

Assessing the impact of conflict management activities in the Karamojong Cluster



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List of Acronyms

ALRMP	- Arid Lands Resource Management Project
AU/IBAR	- African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources
CAHWs	- Community-based Animal Health Workers
CAPE Unit	- Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology Unit
CBOs	- Community Based Organizations
CDTF	- Community Development Trust Fund
CPMR	- Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
DFID	- Department for International Development
DoT	- Diocese of Torit
DPDC	- District Peace and Development Committee
ECOREDEP	- Elemi Conflict Resolution and Development Project
GSU	- General Service Unit
IDP	- Internally Displaced People
ITDG	- Intermediate Technology Development Group
ITDPC	- Interim Turkana District Peace and Development Committee
KPRs	- Kenya Police Reservists
LYAS	- Lokichoggio Youth Association
MAPOTU	- Marakwet, Pokot and Turkana
NCCK	- National Council of Churches of Kenya
NGOs	- Non-Governmental Organizations
PCHI	- Pastoral Community Harmonisation Initiative
PEDP	- Pokot Educational and Developmental Programme
PIMU	- Pastoralist Integrated Management Association
REDSO	- Regional Economic Development Service Office
SNV	- Schweizerischen Normen Vereinigung (Netherlands Development Organization)
SPLM/A	- Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
TDA	- Toposa Development Association
TDPDC	- Turkana District Peace and Development Committee
TUDOF	- The Turkana Development Organization Forum
UK	- United Kingdom
UN	- United Nations
UPDF	- Ugandan Peoples' Defence Force
USAID	- United States Agency for International Development
VPCs	- Village Peace Committees
VSF-B	- Vétérinaires sans Frontiers (Veterinarians without Borders) – Belgium

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Executive Summary

This report summarises the findings of an impact assessment of the conflict management activities of the Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology Unit (CAPE) of the African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR) in the Karamojong Cluster. The impact assessment involved a review of project documents, a consultative process with project stakeholders at the community, district and national levels and an assessment of beneficiary views. Acacia Consultants, a relief and development consultancy firm based in Nairobi undertook the impact assessment in two phases between November 2003 and January 2004. The report presents the findings and recommendations from the study for future consideration by agencies implementing peace work. The CAPE Unit's conflict prevention, management

and resolution (CPMR) work evolved from its animal health work with different groups of the Karamojong Cluster. After several years of supporting community-based animal health care in the Cluster, insecurity and livestock raiding was identified as a major constraint to livestock-dependent livelihoods. In 1998, the communities requested AU/IBAR to facilitate inter-community dialogue to explore avenues for containing insecurity and bringing about reconciliation to allow the expansion of animal health services. This led to the initiation of the Border Harmonisation Initiative in 1999. The Border Harmonisation Initiative (1999-2002) that was later renamed the Pastoral Community Harmonisation Initiative (PCHI), began in 1999 and received funding from the USAID's Regional Economic Development Service Office (REDSO), the UK Department for International Development



Turkana settlement in Northern Kenya - Photo credit: gritty.org

(DFID) and the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF).

The positive impact of the conflict management activities of the CAPE Unit on the three border communities visited as part of this assessment is evident in the community sensitisation and awareness of the problems caused by cattle raiding and the need to share scarce resources. Some inter-ethnic grazing of cattle was reported and large-scale raids are said to be less frequent between Turkana - Pokot and Turkana - Toposa. However, communities still live in fear of one another and social and economic interactions are limited, other than between the Turkana and the Dodoth.

The stakeholders commended the community level efforts of the CAPE Unit and wanted the peace initiatives to continue. However, poor co-ordination between peace actors at district level has rendered peace efforts less effective than they might have been.

The CAPE Unit and international NGOs should co-operate and collaborate more with local

government and communities in implementing district level activities. They should also increase their support for grass roots peace building structures organisations and involve them more in planning.

The CAPE Unit is advised to re-strategise and choose between:

- increasing field staff levels to handle all operations of the internal and international border conflicts in the Karamojong Cluster
- concentrating only on cross-border conflicts and handing over internal border conflicts to other peace organisations in the Karamojong Cluster
- channelling funds and technical advice through new local peace structures, such as Community-based Organisations (CBOs) and District Peace and Development Committees (DPDCs) and concentrating on policy and advocacy work at district, national and international levels.

1. Background and problem statement

Karamojong is a generic term used to describe the Eastern Nilotic agro-pastoralist tribes inhabiting the arid and semi-arid regions of Ethiopia, North-eastern Uganda, North-western Kenya and Eastern Equatoria in Southern Sudan. The Dodoth, the Jie, the Karamojong, the Nyang'atom, the Pokot, the Toposa and the Turkana have a common origin, social organisation (generation systems) and livelihood (agro-pastoralism) systems. See map of area on page five.

The area suffers from endemic conflicts over natural resources, particularly grazing land and water sources during the dry season. Such conflicts are aggravated by the ready availability of small arms that has been increasing since the 1980s. Inter-ethnic cattle rustling and cattle thefts, revenge raids, highway banditry and direct confrontations with government security bodies in the course of forcible animal recovery and disarmament operations are a reality for the local communities in the Karamojong Cluster. Many peace building activities have been undertaken by several actors in the area, mostly through organising peace meetings. Other peace building actors in the area include World Vision, Oxfam GB, Pax Christi Netherlands and the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK). All these organisations have slight differences in approach, with some focusing more on research and advocacy, others on the facilitation of dialogue, and still others on community capacity to handle conflict.

Information collected by the consultants from the three different ethnic groups visited during this assignment showed

that the communities used to honour peace agreements and even international borders during the colonial era and there is evidence that well established networks of communication between the different ethnic groups used to exist. The groups used these networks to request for permission into dry season grazing areas, to negotiate for the return of livestock and for peace with each other. These networks are still present although weakened. Since the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the onset of the war in Southern Sudan, the honouring of such mechanisms has been eroded. There may be scope for strengthening such mechanisms to function as they did in the past because communities tend to own and honour their own mechanisms better than conventional peace building mechanisms that are introduced by outsiders.

Aim of the study

The primary aim of the study was to assess the impact of the CAPE Unit's work in reducing conflicts in the Karamoja Cluster and building the capacity of communities to manage conflict. Several reports have been produced to document the work of the African Union/ Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources' (AU/IBAR) in conflict prevention, management and resolution.² However, this was the first complete impact assessment exercise.

