will be killed. They are armed with guns and torches... These things did not happen in the past.<sup>84</sup>*

82 Focus group discussion with young men, first group (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

83 For example, in collecting data on insecurity in late 2006 and early 2007 the Tufts team never heard reports of attacks inside manyattas. By the middle of 2008 all communities visited were reporting regular attacks inside their homes, and all reported that this was a recent development.

84 Focus group discussion with young men (ES), Panyangara Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009.

Respondents cite the removal of guns as the direct cause of this development and they blame the “unevenness” of disarmament for the increased attacks on their homes.

Although national and international officials often cite the improved security conditions in Karamoja, at least some district officials are highly aware of the ongoing problems faced by their constituents. A district official in Kotido had this blunt response when asked about the security situation in his district:

*Near to towns it is fair, but it is hell in the outlying areas. People are still terrorized by those who have guns. The kraals are being attacked daily. Things are still pretty bad in the communities, especially if animals [as targets] are present.<sup>85</sup>*

In some areas, such as one location in Rupa, the security situation is so poor that women carry all their essential household assets to a nearby barracks each night, including chickens, saucepans and jerrycans. (On a positive note, this indicates a trusting relationship between the communities and this particular barracks.) There are obvious negative implications in this strategy in terms of the time burden and protection risks for women and children who carry these items back and forth to the barracks late at night and before dawn.

The UPDF did not provide protection to communities in any location we visited. A group of young women in Kotido expressed their frustration at the continued insecurity even with many barracks in their area:

*There are five barracks in our vicinity, but we still have no protection. The enemies come in through here—right in the middle of these five barracks. We don't understand why we are not protected. Are the soldiers happy that we are being attacked? Do they want us to be finished?<sup>86</sup>*

Young women in Moroto expressed a similar sentiment when asked if a new barracks near to their village had improved security:

*There is no difference! In fact recently someone was just abducted from right near here. When we first heard that the barracks was coming we were very happy because we thought security would improve. But now at times we think it is the army that is deceiving us. We don't trust them. There is no protection, and animals are raided from their hands!<sup>87</sup>*

The frequency of attacks within homes represents a major protection gap in Karamoja and indicates decreasing human security. The loss of assets in these attacks has important livelihood implications for targeted households and communities. Respondents across the study population report losing relief food, cooking utensils and farming implements. In several locations people had lost plows or hoes, and

85 Interview with district official, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

86 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

87 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Rupa Sub-County, Moroto, 1 April 2009.

those who had oxen had serious misgivings about their ability to protect these animals in or near their homes.<sup>88</sup>

### **Gender-based Violence**

Respondents reported increases in incidents of gender-based violence against women and girls as part of the overall rise in insecurity. The nature and prevalence of gender-based violence varies from one area to the next. In Moroto, rape and sexual assault occur primarily when women go to the bush in search of natural resources. Enemies frequently “undress” women found in the bush and steal their clothes and beads. In some but not all cases, being undressed is followed by rape. A group of women in Moroto explained:

*When you are attacked in the bush they take your clothes, your beads, your sheets – anything of value. You might also be raped and even get ‘slim’ [HIV/AIDS]. Rape is not that common unless it is very bad person.<sup>89</sup>*

Data from fieldwork in February 2009 included one report of gang-rape of two young women during an attack in a manyatta in Bokora.<sup>90</sup> Although to date most incidents of gender-based violence from our study sites have occurred in the bush or remote areas, the rise in attacks upon homes creates conditions that could lead to increased gender-based violence in these instances.

Rape was reported much less frequently by the study population in Kotido than in Moroto with the exception of Kacheri Sub-County. Women in Kacheri say rape is a problem when passing through Kaabong to visit the Nyangia. Although the Jie have had hostile relations with the Dodoth for many years, rape is a recent development:

*Rape we have not witnessed here [in this village]... People on their way to Nyangia are more likely to be raped. When they are intercepted the women are undressed and raped and the husband is led away and killed. The donkeys and all the food are stolen.<sup>91</sup>*

Respondents did not report any incidents of gender-based violence committed against men or boys by enemies. The abuse described as “castration” by some who had been detained by the UPDF should, however, be seen as gender-based violence intentionally designed to emasculate and humiliate young men.

