

Breaking the Spears and Cooling the Earth

**An analytical review of the Pastoral
Communities Harmonisation Initiative**

**Daudi Waithaka
Peace and Development Foundation (Africa)**

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**Community-based Animal Health and Participatory
Epidemiology Unit**

Pan African Programme for the Control of Epizootics
Organization of African Unity/Interafrican Bureau for
Animal Resources



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Carried out by

Daudi Waithaka,
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Produced by

Community-based Animal Health and Epidemiology (CAPE) Unit
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*Edited by Lily Aduke
Design & Layout by Sammy Mwirigi*

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Acronyms

APF	-	Africa Peace Forum
ALIN	-	Arid Lands Information Network
AACC	-	All Africa Conference of Churches
ALRMP	-	Arid Lands Resource Management Project
BHM	-	Border Harmonisation Meetings
CAHS	-	Community-based Animal Health Systems
CAPE	-	Community Based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology
CEWARN	-	Conflict Early Warning Mechanism
CBO	-	Community Based Organisation
CDTF	-	Community Development Trust Fund
DfID	-	Department for International Development
EC	-	European Community
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FEWS	-	Famine Early Warning System
IBAR	-	Inter-Africa Bureau for Animal Resources
ICRC	-	International Council of Red Cross
IGAD	-	Inter-Governmental Authority for Development
IIED	-	International
ILRI	-	International Livestock Research Institute
IRIN	-	Network
ITDG	-	Intermediate Technology Development Group
NGO	-	Non-Government Organisation
OAU	-	Organisation of African Unity
PACE	-	Programme for Control of Epizootics
PARC-VAC	-	Participatory Community Based Vaccination and Animal Health
PCH	-	Pastoral Communities Harmonisation
PDF	-	Peace and Development Foundation
REDSO	-	Regional Economic Development Services Office
SNV	-	Organisation of Netherlands Volunteers
UNHAI	-	United Nations Horn of Africa Initiative
UNIFEM	-	United Nations Development Fund for women
WV	-	World Vision

Summary

The fourteen ethnic groups that constitute the Karamojong Cluster are a troubled people. They are pastoralists who depend wholly on livestock for their livelihood. Their homeland is in the arid and semi-arid lands of north-eastern Uganda, south-eastern Sudan, north-western Kenya, and south-western Ethiopia. The area is characterised by little or no rain; too dry or barren to support vegetation. Frequent droughts force them to migrate continually, in search of pasture and water.

These troubles are worsened by incessant conflict among themselves, resulting in perpetual insecurity and massive loss of life and property. Guns are easily available to the youths, and the four governments; of Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia could be accused of neglecting security and development in the area. The Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the Organization of African Unity (OAU/IBAR) is concerned with promoting the development of animal resources, and has been active in the area since early 1990s. OAU/IBAR's initiatives have been to work with the communities to eradicate rinderpest and control other livestock diseases through community-based animal health approach but insecurity has greatly undermined this work and that of its partners. However, the organisation has already won the confidence of the livestock owners through these initiatives, and the community-based approach to services that it has adopted. The people now identify OAU/IBAR as an organisation that is willing to listen to their problems. In 1998 dialogue ensued between OAU/IBAR and members of the communities. The organisation agreed to convene a meeting, bringing together members of the Karamojong communities Cluster, to seek a solution on how to contain the rampant insecurity. This was the beginning of a peace-making initiative, initially named the Border Harmonisation Meetings (BHM), and later renamed the Pastoral Communities Harmonisation (PCH) initiative.

The PCH initiative started, tentatively at first, in 1999, but soon gained momentum that saw the coming together of representatives from all the fourteen groups of the cluster in a series of meetings. The initiative also attracted the interest of other development and peace workers in the area. In December 1999, an international meeting was convened in Lodwar, Kenya to discuss the progress of the initiative. The meeting commended OAU/IBAR for work well done and recommended that the PCH initiative continue, as it was a useful way of introducing peace at the grassroots. The communities discussed peace between themselves; resulting in a second international meeting that was attended by donors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), government representatives, members of parliament, and community representatives drawn from all the fourteen groups. The PCH initiative has generated useful analyses of the situation; brought out new insights into the problems of the pastoralists; prescribed potential solutions; and halted hostilities. Besides, it has highlighted the dire need of the Karamojong Cluster's communities, for peace and development. The future of the PCH initiative is, however, uncertain. A new home for this initiative needs to be found so that OAU/IBAR can concentrate on its core business of promoting the development of animal resources. Nevertheless, OAU/IBAR cannot just abandon the initiative, in which it has invested so much time and resources and rekindled the hopes of so many people.