Methodology

At the beginning of the assessment a variety of sites were selected for study. The Turkana-Toposa and Turkana-West Pokot border areas were chosen as conflict prone locations and the Turkana-Dodoth area as less prone to

² See bibliography for details

violent conflict. Care was also taken to sample both areas where the CAPE Unit had been very active in implementation and areas where the CAPE Unit had been implementing primarily through NGOs and CBOs. Additionally, a variety of informants was selected to include those who both were participants and non-participants in the CAPE Unit peace activities. It is hoped that the baseline findings concerning the trends of conflict and the overall impact of conflict initiatives will be useful to all peace actors in the Karamojong Cluster.

The following sites were visited:

- **Study Area 1** - Turkana-Toposa international border (Kenya-Sudan), specifically Zolia/Songot and Naliel/Mogila *epidings*³. Enyanangachor/Lokotikol *epiding* was not accessible due to distance and timing.
- **Study Area 2** - Turkana-Dodoch international border (Kenya-Uganda). Only the Turkana side in Oropoi and Naporoto was accessible. The Dodoch did not respond to the invitation for interviews on the Turkana side because of increased tension between the two communities during the assessment. Kamion was also not accessible across the escarpment by vehicle.

- **Study Area 3** - Turkana-Pokot internal border (Kenya), specifically Kainuk/Samakituk and Nakukulas/Lokwamosing *epidings* were visited. Lochuakula/Amaler, Kasei/Lorogon and Alale/Lokiriama *epidings* were not accessible due to distance and inappropriate timing.

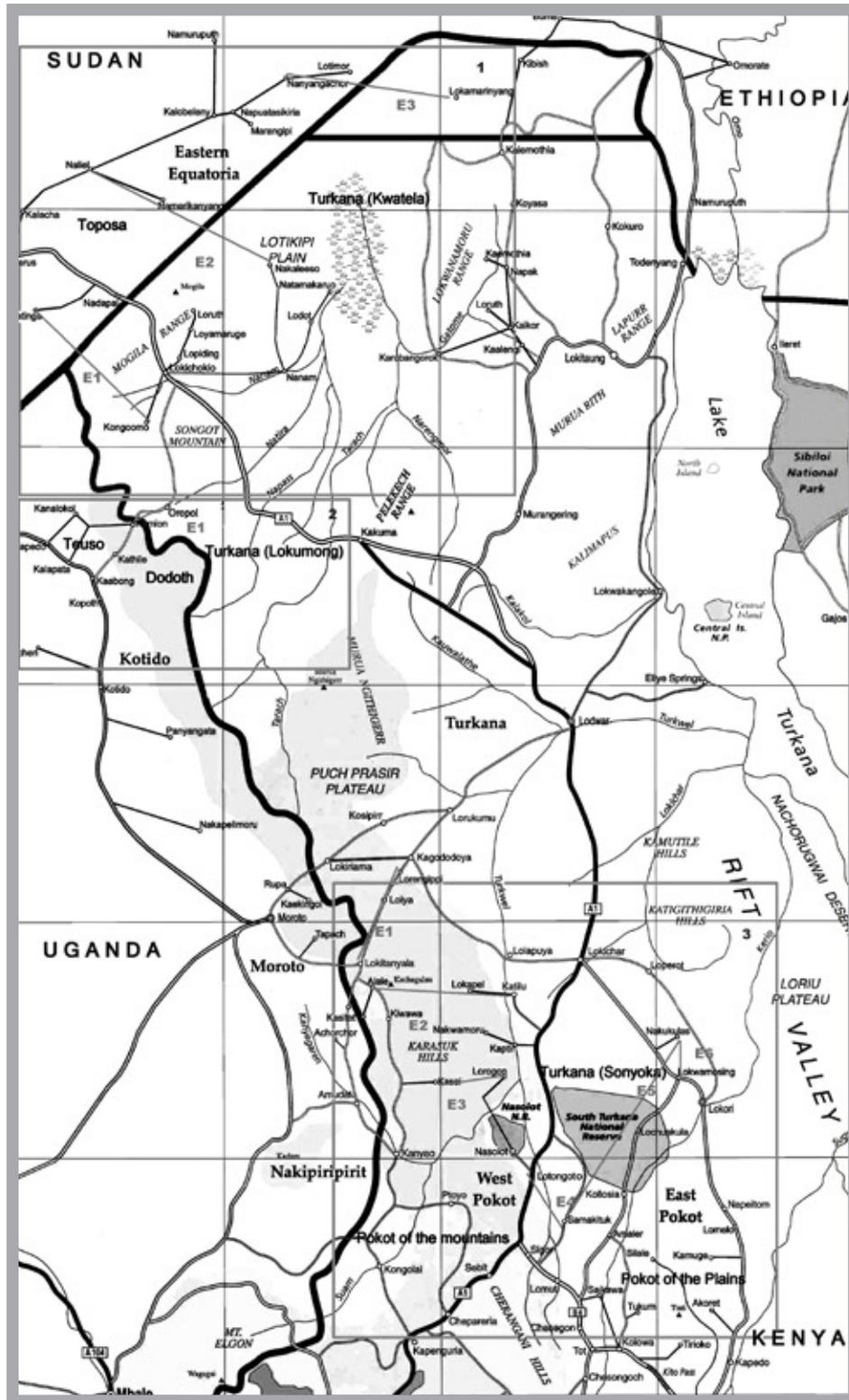
Key informants were interviewed and focus group discussions with youths, elders and women in separate groups.

The following limitations to the assessment are to be noted:

- The assessment could not cover all the areas where the CAPE Unit had implemented peace building activities. Observations, therefore, are specific to the sampled areas and do not necessarily apply throughout the entire border area.
- The assessment was conducted during the dry season when conflict is usually heightened because of scarcity of pasture and water. The findings should be attributed to this particular season.
- The assessment attempted to identify the impact of the peace activities and not simply whether the peace building activities had taken place.

³Common border grazing area between two communities

Figure 1: Map of the Karamojong Cluster



- Pokot/ Turkana internal border
- CAPE operation area during study
- E Epiding common border grazing area

2. Peace Building methods used by the Cape Unit

The methods used by the CAPE Unit have been in constant development and experimentation. The Unit has used the following strategies to broker and maintain peace at the grass roots:

- Convening peace meetings in settlements and remote grazing areas to resolve specific issues between communities
- Burying of hatchets to symbolise communities' commitment to peace
- Forming village peace committees (VPCs) to handle violent conflict
- Holding inter-ethnic women's peace crusades through contested territories to open up dialogue between the parties
- Facilitating the return of stolen animals by local communities and providing support to local authorities to oversee the return of the animals

Grass roots indigenous institutions are potential conflict-mitigating structures and form the basis for VPCs. In Turkana District, AU/IBAR, NGOs and VPCs adopted the "Oxfam model" that was developed in Wajir in the North-eastern Province of Kenya. This VPC model links community-level structures to district level committees.