88 Focus group discussion with young men (DA), Nadunget Sub-County, 3 April 2009.

89 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

90 Interview with elderly woman, Lotome Sub-County, Moroto, 23 February 2009. Her two granddaughters were pulled from the hut and gang-raped during an attack on their manyatta. Work by the Tufts team in Acholi in 2005 and 2006 also found an increase in rape as committed by Karamojong. Karamojong raiders have brought insecurity to the Acholi, Lango and Teso regions for many years, with massive theft of livestock taking place in the mid to late 1980s. Acholi women reported, however, that only very recently had rape become a problem. Gang rapes were reported as being common.

91 Focus group discussion with young women (ES), Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 8 April 2009.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

This section includes additional analysis of the findings presented above with particular emphasis on the implications for shifting gender and generational roles, relations and responsibilities. Throughout this discussion we also examine the nature of the existing protection gap in Karamoja.

### **Women's Livelihoods and Protection Gaps**

The data from the study population clearly indicate a shift in livelihood roles and responsibilities due to multiple factors including disarmament. These livelihood shifts often include a change in protection threats as well as who assumes the burden of risk within a community or household. In particular, we are seeing an increase in livelihoods-related protection threats for women.

The responsibility for sustaining the household is shifting away from livestock – traditionally the domain of men – and towards women and women's livelihood roles. Women are supporting their households through increased exploitation of natural resources at the same time that access to remote bush areas has become more dangerous. Security risks are increasing proportionately, with the greatest effect on women and children who accompany their mothers or other female relatives into the bush.

The increased threat levels in the bush are due to a variety of factors. First, more people are exposed to this threat as reliance on firewood, charcoal and wild food increases as a function of poverty and food insecurity. Second, the disarmament campaign has pushed those individuals who still have guns into remote areas beyond the reach of cordon and search activities or condemnation by their communities.<sup>92</sup> Third, with the increase in hunger a growing number of people have turned to criminal activities, and are no longer only targeting livestock for theft. Criminals are stealing clothes, food, and natural resources themselves. Lastly, men are no longer able to provide armed protection to their women and children when collecting resources in the bush.

The loss of the dual manyatta-kraal system has had a clear effect on male livelihoods and definitions of masculinity as discussed in more detail below. Less obvious is the parallel shift in women's livelihoods. Female livelihoods have become more intensely focused on natural resource exploitation at the same time that they have become less diverse in the scope of activities pursued.<sup>93</sup> Women used to be involved in the care of animals at both the manyattas and the kraals. Traditional kraals do not presently exist within the study population and women do not access the kraals at barracks with regularity. Most milking animals have been moved from the manyattas

92 The presence of armed groups of young men in the bush operating outside the confines of their communities came up in one or two locations and has since been triangulated by two independent NGOs and correspondence with a donor returning from a recent donor mission. Further investigation is needed on this possible development.

93 For a discussion on diversification and intensification as livelihood strategies shift, see Scoones, I. (1998) "Sustainable rural livelihoods : a framework for analysis." Working Paper, No 72, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, England.

to the kraals at barracks for protection and to decrease the likelihood of attacks on homes. Young men discussed the shifts in women's roles in animal husbandry:

*Women have lost all roles with the management of livestock because the detach does not allow them to go milk the animals and the army does not allow the girls to be with them when they are herding the animals to help with watering. Instead they use the small boys. This is a major change.<sup>94</sup>*

Women and girls may return to their traditional roles of working closely with men on animal husbandry if the current arrangement of kraals at barracks proves to be temporary. If it does not, we will see a situation in which girls do not learn how to manage and handle animals, and a concurrent increase in stratification in gender roles related to livestock. Ideally, women and girls will remain involved in livestock care, as economic development and livelihood diversification in Karamoja are likely to be most successful if focused on animal-based industries. Women will have a more secure foothold in these sectors if involved in animal husbandry from a young age and if their role in caring for animals is part of the broader community livelihoods system.

### **Shifts in Male Livelihoods and Identity**

Many men in the study population have experienced extreme shifts in their livelihood strategies in recent years. The loss of traditional kraals, increase in inequality in animal ownership, and removal of weapons for protective, offensive and hunting purposes has had a profound effect not only on male livelihoods but also on concepts of masculinity. Men – and young men in particular – were previously charged with providing for and protecting their families and communities. They had decision-making control over their herds and these decisions were central to the success of their livelihood strategies, their accumulation of personal wealth and status, and the well-being of their families.