This report is a brief, critical analysis of the initiative, its process, strengths and challenges, and future perspectives. '*Breaking spears*' is a term used by the Karamojong people to describe the act of separating warring parties, while '*cooling the earth*' is describes the act of bringing peace and reconciliation.

*the karamojong
cluster initiative*



Background

Pastoralism, as a way of life in large parts of the African continent, has for a long time been labelled primitive and backward. The social development models that colonial governments introduced in different African countries favoured sedentary farming and discouraged nomadic pastoralism. Successive governments have, over time, marginalised pastoralist communities because they, unlike their sedentary counterparts, are not open to external influence, manipulation and control. As a result, pastoralists across the continent have largely been left to their own devices and denied their full share, and access to development resources.

In the last two decades, development agencies and, to some extent, governments became convinced that pastoralism, as a way of life, does have merits considering the harsh and natural resource-starved environment that these people have to contend with. It is now clear that nomadic pastoralism is an appropriate environmental management practice that economically lucrative and contribute to mainstreaming the communities. To achieve this, however, governments must understand the traditional, social, economic, and cultural values and practices of the people, and incorporate them in national policies and plans.

The communities of the Karamojong Cluster occupy the arid and semi-arid areas of north-eastern Uganda, north-western Kenya, south-eastern Sudan and south-western Ethiopia. The cluster comprises fourteen pastoral ethnic groups; : the Upe, Pian, Tepes, Pokot, Bakora, Toposa, Dodoth, Turkana, Merille, Didinga, Matheniko, Nyang'atom, the Jie of Uganda, and the Jie of Sudan. These communities are related, genealogically and linguistically, except the Pokot and the Didinga. The two communities belong to the Kalenjin genealogical group that live in Kenya, Uganda and Southern Sudan. However, the Pokot and the Didinga have been neighbours of

the Karamojong people for many generations. They have interchanged many cultural values and, in many ways, behave similarly.

The Karamojong Cluster has been disadvantaged, exploited and disturbed for over a century. They are isolated, culturally and geographically; the climate is harsh and uncertain, and the natural resources are fast declining. Political crises of the 1970s, the famines of the eighties and conflicts in Sudan and Somalia have turned chronic, low-grade insecurity into out-of-control lawlessness and civil disintegration. Banditry and livestock rustling are causes and consequences of the economic collapse, the spiralling distress, and poverty that now afflict the cluster. Hundreds of people have been killed; thousands have lost their livelihoods or forced to migrate.

The Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU/IBAR), has the mandate from heads of OAU member states to work across the continent, promoting the development of animal resources and curbing animal diseases. OAU/IBAR has been involved in animal health services in the Karamojong Cluster where livestock is the main source of subsistence and income. The communities of the cluster also have a cultural significance that is difficult for outsiders to comprehend. OAU/IBAR's community-based approach to animal disease control helped gain the respect and trust of the pastoralists. From this trust, the communities turned to the organisation to help them to reconcile, and find ways of resolving conflicts that are destroying the lives of people and animals.

OAU/IBAR realised that without peace, it is impossible and pointless to offer animal health services to the people. It accepted the communities' request to broker peace between them, and it has been mediating peaceful resolutions to conflicts during the last three years. The Regional Economic Development Services Office (REDSO) of the United States Agency for International Develop-

ment (USAID) funded the initial efforts; the Department for International Development (DfID), UK and the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF) of the European Commission (EC) have funded the latter ones.

The process

OAU/IBAR conforms to the following procedures when co-ordinating peace and development initiatives in the cluster.