In an earlier study, 14 VPCs were identified in Kenya (Turkana) and 63 in Uganda (40 in Dodoth, 14 in Matheniko, 9 in Pokot) (AU/IBAR, Formation of Village Peace Committees in the Karamoja Cluster, 2001). It was recommended that village elders who are able to control traditional mechanisms of detecting crime and punishing offenders be empowered to enhance the synergies between the local administration and traditional conflict prevention initiatives.

During early 2003, agencies such as AU/IBAR, Oxfam and the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) assisted in forming the Interim Turkana District Peace and Development Committee (TDPDC), a body that would co-ordinate conflict management and resolution at the district and 'village' levels. The committee is composed of representatives and officials of VPCs and civil society organisations. This strategy has been widely adopted in the arid and semi-arid districts of Kenya and is supported by Oxfam GB and the World Bank-funded Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) of the Office of the President.

In April 2001, during Women's Border Harmonisation Workshop in Lokichoggio participants had suggested a novel approach for promoting peace and resolving conflict; the *alokita* or women's peace crusades. Pastoralist women have been instrumental over the years in fuelling conflict by inciting the men to raid for household survival. However, as the main and indirect victims of insecurity, they also play the role of traditional peacemakers. Women also hold the power to give or withhold their blessings on raiders when they go for raids. (AU/IBAR Pastoral Women as Peacemakers 2003).

It is the tradition of the women of the Karamojong Cluster to form an *alokita* a *ngaberu* - a group of women united to compose songs that express powerful messages on issues affecting the community. AU/IBAR has supported women's peace crusades according to this tradition. These crusades were meant to initiate dialogue between the warring factions and also target the youths, the main perpetrators of conflict, with peace messages. Meetings to strengthen the peace accords or resolutions would follow these events.

The non-return of stolen animals or their forcible confiscation by state security forces has almost always triggered revenge raids (areom) and brought about an escalation of violence between pastoral communities. AU/IBAR has, therefore, facilitated several peaceful and forcible animal recoveries in liaison with elders' peace committees and the authorities.

The project has also supported cross-border negotiations, field trips and international travel for the local and national authority representatives to prevent the escalation of violence. These facilitations include trips made by the Commissioner of Kapoeta in December 2001 and Hon John Munyes, MP Turkana North, in March 2003.



Pokot and Turkana Sonyoka warriors advocating for peace under the watchful eye of the women peace crusaders in Turkana - Photo credit: Grahn/AU IBAR

3. General findings

Conflicts in the Karamojong Cluster are dynamic and are influenced by multiple interacting factors. The peace building process, therefore, has to be multifaceted to achieve sustainable impact. Peace building activities need the participation of several actors, hence the following pertinent issues:

- Impacts discussed in this report are mostly due to the combined efforts of all peace building actors in the areas concerned
- Turkana (Kwatela section)-Toposa relationships have been difficult since pre-colonial times and were made worse by the colonial government
- Turkana (Sonyoka section)- West Pokot relationships have also been difficult since the pre-colonial era and recently, the difficult situation has been compounded by alleged political instigation from the Pokot side

Impact on the Local Communities

The local communities are aware of the negative repercussions of cattle raiding through the sensitisation efforts of the CAPE Unit, government and other NGOs. Consequently, elders and women had intensified their efforts to influence the youths to change their attitudes towards all types of raiding, including cattle rustling and revenge raids.

Communities living along the Turkana and West Pokot border claimed that they feared government intervention against raiding but this had not reduced conflict. The Kenyan government has been known to organise

military operations against raiders to capture and return stolen livestock. During these operations many civilians lost their lives. The latest such operation took place in January 2004, when the government forced the Pokot to return livestock they had stolen from the Turkana. The Toposa in Southern Sudan indicated that they did not fear such interventions because of the weak situation of the civil authorities in Southern Sudan.

All communities interviewed were of the opinion that there was still no lasting peace - even though customary 'organised raids'⁴ had subsided, 'small livestock theft'⁵ had increased. In the last six months, however, two large raids were recorded. On 5 June, the Turkana raided the Toposa in Locheriakope water point, stole 940 animals and killed 47 Toposa. The many raids from the Toposa that had not been avenged prompted the Turkana to undertake this raid. Likewise, on 20 November, during the impact assessment, the Pokot raided the Turkana in Katilu and drove away 437 cows and 880 shoats.

The community's assessment of trends in peace indicators since 1999 can be summarised as follows:

Reduction in climate of insecurity and fear

Communities in the settlements and grazing areas along the three border areas were still suffering from insecurity. However, fear and

⁴'Organized raids' are usually taken to mean that the raiders were numbering more than 100, the raids were well planned over a long period and they targeted settlements, where human lives were lost and hundreds of livestock was stolen. These raids also had the blessings of the elders with their so-called generals leading them.

⁵Small theft means that less than 10 young raiders steal livestock from the grazing areas and tens of livestock are stolen, with little or no humans lives lost.

insecurity was less in Lokichoggio town and its immediate environs. According to the Pastoralist Integrated Management Association (PIMU) and the Lokichoggio Youths Association (LYAS), local CBOs, the area was more secure because of the intervention by the Kenyan government. Since Lokichoggio is the operational centre for many humanitarian agencies serving South Sudan, including the UN, the Kenyan government is obliged to provide security to the agencies.

Decrease in raids and road banditry

Most community members interviewed claimed that organised raids had decreased but small theft had increased. Small theft was found to be extremely frequent (every alternate month among Toposa-Turkana to almost every week among Turkana-Dodotoh). The number of livestock lost in organised raids were sometimes less than the cumulative livestock lost through frequent theft. This observation may be more valid during the height of the dry season when the assessment took place than during other seasons. A decrease in road banditry was acknowledged in Lokichar Division (Turkana District) through the efforts of VPCs, the local administration, and the Turkana District Peace Development Committee (TDPDC).

Decrease in loss of property and human life

Since there was a decrease in organised raids in the homesteads, loss of property and, above all, human lives had decreased considerably especially along the Turkana-

Dodotoh border. The Turkana claimed that during recent raids, the Dodotoh held the herders captive instead of killing them and released them when they were safely in their territory because they feared revenge by the Turkana. In January 2004, for example, the Dodotoh held a woman hostage when they stole 32 goats from her. They later released her when they reached the safety of their land and were sure that no one was following them.