Today many men find themselves unable to provide for or to protect their families. They have turned their decision-making power over to soldiers whom they distrust and who are unskilled in these matters. They are unable to protect their families at the same time that insecurity and attacks – and hence the need for protection – have increased. The loss of traditional male capabilities has shifted the way men are viewed within their communities. Both men and women in multiple study sites told our team that men “have become like women now” because they have lost control over their livestock and are no longer protecting their families.<sup>95</sup>

The causes of these livelihoods shifts for men are multifaceted but have direct links to the policies and consequences of disarmament. Furthermore, the process of disarmament has been humiliating and has brought shame to men of all ages.

<sup>94</sup> Focus group discussion with young men (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009.

<sup>95</sup> Focus group discussions with young men (DA), Nadunget Sub-County Moroto, 2 April 2009 and Rupa Sub-County, Moroto, 1 April 2009. Focus group discussions with young women (ES), Nadunget Sub-County, Moroto, 2 April 2009, Rengen Sub-County, Kotido, 6 April 2009 and Kacheri Sub-County, Kotido, 7 April 2009.

Physical abuse that directly targets masculinity – such the acts termed ‘castration’ by respondents – demonstrates the intentional psychological nature of this abuse.

The combination of erosion of traditional livelihoods, the removal of the ability to provide protection and the subsequent rise in attacks, and the emasculating nature of disarmament as it has been carried out has brought a radical shift to the concept of manhood in Karamoja. Young men who were once the economic and social pillars of their households and communities find themselves idle, unable to use their skills to contribute to their families’ needs, and are repressed in their daily pursuits by the military. The resulting gap in the effectiveness and engagement of young men in the social and economic order will need to be addressed if Karamoja is to develop in a sustainable and peaceful fashion.

### **Young Boys: Adjusted Roles, New Threats**

Important shifts in roles and responsibilities have also occurred for children, especially young boys. Many observers – including army personnel, NGO staff, and residents of the towns and trading centers in Karamoja – commented on the very large number of young boys who gather at the kraals at the barracks. We sought to find out if we were really seeing a *change* in livelihoods for these boys or if the centralized location of the kraals at barracks simply made their roles as shepherds more obvious to outside observers. We talked directly with shepherds at several locations in Kotido and Moroto and with family members of shepherds in manyattas.

Our analysis indicates a nuanced picture. Young shepherds have always carried a great deal of responsibility and this continues today. The main difference is not in the responsibilities of the boys, but rather in with whom they share these duties and the consequences of this relationship. Traditionally, young men and boys would together take the animals out to the grazing area. The boys would be primarily responsible for watching the animals and the young men would focus on monitoring the perimeter of the area. The young men would watch for signs of the enemy, deter potential attacks through their armed presence, and check for areas of better pasture or water. If the shepherd boys had a problem they knew that their older brothers, fathers or uncles were nearby.

Under the present security arrangements the soldiers have taken over the traditional roles performed by the young men. Soldiers patrol the perimeters of the grazing areas and are in charge of security. They are also in charge of decisions about major animal movements. The shepherd boys remain in direct control of the animals, but no longer have the presence or protection of their older male relatives to turn to for assistance or advice. This increases the responsibility on the young shepherds, and the poor protection provided by the soldiers often leaves these boys and their herds open to enemy attack. Young boys told us that they often lost their animals “while hunting.” Using bows and arrows to hunt birds and small prey is a normal pastime for shepherds while grazing, and the perimeter of older boys provided a safeguard against wandering animals or an intruder. This perimeter defense is now much less effective. At the same time, the increase in food insecurity amplifies the pressure upon young boys to hunt for their own sustenance and also to contribute to their families’ food supply.

As evident in earlier sections, many respondents in the study population perceive the soldiers to be intentionally derelict in their duties. At least part of this shortfall, however, is likely due to lack of skills and experience on the part of the soldiers, especially when compared to local herders. Few of the soldiers are Karamojong, and most have limited experience tracking animals or detecting signs of enemy movements in the bush.

For their part, young men in the study population appear reluctant to resume an active role in grazing now that the animals are housed at barracks. The soldiers have subsumed the role of the young men, and mutual mistrust between these two groups makes cooperation in perimeter monitoring difficult. In many areas it was reported that most young men do not participate in grazing, leaving this to the young boys in the company of soldiers. Shepherd boys verified this, but also added the need for young men to increasingly help families locate food.