- > Each community identifies representatives;
- > OAU/IBAR convenes a meeting for representatives of each community to discuss and set the agenda for inter-communal dialogue;
- > OAU/IBAR transports the representatives to a selected venue for inter-communal dialogue;
- > Representatives from the various communities offer traditional prayers to open the meeting;
- > Each participant introduces her/himself to fellow participants;
- > Participants, particularly those coming from neighbouring communities who share common livestock pathways, and have problems with each other hold informal discussions. OAU/IBAR encourage participants to interact, by getting them to eat together and share accommodation, and promote informal discussions;
- > OAU/IBAR staff guide participants to consolidate the informal talks to formal discussion sessions conducted in local languages;
- > Community representatives propose strategies and solutions to the various problems;

- > Community representatives analyse the roles that donors, UN agencies, religious organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government departments perform or fail to perform to improve the lives of members of the cluster;
- > Community representatives propose what each body can do to strengthen the impact of its involvement in the lives of the communities.

While initial meetings may involve two neighbouring groups, subsequent meetings include several groups and develop into a summit for the whole group. Two such meetings have taken place since 1999. The first one, composed of elders alone, was in Lodwar, Kenya in December 1999, and the second one that included women and youth representatives was in Mbale, Uganda in June 2001. Both meetings ran concurrently with international ones involving representatives from NGOs, governments, donor organisations, and religious bodies. The idea behind holding the two meetings side by side is for these agencies and community leaders to exchange ideas and information. OAU/IBAR has facilitated sixteen inter-communal meetings since the beginning of the peace process.

Problems that communities resolved to address by themselves

By entering into dialogue, the communities identified certain failures in their part. They bemoaned the breakdown of traditions and customs that acted as social control mechanisms and admitted that they still instigate raiding for livestock. The dialogue also identified solutions and resolutions to their problems, and they promised to implement what they can.

The participants feared that it might be too late to revert

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to the traditions that once helped in disciplining the youth. Many of them felt that as long as the youth could obtain guns, independently, they would continue undermining the authority of the elders. Some participants were hopeful that if the governments ridded the area of guns, and educated and trained the youth, the desire to carry out raids would diminish.

The participants resolved to desist from instigating raids and begin to correct the wrongs. Listed below are some examples of positive interventions that resulted from the inter-communal meetings.

Following the Chemoligot Pokot¹ -Turkana meeting the following activities have taken place:

- > The chiefs from the two communities have organised a joint public meeting to persuade the youth to abandon raiding;
- > The elders from the two communities stopped an impeding raid at Kapedo Sub-county, Kotido District of Uganda;
- > The Turkana and the Pokot performed a daylight *edonga*² on Christmas day, at Kapedo;
- > The Turkana in Kapedo allowed the Pokot to sell milk to them;
- > The two communities have contained banditry along the Kapedo-Marigat Road.
- The Lukumong Turkana³ and the Dodoth communities have taken the following actions after the meeting between them.
 - > Turkana elders returned 44 cattle that the youth from the community had stolen from the Dodoth;
 - > The raid that the Toposa had planned to Dodothland aborted because their allies, the Kwatela Turkana⁴ reneged;
 - > Apamulele, a Turkana man, married a Dodoth woman and paid the required dowry;⁵
 - > The Turkana of Naporot⁶ migrated to Dodothland in search of pasture, unmolested by the natives;
 - > The Dodoth and the Turkana communities now barter goods;
 - > The Dodoth allowed the Turkana to graze their livestock in their territory during drought;
 - > The Dodoth returned twenty heads of cattle and four donkeys that their youth had stole from Daniel Lochampa, a Turkana man of Adakari Apamulele, a grazing association;

¹ The Chemoligot Pokot come from East Pokot in Kenya.

² An *edonga* is a traditional dance that communities of the Karamojong Cluster perform in the evenings. That the two communities danced together signifies peace.

³ The Lukumong Turkana are a sub-section of this community living in Kakuma Division in Kenya.

⁴ The Kwatela Turkana are a sub-section of this community living in Lokichoggio Division in Kenya, bordering Toposaland in Sudan.