Natural resource sharing

Lokapelimo and Lotom, kraal⁶ leaders from Zolia and Songot, agreed that watching animals grazing and drinking water from the same source is the most genuine sign of peace (Burial of the Hatchet speeches, 2002). However, no such activity was observed during the assessment. Grazing agreements had been brokered in the three border areas in the past but none were effective at the time of the assessment due to patchy follow up by the CAPE Unit, according to the communities interviewed. They claimed that there was an operational agreement between Ekipor (Turkana) and Lomong (Toposa) but this could not be verified because Ekipor was grazing his animals in the interior (near Kaaleng) of Turkana District. Productive agricultural lands, such as Napeitom, Lomelo, Kamuge and Amolem along the Turkana and West Pokot border are still deserted due to insecurity.

Freedom of movement

Movement to agricultural fields, markets, around the permanent settlement in

⁶Kraal is used in this report to refer to a mobile grazing unit under the authority of a leader

search of wild fruits, collecting insects and producing charcoal was not observed. In the Turkana-West Pokot and Turkana–Toposa border areas, no freedom of movement or trade between the ethnic groups was recorded. However, recent exchanges between the Turkana and the Dodoth were recorded despite the prevailing insecurity.

Return of internally displaced people (IDP)

One of the major consequences of conflict in pastoral areas is internal displacement of people to more secure areas (migration toward urban centres, other districts and region). There were no observations of returning IDPs. Some settlements and agricultural areas, especially along the border between Turkana and West Pokot are still deserted.

Increase in inter-ethnic marriages

Inter-ethnic marriages, often used as an

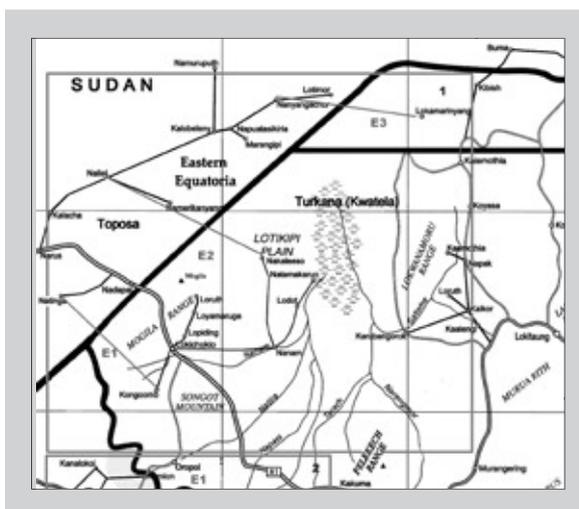
indicator of good inter-ethnic relations, had not increased in the sample areas. No recent inter-ethnic marriages between Turkana and Toposa, and Turkana and Dodoth were recorded due to poor relations between the two communities. Marriages that were reported took place more than two decades ago. The Pokot on the other hand do not generally inter-marry with the Turkana because Turkana women are not circumcised.

Increase of service delivery and development activities

Provision of administrative, human and animal health services and development activities was not found to have increased in the sampled areas because of insecurity.

4. Impact by sample area, gender and stakeholder

Study Area 1: Turkana (Kwatela)/Toposa International Border Area



Raids

In this area, raids intensified with the beginning of the civil war, in 1985 when the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM/A) displaced the Toposa. Peace initiatives spearheaded by church leaders, such as George Kinga (Toposa) and Barnabas Lochilia (Turkana chief) began in 1992. When the CAPE Unit began its conflict resolution work in 1999 it complemented these earlier initiatives.

Information collected from this border area suggested that the communities did not feel that there were significant impacts of peace initiatives because they associate peace meetings and crusades with conflict incidents. During the Turkana Women's Peace Crusade, for example, the Toposa threatened the participants because the Turkana had stolen Toposa livestock from Natimor earlier when the crusade was taking place. On the day of the burial of the hatchet (October 2002), the Toposa raided the Turkana and took away 1,500 cows. The Turkana revenged and stole 46 cows from the Toposa in Nadapal. The Turkana later returned some

animals but the Toposa failed to return the stolen animal in November 2002. The Turkana then raided the Toposa in June 2003 and stole over 900 heads of livestock to compensate for their animals.

The coincidence between animal theft and peace meetings conducted by the CAPE Unit and other peace building actors can be associated with errant youths who do not want to see peace prevailing. They wish to continue raiding for such reasons as bride price and heroism when most of the influential elders are attending the peace meeting and would, therefore, have no control over their errant activities. This observation was also recorded along the Turkana-West Pokot border during the assessment.

From February 2003, the CAPE Unit did not conduct any peace building initiatives between the two communities. When the dry season approached, incidences of violence escalated because there were no grazing agreements. The lack of the CAPE Unit activities in this area from February 2003 was attributed to the delay in receipt of funding for the Lodwar office and this hiatus was compounded by the death of a staff member.

Grazing

The Turkana (Kwatela) lack adequate water sources and grazing during the dry seasons and almost move annually to Toposa land in Sudan. The two communities last shared the grazing area located between Lokichoggio and Nadapal in 1997. Grazing and watering agreements were brokered between kraal leaders of the two *epidings* during the focal meeting held by the CAPE Unit in September

2002: These include:

- Mogila/Naliel *epiding* agreement was brokered between Ekipor (Turkana) and Lomong (Toposa) but was broken when warriors alleged to have been sent from the *epiding* of Lokapelimoe attacked the kraals of Ekipor.
- Zolia/Songot *epiding* agreement was brokered between Lokapelimoe (Toposa) and Lotom (Turkana).

Whilst the first grazing agreement between Ekipor and Lomong was well respected, the second one was only partially implemented. For the third *epiding*, Enyangachor/Nakaleso (Longechelemoi/Apangeseption kraal leaders), a meeting was scheduled in Lopotikol but never took place due to the escalation of conflict.

Peace committees

The Toposa elders' peace committee of seven members (two Lolim, two Kalacha,

two Nakolomai, and one from Narus) created by the CAPE Unit in Sudan attend peace meetings but are not active in recovering stolen animals. Since the last recovery exercise in November 2002, the Turkana elders' peace committees have not been involved in follow up of grazing agreements, animal recovery and punishment of thefts. The elders felt that they needed to be facilitated by other peace building actors to pursue such activities, because they feared being killed if they work alone.