## CONCLUSIONS

Disarmament is needed in Karamoja. This is the overwhelming message from respondents of both genders and all ages in multiple locations. Mortality and morbidity rates from raiding and associated violence make the need to remove guns and stop attacks indisputable. And the negative effects of insecurity on pastoral livelihoods – the livelihood system best suited to the ecosystem of Karamoja – leaves no doubt that disarmament must be part of a lasting solution to the struggle and tension over natural resources. Disarmament itself is not the solution to violence in Karamoja, but a disarmament campaign is one essential part of a broader initiative to bring peace, promote development, and support and protect pastoral livelihoods and communities.

Disarmament must be uniform and complete if it is to bring benefits to the Karamoja region. It must seek to support, not undermine, the livelihood systems in the region and to allow effective traditional coping mechanisms to continue. This will require ongoing monitoring and assessment of unintended consequences of disarmament policies and a system to rapidly and efficiently address these outcomes and the processes behind them.

The introduction of kraals at barracks addresses some of the problems of inadequate protection for livestock that arose in the 2001–2002 disarmament and in the first period of the current disarmament. This is commendable and demonstrates a learning process. The unintended result of this policy, however, has been a shift from attacks on animals to attacks on people and their assets. The picture today is one in which animals are protected while people are left open to attack. It is positive that the military has recognized the importance of livestock as an essential livelihood asset in Karamoja; it is difficult to rationalize, however, that animals are afforded more security than men, women and children who are attacked in their homes at night with regularity.

The physical abuses and arbitrary and illegal detention that continue to be part of disarmament at the barracks level must stop. An accountable and transparent system to hear complaints, respond to abuses, and report back to communities must be put in place. After three years of evidence and complaints, there remains little room for debate on this issue.

The current system of kraals at barracks is not sustainable, nor should it be. The

military has little interest in or aptitude for animal management, and guarding livestock from criminal attack is not within the normal realm of duties for a national army. Communities and their livestock need to be able to return to traditional livelihoods as soon as possible, including a dual system of manyattas and kraals, shared gender and generational divisions of labor, and the re-involvement of young men in animal husbandry. Dismantling the kraals at the barracks, however, can only occur once an effective and tested system of civilian protection is in place. If the kraals are dismantled before this time there will be a rapid descent into the levels of insecurity experienced in the past and a quick re-arming as communities seek to protect their assets.

Karamoja is and will continue to experience a shift in its economic, political and social order.<sup>96</sup> This includes a shift away from pastoral livelihoods. Some groups such as the Pian and the Bokora are engaging more heavily in agriculture while still maintaining some herds, while other groups such as the Nyangia and the populations in Abim are relying almost exclusively on crop production. Within groups people are expanding into trade, professional services, unskilled labor and the service sector. All of these changes are necessary and should be supported in order to promote economic growth and be an engine for broader development activities. Animal-based livelihoods, however, whether pastoral or agro-pastoral in nature, will remain the backbone of Karamoja for the foreseeable future based on the unique climatic and ecological conditions. These livelihoods might include tanneries, fodder production, veterinary services, animal trade, water resource management and natural resource management. Regardless of the exact shape and form, animal-based livelihoods should be promoted, protected and supported, and should be a central part of all national and international policies and programs in the region.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

International actors working in Karamoja should be guided by the principle of improving and protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people of the region. By definition this must include vigorous advocacy with national and district authorities, including the security sector, to generate increased recognition of the needs in the region and respect for the population. Outreach and learning by actors is critical – relatively few assessments of local priorities have been done in the region, particularly in remote areas or those considered insecure.

Recommendations are divided into the two broad categories of livelihoods and disarmament and then split into programming, policy-level and advocacy sections. There is some inevitable overlap between these areas in specific recommendations. This report was written in collaboration with Save the Children in Uganda and thus many of the recommendations are geared towards international NGOs but have relevance for a wide range of stakeholders, including national government bodies, international donors, and national agencies.

<sup>96</sup> A discussion on generation-sets and the stagnation in the initiation system is beyond the scope of this paper, but has important implications for ongoing security and development in the region. See Knighton, 2005; Sandra Gray, "A Memory of Loss: Ecological Politics, Local History, and the Evolution of Karimojong Violence" *Human Organization* 59 (4) Winter 2000: 401-418.