⁵ This was an acknowledged intermarriage signifying a peaceful co-existance.

⁶ Naporot is a dry season grazing area in Oropoi Division of Turkana District. It borders Dodothland in Uganda.

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- > The Toposa, on 19th March 2001 returned to the Turkana 13 heads of cattle that their youth had stolen during a raid
- > The Kwatela Turkana, on 26th March 2001, returned to the Toposa 65 heads of cattle that their youth had stolen during a raid

Problems beyond community capacity

The communities identified insecurity, underdevelopment, sponsored banditry, influx of guns into the area, and political and economical marginalisation as some of the problems that contribute to their situation, and are beyond their capacity to control or solve.

Overall impact of the initiative

Over and above the isolated positive outcomes of the process, as highlighted in 3.3, the overall value and impact of the initiative has been raising awareness, and focussing on issues that contribute to marginalisation and suffering of the communities of the cluster. That the initiative has grown to involve NGOs, governmental agencies, the fourteen communities, international organisations, and people's representatives in the national legislatures is testimony to its impact. This growing awareness needs to be nurtured and information flow maintained so that a point of critical mass may eventually be realised. When this happens, the concerned parties will jointly and independently, generate corrective activities.

strengths of the initiative



Appropriateness of entry point into the communities

The Participatory Community-based Vaccination and Animal Health Project (PARC-VAC), later renamed the Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology Unit (CAPE), spearheaded the work of OAU/IBAR. The CAPE project was designed to use community-based approaches to offer animal health services. Herdsman and livestock owners were directly involved in treating their sick animals, guided by veterinary doctors and veterinary technicians. This approach brought veterinary personnel close to the communities and enlightened them on the hazards that pastoralists face, from day to day. The community members also came to trust veterinary officers, and to appreciate their work. These sentiments are clearly illustrated by the words of Ekeno Loirabok, a Turkana elder from Lotikipi Plains.

"The best friend of a livestock owner is the vet. By treating and keeping the animals alive, the vet literally keeps the family of the livestock owner alive. OAU vets have been with us for some years, and we have come to trust them"

As mutual respect and trust between the staff of OAU/IBAR and the different pastoralist groups grew, the communities confided in OAU/IBAR veterinary officers, telling them of their problems. This close relationship between the staff and members of the fourteen ethnic groups eventually resulted in peace-making interventions.

The field team

The head of the field team is a veterinary doctor from the Teso ethnic group of Uganda. The Teso are, genealogically, closely related to the Karamojong. He,

therefore, understands the languages and the cultures of the whole group. He has also worked with the pastoral people in this area, and in Central Africa for many years. These qualities and the experience are an advantage for he is well-known and highly-regarded by the people. The rest of the team, composed of para-vets, interpreters and drivers, is also largely drawn from the cluster. These factors have greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the field team.

The support team

The CAPE Unit Office in Nairobi provides essential technical and logistical support to the field team. A veterinary doctor, who is a British citizen, heads the unit. He has worked for many years in Southern Sudan and among the communities that constitute the cluster. He has been at the forefront of pioneering the community-based animal health provision approaches in the region. He is not only well-known to the communities but also has a clear insight into the problems that pastoralists face. The other members of the support team are two veterinary doctors, administrative and accounting staff, and consultants from the Peace and Development Foundation (PDF), a pan-African organisation that endeavours to link peace with development, among other objectives. The support team is in charge of fundraising, reporting and accounting. The team also acts as the external arm of the frontline team through research, liaising with other agencies and projecting the reach of the initiative to the outside world.

Additionally, the TUFTS University of the USA rendered invaluable support to the community-based approach by providing a wide range of information on complex emergency response, livelihoods analysis, case studies and the development of key tools for Community-based Animal Health Delivery Systems (CAHS) such as the heat stable rinderpest vaccine.

Funding the initiative

The Regional Economic Development Services Office of the USAID has been the principle donor of the PCH initiative, over time, by providing US\$300 000. Recently, the DfID and the CDTF also joined the donors to the initiative. DfID has provided £30,000; CDTF has provided Kshs.5 million. The funding has enabled the initiative to pay staff salaries, buy office equipment and vehicles, and meet the costs of community workshops and international meetings. Other International NGOs, like, VSF-Belgium, Oxfam-GB, the Diocese of Torit, the Organisation of Netherlands Volunteer (SNV), and the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) have also contributed to the initiative in cash and kind.