Fine system

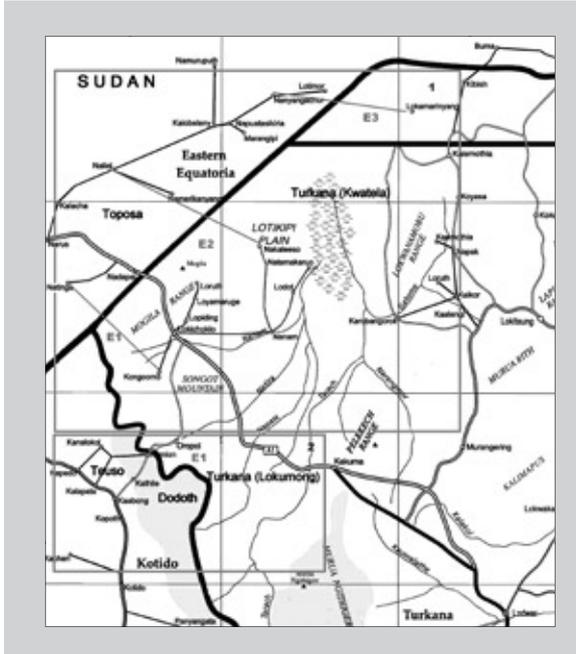
According to the elders of Mogila, the fine system agreed on in September 2002 is not operational because they claim that the Toposa do not return stolen animals even when the Turkana return Toposa animals. The fine system can only work if the warring communities are making effort to return these animals.

Elders hold morning discussions - Photo credit: Lokong Augustine/IBAR



Study Area 2: Turkana (Lokumong)/Dodoth International Border Area

It was not possible to interview the Dodoth and, therefore, the findings of this border area may be biased in favour of the Turkana as the Dodoth perspective was not fully captured.



Raids

The Turkana (Lokumong) and the Dodoth buried the hatchet in the 1970s. Unlike, the long-lasting burial of the hatchet performed by the southern neighbouring *epiding* (Turkana-Woyakwaran/Jie) in 1973, it collapsed in 1982 when the two communities were grazing their animals together in Timu, Uganda.

The forcible disarmament in Uganda of February 2002 also affected grazing relations between the Dodoth and the Turkana. The Ugandan Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF) confiscated guns, rounded up livestock and captured three Turkana women at the border. The animals were returned to the Turkana at Oropoi on 18 March 2002 after the CAPE Unit sponsored Hon. Munyes to go to Moroto to negotiate the release of the women and livestock. The elders of Apamulele classified this intervention as a positive initiative because it illustrated that the government

was capable of assisting them. Currently, the presence of UPDF is still seen as disruptive as the Turkana allege that the UPDF arm the Dodoth for raiding purposes. They claim that the Dodoth reward the soldiers with some of the stolen livestock.

From August to October 2002, the two ethnic groups co-existed relatively peacefully. During this period they exchanged calves and bulls. Stealing began again in November/December 2002 when they shared grazing grounds at Kamion. In December 2002, the CAPE Unit facilitated the return of 12 cows stolen by Turkana youths from Oropoi in Kamion. The Turkana also returned three goats in November 2003 but apparently the Dodoth have not returned any livestock and have continued stealing.

The elders from the Turkana Lokumong section denied stealing from the Dodoth and blamed a neighbouring Turkana section, the Woyakwaran, for these offences. The last Turkana raid in Dodoth, when six goats were stolen, was attributed to the Woyakwaran. Edoie (Lokumong section kraal leader) captured the goats and had them returned to the Dodoth so that the Dodoth do not take revenge on the Lokumong.

The Turkana (Lokumong) say that they have not been revenging because:

- They comply with the message of peace given by their administration
- They would become vulnerable to their other enemies, such as the Toposa if they organise revenge raids

- They cannot provoke the Dodoth because the water point they use at the height of the dry season is located in Dodoth land

Grazing

The Turkana (Lokumong) lack adequate water sources and pasture in the dry season and, therefore, need to migrate to Uganda. The current tensions are manifested by the gathering of the three Turkana (Lokumong) kraals (Edoie/Akadae/Apamulele) in one grazing area (Naporoto) in Kenya. This gathering also serves as defence against raiders because they jointly own approximately 5,000 cows. The women still fear being attacked while gathering wild fruits around the river, and when they travel from the kraal to Oropoi market and to the watering points.

Marriage

There have been very few inter-marriages since the 1980s. Turkana men used to marry

Dodoth women but Dodoth men never married Turkana women.

Peace committees

The Oropoi Peace Committee was created in 1996. It is composed of ten representatives from the Edoie kraal and another ten from Akadae and Apamulele kraals, including four women. In March, November and December 2003, this committee invited the Kalapata Peace Committee (Dodoth land) for peace negotiations but there was no response. The Oropoi Peace Committee is using the Teuso from Uganda to mediate between the Dodoth and the Turkana because they fear being killed by the Dodoth. The Teuso are an agricultural community that inhabits the border areas between Kenya and Uganda, and because they do not own livestock, the pastoralists find they are suitable mediators because they have no vested interests in cattle rustling.

Study Area 3: Turkana (Sonyoka) /Pokot Internal Border



Raids

The conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana is said to have escalated after Kenya

attained independence from Britain in 1963. The escalation began with the killing of a prominent Turkana elder called Atiktik. The Pokot of the plains from Tikit village allege that they were forcibly displaced from Amoler by the Turkana in 1988.

According to the two ethnic groups, peace activities achieved limited impact due to the frequency of theft and raids. Conflict between the two communities intensified in November 2002 after the murder of a Pokot laibon (witchdoctor) that culminated in the Kainuk massacre in April 2003 where eight Turkana were killed in cold blood. When the Turkana peace crusaders came back from Samakituk, the Pokot

had raided Lorogon. The security meeting held in Nakwamoru in November 2003 was followed, a day later, by a massive raid by the Pokot in Katilu. Grazing areas and watering points were identified as the targeted areas for animal theft. The Turkana and the Pokot both denied raiding each other because they have internalised and appreciated the peace messages by the government, the CAPE Unit and other NGOs, and, therefore, they have been discouraging their youths from the vice. The Turkana admitted to attempting to recover their animals from the Pokot. However, records show that both sides raid each other often.

Marriages

The Pokot do not generally marry women from Turkana because the women are not circumcised.

Trade

The only path of trade recorded between the Pokots and Turkana was Kasei-Lorogon. This may be attributed to the heavy presence of the Kenya government security forces, the General Service Unit (GSU), at Lorogon.

Grazing

When the Pokot are affected by drought, they migrate to Turkana land with prior

arrangement. According to the Pokot elders, the last time the two communities shared grazing areas was in Kainuk in 2000/2001 during the prolonged drought. This grazing agreement was brokered between the elders of both communities assisted by the local administration. Pokot youths confirmed that they shared Kainuk grazing area from January 2003 until April 2003. There was no raiding during this period but it resumed in the rainy season.

Shared grazing and watering agreements made through the CAPE Unit in February and March 2003 between Nakukulas and Lokwamosing and Nakukulas and Amaler have been broken when the kraal leader, Tebaris, from another *epiding* (East Baringo) was raided. There are currently no joint patrols and very productive agricultural land in Napeitom, Lomelo, Kamuge and Amolem is still deserted.