## ***Livelihoods***

### **Programming**

- **Livelihood training** programs are critical as the economy and way of life diversifies in Karamoja. Trainings need to be carefully tailored and in response to local realities and demands. Most importantly, any livelihood intervention needs to be sustainable beyond the life of the program or project. Livelihood programs should:
  - Start with thorough market assessments to understand market saturation and demand;
  - Be based on discussions with male and female youth as to their interests, though taking into account low exposure rates to different livelihood options for many respondents;
  - Be tailored for each specific area, i.e., more livestock focused in the more pastoral and agro-pastoral areas and less so in areas with a more agrarian population;
  - Emphasize appropriate skills trainings for livestock-related trade, marketing and services;
  - Include start-up capital where appropriate, refresher courses, business management skills, and continuing out-reach and follow-up course for participants;
  - Focus on male youth who have become largely redundant due to disarmament and loss of animals and are in need of new skills and new mechanisms through which to support their families.
  
- **Community animal health workers and health workers** are very much in demand and both men and women expressed interest in being trained in these areas. These sort of programs should:
  - Be based on assessments of and lessons learned from past and present similar programs in the area and in other pastoral regions;
  - Be coordinated with the district veterinary office or district health office;
  - Have selection criteria based on willingness to learn and commitment, not education or literacy levels;
  - Take into account mobility of pastoral and agro-pastoral communities;
  - Include budgets and resources for regular refresher trainings, outreach and support for participants;
  - Include start-up capital and business skills development;
  - Be self-sustaining.
  
- Organizations and donors should incorporate investment in **community assets and infrastructure** in programs, including roads, traditional systems of water catchment (where appropriate), terracing (where appropriate) and, where supported by the district veterinary office and linked to sustainable programs, the rehabilitation of animal crushes, dips and other veterinary infrastructure. These projects should be labor intensive, based on community-identified wishes and needs, and should use local labor (in rotation if demand warrants) exclusively.

- **Peace-building** and conflict management programs continue to be important in areas of existing tension. These should:
  - Be based on community initiatives;
  - Include perspective and involvement of male youth as well as elders;
  - Include mechanisms to allow for monitoring and maintenance, including regularly meetings between groups and mechanisms for immediate follow-ups in the event of thefts or a rise in tensions;
  - Include conversations on underlying causes of conflict and mechanisms for these messages to filter up to local and national officials and other concerned parties;
  - Include joint development goals and projects to be implemented by local communities;
  - Encourage spontaneous dialogue and interaction. Organizations will need to sensitize the UPDF to ensure that these regular meetings are allowed.
  
- **Conflict mitigation** programs are likely to be important in areas where mobile (pastoral or agro-pastoral) and sedentary (agrarian) populations come into regular contact or seek to access shared resources. These should focus on resettlement sites in the so-called green zones and for mobile populations who will continue to access these areas for water and pasture.
  
- **Education:** Children, youth and adults in all locations recognized the growing importance of education within their communities. The loss of livestock and decrease in herding opportunities in many areas is an opportunity to increase education outreach. Education programs should:
  - Target boys and girls of school age and younger with sensitization and outreach programs explaining education;
  - Include accelerated learning programs for youth and adults of both genders;
  - Include sensitization and outreach programs for parents to assist them in understanding the experience and importance of education;
  - Continue and expand monitoring and follow-up for alternative education programs such as ABEK to address problems and respond to community needs;
  - Scale-up the number of ABEK learning centers where requested by communities;
  - International actors should limit engagement in any discussion of compulsory boarding schools and should not allocate funds for any aspects of such programs.
  
- All programs should include **conflict analysis** and ongoing monitoring of the program's impact on conflict. Contingency plans should be made prior to the start of the program.

### **Policy Level**

- **Coordinated pro-pastoral policies** need to be developed and implemented in

parallel with policies designed to encourage settled or more intensive agriculture. Nongovernmental actors, donors and government bodies should be involved in the creation of these policies. These should:

- Include clear impact indicators for improving livelihoods and protection for pastoral and agro-pastoral populations;
  - Balance access to grazing and water sources with the populations currently being settled in the fertile zone in the west and south of Karamoja;
  - Be assessment-based and focus on the priorities of the targeted groups themselves;
  - Include conflict analysis and possible implications for programs and policies in all assessments;
  - Include advocacy at the national and district level to encourage a pro-pastoral approach and balance the current emphasis on sedentarization.
- Actors should encourage **cross-border regional initiatives** among implementing partners, donors and governments in the following policy areas:
    - Natural resource management;
    - Formal and informal trade;
    - Peace-building and conflict mitigation;
    - Weapons trade.
  - Actors should **build on existing systems** of coping and vulnerability management.