The credibility of OAU/IBAR

IBAR is one of the oldest pan-African organisations in existence today. It was founded in 1951, long before its current parent organisation-the OAU. IBAR's track record in promoting the development of animal resources, throughout the continent, is outstanding. Its most prominent role has been spearheading the struggle against animal diseases and curbing epizootics across borders. This excellent track record has added credibility to the PCH initiative and attracted the interest and participation of other agencies.

The continental mandate of OAU

The OAU has been criticized, in some quarters, for its ineptitude in dealing with political and economic problems facing Africa. However, even its worst critics concede that given its structural and resource-starved condition, it has enhanced Africa's continental oneness and laid foundations for inter-country and regional economic and political collaborative initiatives. The PCH initiative has benefited from the OAU continental mandate by having easy access to governments, enabling

it to operate with ease across borders and within the cluster.

Deliberate inter-agency collaborative approach

OAU/IBAR realised, early enough, that the PCH initiative needed to involve several actors and supporters, within and without the cluster, if it was to impact on the situation of the Karamojong people. The organisation, therefore, has spared no effort to involve several NGOs, religious organisations, government departments and community-based organisations (CBOs) in the peace initiative, across the cluster. These organisations have not only participated in meetings but their involvement has resulted in a substantive facilitation of the frontline team's operations. The OAU/IBAR team and other agencies have jointly conducted most of the community workshops. The wide participation of the experienced agencies has brought new insights into the initiative. The organisations have obtained permits from the administrative structures of the government, with ease, to cross borders and to hold meetings because the authorities are directly involved in the peace initiative. Some of these organisations are listed below.

- > ACACIA
- > Actionaid
- > Africa Peace Forum
- > All Africa Conference of Churches
- > The Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN)
- > The Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP)
- > CARE International
- > Center for Conflict Resolution
- > Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)
- > Farm Africa
- > Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

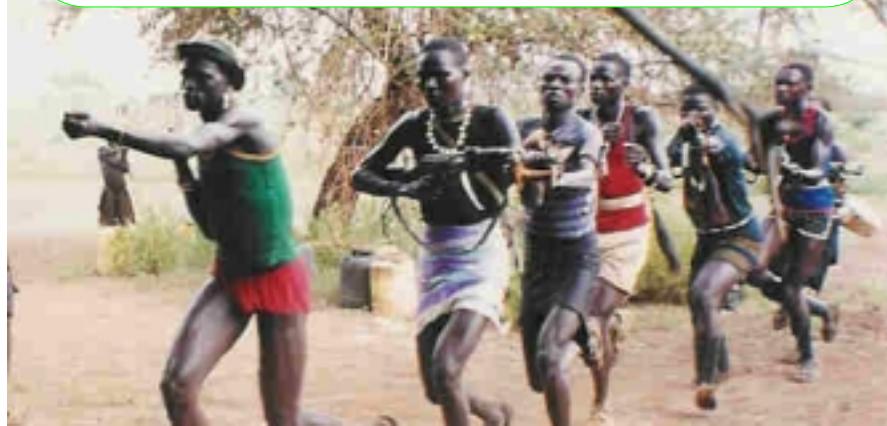
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- > The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)
- > The Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD)
- > The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC)
- > The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
- > The International Livestock Research Centre (ILRI)
- > OXFAM-GB
- > PACT MWENGO
- > The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
- > The United Nations Horn of Africa Initiative
- > The Wajir Peace Initiative
- > Women as Partners for Peace
- > World Space
- > World Vision

The deliberate effort, by OAU/IBAR, to involve many agencies has paid off. The ownership of the PCH initiative is widely shared and there is a slow shift, by the various actors, towards greater cohesion of activities and styles of implementation. There is also a notable increase of information exchange among the agencies though the most important benefit of this deliberate policy has been the value adding aspect of the agencies' individual activities to the peace initiative. The various agencies are more aware that in whatever development sector or geographical area they may be operating, they are contributing to a wider goal—that of unifying the people of the whole cluster.