Peace committees

In Nakukulas, there is a peace committee of 15 members that was created by the CAPE Unit in December 2002. The members attend peace meetings, educate the youths and strategise on animal recovery in close collaboration with the local administration. They have thus been highly successful in the recovery of livestock.

5. Impact disaggregated according to gender

(Elders, women, youths)

The CAPE Unit has made considerable efforts to involve all key actors in their peace building activities. However, in spite of these efforts elders and women have been the main participants of such activities in all the sample areas, with the youths being inadequately involved.

Elders

Elders from all communities interviewed appreciate the CAPE Unit's efforts at peace building. Many of them had represented their communities during such meetings. Despite the elders' efforts to advise the youths against raiding, the practice did not stop. Elders from Toposa cited incidents where armed youths have killed their parents when advised against raiding.

Elders from Turkana, Pokot and Toposa border areas claimed they had not realised the positive impacts of the peace building process because raids and thefts continue. They suggested that the peace building activities should continue with the strengthening of the VPCs. Some proposed disarmament of the warring communities while others said the peace building activities should target the youths more frequently. The CAPE Unit's efforts to involve the youths by holding meetings in the grazing areas and through the women's peace crusade had been also been welcome but regular follow-up of resolutions made during such meetings is vital.

The peace committee of Nakukulas (Sonyoka) had been very successful in forcible animal recovery. In Oropoi Turkana (Lokumong) the elders returned three goats without any facilitation. However, the elders from the three communities had not been successful

in holding negotiations and curtailing any impending raids or theft. They feared that they would be killed if they pursued these peace missions with their enemies.

Women

Women interviewed from the three ethnic groups also appreciated the CAPE Unit's efforts. In Turkana and Toposa, the women who had taken part in the women's crusades thought it was an innovative peace building idea. However, they failed to see much impact of the crusades due to the continuing raids and theft even during crusades. Key rural women leaders, such as Atapar Longelia, could not attend the peace activities due to the burden of housework. They claimed that the initiative was more suitable for urban women.

The women said that they have been advising the youths against raiding but the young men are usually provoked to retaliate by the enemy. A woman crusader from Toposa land, however, reiterated that despite the continuing raid and thefts, peace building activities should continue.

Women from the three ethnic groups are of the opinion that the peace building activities may have greater impact if they continue targeting the youths in the grazing areas and involving them actively in the follow-up activities.

Youths

Despite the CAPE Unit's efforts to reach the youths with peace messages in the grazing areas and women's peace crusades, the few youths interviewed had not been involved in peace building activities. Turkana youths added that their elders did not appreciate their opinions, accusing them of stubbornness. The

Toposa youths had not been involved in the peace building activities because they were grazing animals in remote areas far from the places where the peace meetings and crusades were being held.

In Turkana South, the women of Nakukulas also mentioned that the youths are not sufficiently involved in peace building activities. The Pokot youths blamed the Turkana youths “karacunas” from Nakwamuru for raiding and counter raiding. However, some Pokot youths had accompanied the women’s crusade to Turkana and they said that they were prepared to hold meetings with their Turkana counterparts to resolve grazing issues.

The elders and women emphasised that there had been an increase in youth criminality. The CAPE Unit reports also raise the same issue:

“Phelix Palal gave the chronology of events that led to a bloody fight between the Toposa and the Turkana. According to the elder, two Toposa youths invited a group of Turkana youths to their home assuming from their

look; they are the Nyangatom. The visitors turned on the young Toposa men killing them in cold blood using machetes. The gang of murderers came across five old men holding a discussion under a traditional tree and shot them to death. The wanton killings continued. The spate of killings alarmed the Toposa who perceived it as provocation by the Turkana”.

(Akoret, Kapoeta, Chemolingot Peace Follow-up Meeting, July 2002).

In addition to raiding for bride price, alcoholism among the youths was also observed. An AU/IBAR document reports that:

“Kula Kolea said the unbecoming noticeable behaviour among the youths especially from Koloa Division is drinking alcohol indiscriminately in the villages on credit and when they fail to settle the bills, a raid is organised where raided animals are sold to settle debts” (ibid.).

Raising school fees was also identified as another factor contributing to raiding by more educated youths.

Woman addresses peace meeting at Loktikippi plains - Photo credit: GrahniIBAR



6. Impact on development stakeholders

Partners such as government institutions CBOs, NGOs and local authorities appreciate the cross-border work of the CAPE Unit and their unique approach with the women's peace crusades that promote cross-border dialogue. However, they expressed a wish to be more involved in the planning of the CAPE Unit's activities and suggested that the project should concentrate on conflict prevention rather than crisis management.

Conflict prevention activities should include regular peace meetings between the warring communities, intensified just before the onset of the dry season. It should also include the enhancement of water development, among other activities, running concurrently with the regular peace meetings. Grass roots CBOs should be supported to follow up the peace meetings.

Currently stakeholders feel that the CAPE Unit moved into the conflict cycle after hostilities had occurred: this was often too late. For effective conflict management, the peace building actors need to intervene at every stage of the conflict cycle by collaborating and networking with all the actors to ultimately reduce frequency of raids.

Relations with NGOs and CBOs

Most of the CAPE Unit's activities have been implemented in partnership with other international NGOs, especially ITDG, VSF-B, SNV in Kenya and church institutions, such as the Diocese of Torit (DoT) in Southern Sudan. Most partners also credit the CAPE Unit women's peace crusades as a unique approach.

Whilst acknowledging the tremendous efforts of the CAPE Unit in peace building, most partners pointed out the following weaknesses:

- **Weak participatory planning.** Most partners in Turkana and Toposa areas

wanted to be included in the planning phases of the CAPE Unit's activities to prepare adequately for activities assigned to them. The CAPE Unit had not held activities in West Pokot except the women's crusade that did not involve many partners from the district.