## **Advocacy**

International organizations and donors should:

- Advocate for a **national pastoral policy** that takes into account the important and specific role of pastoralism (including agro-pastoralism) as a livelihood to be protected and supported. This policy should include aspects for pro-pastoral development, basic and non-formal education, service delivery, infrastructure, and food security.
- Encourage dialogue on revision of **land and natural resource management** guidelines to better balance the needs and priorities of settled agrarian communities, agro-pastoral communities, pastoral communities, and game reserves.
- **Discourage policies aimed at widespread sedentarization** (explicitly or implicitly) of pastoralists. Combat moves towards sedentarization by other actors by insisting on an analysis of sustainability across multiple years (including of drought) and a clear understanding of push and pull factors on the part of potential beneficiaries.
- Encourage livelihoods interventions as opposed to repeated emergency response and food aid.

## ***Disarmament***

### **Advocacy**

International organizations and donors should:

- Work with local and national actors involved in disarmament (UPDF, OPM, Minister of State for Karamoja, district officials and security officials) to **emphasize the *pro-disarmament* views** of the local communities. They should promote a new phase of disarmament that moves beyond cordon and search, prioritizes rule of law and community dialogue and includes a policy of zero-tolerance for physical abuse, illegal detention, exploitation by soldiers, or monetary gain of security personnel.
- Insist on **protection for people as well as animals**.
- Work with detachments, commanders and soldiers to ensure that disarmament policies **do not** (intentionally or otherwise) **target livelihood strategies**, including mobility, access to natural resource areas, engagement in diversified livelihoods (such as trade and setting up local shops), sale of animals or taking of blood.
- Work with commanders to have **restrictions lifted on movement** of men between Kotido and Kaabong to allow the Jie access to Nyangia. Provide protection along this route for travelers and communities along the way.
- Promote a **new phase of disarmament** based on accountability, transparency and rule of law. This would include the following aspects:
  - certificates for disarmament (with names kept separately in a central ledger);
  - clear explanation (written and verbal and in local language) of charges against detainees and process to be followed, provided to detainees and to their family members;
  - immediate notification of family members upon detention or relocation of detainees;
  - military judicial proceedings against soldiers found to be engaged in physical abuse of any kind;
  - military judicial proceedings against soldiers involved in extortion or theft;
  - complete transparency and community feedback of all military judicial proceedings to affected communities and civil society organizations;
  - establishment of a complaints mechanism at each detachment where civilians or LCs can report instances without fear of intimidation or retribution.
- Encourage **improved border control** and monitoring of trade in weapons.
- Encourage the UPDF **not to dismantle kraals at the barracks** until an effective alternative protection regime is in place.

## **Policy level**

International organizations and donors should:

- Work with government bodies to establish a timeframe and indicators for **hand-over of security duties to police from UPDF**.
- Introduce **indicators and a monitoring** system to ensure that police are able to perform these tasks effectively *before* the UPDF pulls back entirely.
- Work with the UPDF to **understand obstacles to adequate recovery of stolen animals**; based on the results of this dialogue, work with the UPDF command to overcome these obstacles to improve rates of return to communities.
- Work with the government to encourage a **greater focus on the development components of the KIDDP**.
- Work with regional and local commands to re-establish amnesty for surrender of weapons in Kotido.

## **Programming**

International organizations and donors should:

- **Continue and expand civil-military activities** in Karamoja, with emphasis at the local level, i.e., local communities and their associated detachments. Such activities should focus on male youth and ordinary soldiers, not just the community leaders and the military officers.
- Conduct **sensitizations for all new soldiers coming into Karamoja**, including briefings on importance of pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods, key aspects of food security and coping mechanisms (such as off-take of blood in the dry seasons), and the importance of mobility in pastoral livelihoods.
- **Educate commanders and foot soldiers** on the importance and function of community-level peace-building activities and the importance of local movement between difference areas for this purpose.
- Establish, fund and promote **law and order** programs, including police training and capacity building, community-police dialogue and facilitation of police (transport, communications, facilities).
- Support expansion and capacity building of **judicial systems** at the district and regional level.

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