*challenges & shortcomings
of the initiative*



Pervasive poverty of the Cluster residents

Governments and development agencies widely accept poverty and inaccessibility to development as the root causes of the perpetual conflicts and lack of security in the cluster. Continual marginalisation of the cluster, since the colonial times, has resulted in whole populations missing out on education and vocational training—hence the lack of alternatives for earning a living. Insecurity further limits and hampers the few development initiatives that development agencies avail. Poor or non-existent infrastructure and shortage of veterinary health services compound the situation. These problems limit trade in the only commodity widely available in the area—livestock. OAU/IBAR and other development agencies now realise that they have to tackle the spiralling poverty and its attendant negative effects if the communities are to know lasting peace.

Eradication of extreme poverty can only be achieved through long-term and sustained efforts. This fact is, slowly but surely, sinking into the collective consciousness of government authorities. However, the communities of the cluster will have to compete for the dwindling public resources with other areas even with the heightened will of governments to invest, massively, in the developing marginalised areas. Herein lies the dilemma facing OAU/IBAR and like-minded agencies. The best that one can hope for, at least in the short-term, is that sustained periods of peaceful co-existence will prevail. Peace among members of the cluster will allow OAU/IBAR and other agencies to offer animal health and other related development services, and thus gradually uplift the people's economic and political condition, for them to sustain the momentum for peace.

Conflicts and their causes are often regional—beyond the cluster

Practically the whole of the Horn of Africa is in tur-

moil. Somalia is a nation in shambles, without a central government. Sudan has been engaged in a civil war for a long time. Ethiopia is also experiencing civil unrest. A civil war is in progress in northern Uganda. Northern Kenya has not known sustained peace since independence.

The Karamojong Cluster lies in the middle of the unrest and some of the negative effects of these regional conflicts tend to spillover into the cluster. The long-term stability of the cluster is deeply intertwined with restoration of peace in the whole region. OAU/IBAR is aware of this reality hence its efforts to reach out and involve regional governmental organisations, particularly IGAD, and the Department of Political Affairs of the OAU.

Difficult terrain

The cluster is located in a vast arid and semi-arid area where roads are impassable to vehicles. The cluster dwellers are continually on the move in search of water and pasture. Mobilising community representatives for a meeting, even when only two neighbouring groups and not all the fourteen members of the cluster are involved, is a mean task. It is a difficult assignment on the personnel and the vehicles. There are many areas that are completely inaccessible by motor transport, so the frontline team has to abandon the vehicles and mobilise the people on foot. Though most community workshops take three to five days, the arrangements may take up to seven weeks.

Warlords and sponsored banditry

Traditionally, raiding for livestock was community initiated and controlled through the customary institutions—elders, seers, mothers, and young women. The motives for such raids, like restocking after serious droughts or after an outbreak of epizootic diseases, were mostly part and parcel of the communities' survival.

Rules for the mission were, however, clearly understood and adhered to. The customary institutions were also used to petition for peace and reparations. The community was in control.

Over time, the communities' control institutions have been eroded and rendered impotent. The first onslaught on these institutions took place in the colonial times when the government imposed chiefs on the people to replace traditional leaders. The communities did not recognise or respect the leaders that were imposed on them. The post-independence governments also perpetuated the imposed institutions that replaced mechanisms for internal governance. The governments introduced new laws without consulting the communities, compelling them to use force to ensure that the people complied with those laws. Country borders that the colonial government introduced cut whole communities from their traditional grazing areas. Unfortunately, governments have, over time, largely lost control over the pastoral areas and created an administrative vacuum.

Self-styled warlords and bandits have filled this vacuum. The warlords sponsor raids to enrich themselves and to gain political control of the area. Bandits and criminals have also found a fertile ground for their anti-social activities. The communities are unable to stop these types of raids. Community workshops have estimated that more than 60% of all the raids in the region, in the last ten years, were actually occasioned by these anti-social elements, rather than themselves. OAU/IBAR is aware of these truths even as it engages communities in dialogue. This is why the organisation has been putting extra effort to engage governments in the communities' harmonisation initiative for without governmental participation, externally sponsored banditry will not be contained.