- **Insufficient capacity.** All partners felt that the CAPE Unit office in Lodwar lacked adequate staffing to implement their activities effectively, hence the tendency to focus on Turkana District. Some also felt that the Unit needed to employ staff from the communities they were assisting in peace building and conflict management, such as the Pokot, Dodoth and Toposa. Currently there is no staff from these communities in the Lodwar office, although there is a combination of Karamojong and Turkana among them. The partners suggested that the impact of the peace building would be better if implemented by staff working with their own ethnic communities as opposed to staff from another community.
- **Supporting peace committees.** Whilst the CAPE Unit has attempted to form peace committees at the village level (including Nakukulas), ITDG, World Vision MAPOTU (Marakwet, Pokot and Turkana) and VSF-B have also made progress in this area. They would be willing to support the CAPE Unit in forming new peace committees or working with existing ones in conflict prevention. Peace committees at the grass roots are the most effective institutions for sustainable local conflict management.
- **Supporting local CBOs.** The CBO umbrella organisation in Turkana, the Turkana Development Organisation Forum (TUDOF), and LYAS had not

received support from the CAPE Unit despite several requests and neither had Toposa Development Association (TDA) in Sudan for peace building activities. However, the CAPE Unit had assisted PIMU, KOMDEI and the Elemi Conflict Resolution and Development Project (ECOREDEP). In West Pokot the CAPE Unit still implements its activities through Community-based Animal Health Workers (CAHWs), instead of liaising with the new local CBOs, such as Pokot Educational and Development Programme (PEDP). The current CAPE Unit USAID funding is restrictive and can only be used to support CBOs on the Kenya-Sudan border. However, the CAPE Unit is currently seeking approval for support to CBOs in other project areas. In addition, most CBOs are relatively new and have been formed in the last two years. They still lack capacity for effective project implementation. The CAPE Unit still has a role to play in strengthening the capacities of the new CBOs in various fields by supporting the district umbrella organisations, such as TUDOF in Turkana District.

Relations with governments political and administrative structures

- The relationship between the CAPE Unit project and the local authorities

in Turkana District is good. According to the Assistant Chief of Lokichar, collaboration between the local authority and the community has improved due to the peace initiatives by the CAPE Unit and other actors, such as World Vision MAPOTU (creation of village peace committees). The community relays reports on crime to the chiefs, councillors, elders and the police through peace committees, hence the reduced incidences of highway banditry in Lokichar Division. However, improved security in some parts of southern Turkana can also be attributed to the deployment of administration police along the Pokot/Turkana border and GSU patrols in Lorogon.

- In Southern Sudan, the relationship between the CAPE Unit and the Kapoeta County authorities could be strengthened. Protocol, consultation and participatory planning of activities especially conflict prevention with the authorities in Sudan has room for improvement.
- In West Pokot, the local administration was hardly involved in the CAPE Unit's activities because most of them, except the women's peace crusade, took place in Turkana District.

7. Impacts on root causes of conflict

The root causes of conflict in the Karamojong Cluster range from competition over dry season grazing areas and water points (Turkana - Dodoth), bride price (Toposa), heroism, to wealth and border disputes (Turkana - Pokot). All these causes have been exacerbated by the proliferation of small arms and, in Southern Sudan, the weakness of government.

The following points show the CAPE Unit's efforts in addressing root causes of conflict:

Behaviour change

The CAPE Unit has made tremendous inroads at creating awareness and sensitising the communities on the need to change cultural behaviours, such as heroism, brideprice and revenge that contribute to raiding. All stakeholders endorsed this achievement.

Sustainable natural resource management

The CAPE Unit has also attempted to address resource management by facilitating grazing agreements and establishing the judicial mechanisms to enforce them. Incomplete participation of key community leaders during meetings and weak participation of youths and local authorities and such security organs as the army and police lead to failure in enforcing the resolutions of peace meetings.

Governance

The CAPE Unit has also made efforts to lobby state security organs to get actively involved in international border conflict management.

However, the Unit should be more active in this area by targeting the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management and Peace Building.

Development

The CAPE Unit has directly addressed development issues moderately by increasing access to water in grazing areas and lobbying for the control of small arms in the region.

It should also be noted that developmental projects located along the borders, such as the Turkwell Gorge Dam, the irrigation project in Turkana and Nasolot Game Reserve are thought to have contributed to the escalation of conflict between the Pokot and Turkana because each community feels that they should benefit more from these ventures compared to their neighbours.

The CAPE Unit does not provide animal health services directly but has technically facilitated international NGOs, such as SNV and VSF-B to provide these services. The CAPE Unit has also supported the privatisation of CAHWs trained by the two NGOs. However, the CAPE Unit could consider setting aside resources to support other actors whose mandate are in water and other development sectors. The Kwatela and Lokumong among the Turkana claimed that water was their most pressing need, while the Pokot affirmed that the settlement of border disputes was most important.

8. Analysis of impact

Reducing Conflicts

Communities who participated in the assessment claim that the frequency of major raids has reduced while small thefts had increased. Yet the same communities had not realised major peace dividends, such as trade, security, joint patrols, access to common grazing areas and increased inter-marriages.

The dynamic nature of conflict makes it difficult to control and attribute its reduction to any actor or a particular intervention. The root causes and the factors that contribute to the increase of these causes are numerous, intertwined and intricate. There are also many actors in conflict management and resolution using various methodologies and approaches. Reductions in conflict in the Karamojong Cluster can only be attributed to the sum of the efforts of all actors.

The Turkana-Dodoth border, for example, was found to be less volatile than the Turkana-Toposa or the Turkana-Pokot borders, because the peace efforts from the CAPE Unit, ITDG, the local authorities, the Catholic Mission had succeeded to some extent. This improvement also resulted in better discussions between the Dodoth and Turkana on dry season grazing and the return of stolen livestock. The two communities had been involved in livestock barter trade. During the assessment all these activities had stopped because of increased livestock theft by the Dodoth during the onset of the dry season and the consequent increase in tension between the two communities.

While tackling conflict, actors need to target the whole cycle of conflict from the mitigation phase to prevention, crisis and resolution phases. Sustainable conflict transformation and peace building can only be successful by initiating development activities and regular follow-up of peace agreements and resolutions.

Community capacity to manage conflicts

The capacity of communities to manage conflicts can be increased by supporting grass roots peace structures, such as VPCs and CBOs. Various actors in the three border areas studied have adopted this approach with the District Peace and Development Committee in Turkana and VPCs in West Pokot. Kapoeta County in Southern Sudan, like in Turkana District, is in the process of forming county peace committees based on the Wajir model.

The role of peace agreements and recognition of international borders

The three ethnic groups that were interviewed affirmed that networks of communication between the different groups, respect for peace agreements and recognising international borders were effective mechanisms for managing conflict. Although the onset of war in Southern Sudan and the proliferation of small arms have weakened these methods, they can be revived because they are more acceptable and familiar to the communities than other methods that have been introduced from without.

Institutional constraints

Institutional constraints within the CAPE Unit also played a role in the impacts of peace building in the Karamojong Cluster. The weak follow-up of peace activities in all the study areas was due to under-staffing. It is important to recall that the impact assessment was conducted when the CAPE Unit had recently lost two staff members from the Lodwar office. The lack of support to Kenyan CBOs was due to funding restrictions on the funds provided by the donor. Secondly, a delay in facilitating peace building activities during late 2003 is partly explained by a three-month delay in the release of funds by one of the core donors.