Easy availability of modern weapons

While traditional raids were carried out using basic weapons—spears, bow and arrows, sticks and knives; modern weaponry is used in contemporary raiding missions. Raiders need not get close to their victims, but are able to mow down anyone within the range of their guns. Women, children and the elderly, who were traditionally protected from molestation by customary and traditional codes, are now the most common victims of such raids.

Chief David Longiro of Lobolangit in Karamoja was quoted in the East African of May 7th 2001, saying : -

"Here, the buying and selling of guns is an accepted way of life. Men travel hundreds of miles to look for the 'latest' weaponry"

In the same issue of the East African, the following information was revealed,

"—Karamoja region (of Uganda) alone has over 160 000 illegally owned arms"

The People Newspaper (of Kenya) of May 15th 2001, citing a report by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission said this,

"There are 3 000 Kenya Police reservists in the North Rift. Their arms are being misused for profit and to terrorize the people of the North Rift."

Ethiopian and Sudanese connections weak

The linkages of the PCH initiative with the governments of Sudan and Ethiopia are rather weak. In Sudan, the area that the cluster covers is mostly under the control of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). However, SPLM is not an internationally recognised governmental authority. OAU/IBAR cannot formally engage it to implement the peace initiative yet, if banditry is to be controlled in this area, SPLM is the body to initiate it.

In Ethiopia, the frontline team has not been able to fully involve government authorities because of logistics and systems of hierarchy in the government that they are yet to understand. Ethiopian representation at the international fora has been composed mostly of veterinary officers and some junior administrators, and not senior government officers because of this problem. The CAPE Unit recently employed a veterinary officer based in Addis Ababa to help bridge this gap.

Insufficient involvement of women and youth

In the traditional forms of raiding, all members of the raiding community participated in the mission. Elders legitimised raids by giving the necessary permission. Seers recommended the most appropriate targets and predicted the most opportune times for the raids. Medicine men treated the would-be raiders with protective potions. Mothers blessed their sons before the raids. Young women encouraged and cheered the raiders on. Young men, of course, did the raiding. After successful raids, the whole community would feast and celebrate the victory.

The communities' initiative initially only targeted the elders in the inter-communal dialogue because they still hold sway over the communities in the cluster. How-

ever, this approach presented certain problems. On one hand, elders are well-schooled in diplomacy and will commit their communities to certain resolutions, knowing quite well that such commitments would not be binding. On the other hand, elders' authority has been so eroded of influence that it used to command, particularly with the youth. The youth can now access guns, readily, on their own and they disregard the elders' advice.

Mothers and young women often have greater influence on the young men than the elders do yet it took some months for the initiative to realise that for greater impact on the communities, women must be involved in the process.

Similarly, young men have always been, and still are the main perpetrators of raids. They joined the initiative belatedly. Involving them in the dialogue is crucial because unlike the old days, the youth from the cluster, today, easily become their own free agents as a result of the weapons that they can acquire independently. They do not always recognise the authority of the elders and even less, that of the government agents because of the newly gained independence. IBAR has recognised those wild card elements and has set out to redress them.

Weakened traditional social governance mechanisms

Traditionally, the societies in the cluster had certain governance mechanisms that exercised control and regulation of life. The most powerful of these were the elders' councils. The seers were also influential and their pronouncements determined the course of many events, including raids. Mothers exercised a great deal of influence on their sons. A mother's blessings were mandatory before a raiding mission. Women also mitigated the actions of the men folk through the *alokita*—a forum where women openly castigated the men for their excesses

through poetry, song and dance. The young women also played an important part in instigating raids not only by subtle urging of young men to go raiding, but also by glorifying successful raiders through praise songs.