9. Recommendations

The following measures were recommended with input from the target communities, CBOs, international NGOs and the local administrations from the three border areas sampled.

The multiplication of un-coordinated peace initiatives in the Karamojong Cluster over the past decades has been a source of turmoil. It is recommended that all actors, especially the international NGOs including the CAPE Unit, increase their co-operation and collaboration efforts at the district and national levels. They should as much as possible support the implementation of grass roots peace building structures as the impacts of the CAPE Unit, both in peace dividends and increasing capacity of local communities would be better with stronger structures at the lowest levels.

Peace dividends

To increase peace dividends the following measures were suggested:

- ***Increase collaboration and participatory planning with local authorities, in Southern Sudan, Uganda and Pokot***

The Sudanese and Kenyan authorities are still stressing the need for radio frequencies that can be used across



Small arms proliferation has increased insecurity and made it difficult to provide services to pastoralists
- Photo credit: gritty.org

borders to monitor conflict. This recommendation was made in the 2001 review and the need still stands. The CAPE Unit having a cross-border mandate should explore the feasibility of this request.

- ***Establish bases locally and involve indigenous staff in the programmes***

The CAPE Unit should establish bases in Sudan, Uganda and Pokot and could try to employ more indigenous staff or increase support to established CBOs in such areas. This recommendation was also made in the 2001 study and in November 2002 by the CAPE Unit field mission to Southern Sudan. The CAPE Unit has taken a significant step towards this goal by implementing the Sudan Peace Fund Project with an established base in Kapoeta, Southern Sudan.

- ***Facilitate the involvement of prominent personalities in the peace building process***

The CAPE Unit's sponsorship of Hon. Munyes' visit to Uganda to negotiate the return of livestock stolen from the Turkana was highly appreciated by the Turkana and had a significant impact on their perception of the government. The CAPE Unit should consider scaling up this type of effort in other border areas.

- ***Strengthen collaboration with partners***

The CAPE unit should identify, prioritise and plan activities with international NGOs and umbrella institutions, such as the TPDC and TUDOF and also increase participation in forums such as the District Steering Group.

- ***Engage the youths in peace building activities***

The youths should be encouraged to participate in regular fortnightly inter-community meetings and engage in developmental activities to earn a living and diversify their livelihood into other activities other than livestock keeping. They could also be deployed at peace monitoring activities, such as collection and collation of conflict data while sensitising their communities about the consequences of conflict. The CAPE Unit could collaborate with other developmental actors who specialise in diversified livelihood programmes.

- ***Enhance support for development projects***

If the CAPE Unit cannot enter directly into the development arena, it can try to increase support to other actors in animal health, water and pasture management projects because such activities are effective in reinforcing peace gains and maintaining peace.

Community capacity to manage conflicts

To increase the capacity of the communities to manage conflicts, the consultants recommend the following steps:

- ***Support the existing traditional negotiation mechanisms for grazing agreements and return of livestock***

Before every dry season, the CAPE Unit should support the elders to meet and broker grazing agreements amongst themselves before they move to the dry season grazing area. The communities along the three border areas indicated that they were willing to negotiate grazing

agreements with other communities.

- ***Support and strengthen the district and village peace structures, through training and facilitation in terms of finance and materials through the DPDCs***

Funding and institutional capacity building would still rely on external aid. However, the fine system (compensation or penalties against crime) could be used to maintain the peace committees as is the practice in some areas.

- ***Increase support to local CBOs***

The CAPE Unit should give financial and material support to CBOs for mobilising and assisting in forming grass roots peace structures and building capacities through group management and leadership training through TUDOF. This support should be well designed with exit strategies at the onset to avoid dependency syndrome by the CBOs and lack of sustainability. The CAPE Unit can emulate the Oxfam GB capacity building and institutional strengthening programme in Wajir that has documented many experiences and lessons from implementing a similar process.

Rethinking the CAPE Unit strategy

The limited peace dividends realised by the communities were mostly associated with the CAPE Unit's lack of capacity in the Lodwar office to follow-up the resolutions agreed upon during peace meetings. The three conflict border areas are far apart and conflicts are frequent. The CAPE Unit, therefore, needs to choose one of the three suggested scenarios for their new strategy.

Scenario One

- Increase staff and resources to cover the area in greater depth

Scenario Two

- Concentrate on cross-border work, especially in Sudan and Uganda and hand over internal border conflict (West Pokot-Turkana) to other relevant peace organisations, such as World Vision, Oxfam GB, ITDG and the NCKK.

Scenario three

- Instead of direct implementation of peace building activities, the CAPE Unit could channel funds and technical advice through new local peace structures such as DPDCs, VPCs and CBOs and concentrate on policy lobbying and advocacy at district, national and international levels. Policy influencing should be informed by peace building activities of the CAPE Unit's grass roots partners whose lobbying and advocacy capacities should be strengthened. Lobbying and advocacy should target the following areas:

1. Small arms and disarmament, increasing border police and Kenya Police Reservists (KPRs) and reviewing the role of the paramilitary institutions, such as the KPR by supporting the work of the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management and Peace building based in Nairobi
2. Increasing development interventions, such as water, animal health services and infrastructure in conflict prone areas by governments and developmental agencies. Lobbying can be channelled through existing networks, such as the Pastoralist Development Network of Kenya.
3. For the Turkana–Toposa border area, the lobbying for the establishment of a new government in Southern Sudan is extremely important as the Toposa blamed the lack of peace enforcement on the weak government structures. Through the new conflict programme in the AU headquarters, the CAPE Unit can influence this process.

10. Conclusion

The peace building efforts by the CAPE Unit are commendable. The Unit has created awareness, and sensitised the target communities on the need for behaviour change. There is however, a real need for the CAPE Unit to re-strategise on a pragmatic way forward that will deliver the greatest impact from its peace building work.

The assessment found that efforts such as the women's peace crusades and meetings by the CAPE Unit have been successful in creating awareness in all the operational areas and reducing violent conflict along the Turkana-Dodoch border. In addition, the livestock recovery by the peace committee in Nakukulas along the Turkana - Pokot border has also increased, showing improved capacity

of the community to manage conflict.

Better, more participatory and more rigorous prioritisation of the CAPE Unit's operational activities in the Cluster would lead to financial resources being spent on interventions that will yield maximum impact such as following-up resolutions agreed upon in meetings and facilitating government officials in peace negotiations.

Finally the consultants believe that there are numerous opportunities that the CAPE Unit can exploit to yield better results and greater impacts especially with participatory planning with all stakeholders and direct support to district and village peace structures for sustainable peace.

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