These institutions have been weakened by the changes that have occurred in these societies, over time. These are: -

- > Removal, by governments, of the power and authority of the elders' councils and replacing it with local government departments and chiefs that they have imposed on the people;
- > Discovery, by the youth, that traditional curses do not affect them and that once they get hold of guns, they become their own masters;
- > Destruction of the social fabric of the society by introducing western education and values, creating new social classes of the educated and the powerful;
- > Growth of urban settlements that introduced anti-social behaviour, like prostitution;
- > Breakdown, of culture and tradition, accelerated by the regular recurrence of serious drought, famine, and livestock diseases.

To achieve sustainable peace, it is important that these institutions are reactivated and modernised. The PCH initiative has made some commendable efforts in this endeavour. OAU/IBAR has conducted the inter-communal dialogue mainly through elders who are recognized by the community. The organisation has attempted to revive the institutions through the *alokita*-the women's peace crusades. Village peace committees, currently under consideration, are yet another such attempt. Certain factors, however, stand in the way of

reactivating such institutions. The attitudes of governments' officials, and their policies and practices are key among these factors. Unless government machinery recognise and support village peace committees, these efforts are likely to fail. Endemic poverty and the inability of the societies to support such institutions materially, are also major difficulties. The easy availability of weapons and the presence of externally sponsored criminals also pose a major challenge. Poor transport and communication infrastructures are also major threats to the effectiveness and impact of the PCH initiative.

future perspectives



If the PCH initiative was to stop today, its impact would be quickly eroded and the situation would revert to what it was before. The momentum that the initiative has gained must be sustained. OAU/IBAR has a continental mandate to respond to trans-boundary problems of animal resources and it would be in its interest to continue with the Karamojong Cluster's peace initiative and to replicate it elsewhere in the troubled pastoral areas of Africa. Yet OAU/IBAR cannot continue playing the central role as it has done up to now. But until it successfully identifies a new home for this initiative, the organisation must continue playing the leading role. It has already invested a lot of time and money into the initiative, therefore, the positive signs of success that are evident should not stop.

Involvement of the OAU – Political Department

OAU has a fully-fledged department concerned with conflict management and resolution—the Department of Political Affairs. As is the trend in large organisations, each department ‘does-its-own-thing’ with little concern for what other departments may be doing. This is the case in OAU. The Department of Political Affairs has had, until recently, only a passing interest or involvement in the PCH initiative. OAU/IBAR wishes to woo this department to become more interested and involved in future activities of the initiative.

The advantages of eventual handing over to the Political Affairs Department are many. Key among them is that insecurity in pastoralist areas is not confined to the cluster, but is common all over Africa. The cluster's experience would equip the department with a live example of how to create and manage pastoral interventions targeting containment of insecurity and mainstreaming development issues on pastoralist communities. Besides, this move would keep the experience and lessons learnt

in-house within the OAU thus enriching the organisation. OAU, with its soon to be strengthened mandate, would also have a greater chance of maintaining the momentum that OAU/IBAR has created, and replicating the same elsewhere in the continent. This organisation would still be the entry point for the Department of Political Affairs to replicate these efforts in other pastoralist areas.

For this to happen, OAU/IBAR would need to put together a strong case and pitch the same at the highest levels in the organisation. It would also have to carefully explore the potential for continued donor support. Meanwhile, the participation of the staff of the Department for Political Affairs needs to be strengthened so that they can recognise the opportunity that OAU/IBAR is presenting to them.

Increased role of IGAD

IGAD has a developmental mandate from its member states across the Horn of Africa. The horn is home to the majority of pastoralists in Africa. It is an area that is most affected by instability and insecurity, among pastoral communities of the continent. IGAD could, therefore, play a leading role for the PCH initiative in future. It has already been involved, through participation in the international meetings of the initiative, and has shown an interest in deeper involvement. It has the advantage of having the ear of member governments and can easily build its own internal capacity to cope.

As a result of OAU/IBAR's continued efforts to involve IGAD, a team from the CAPE Unit was invited to a workshop that took place in August 2000, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to participate in the design of a Conflict Early Warning Mechanism for the Horn of Africa (CEWARN). The GTZ and USAID will provide funds for this mechanism that is expected to function by 2002. Following the presentation, by the CAPE team, the

Karamojong Cluster was one of the two areas identified by the meeting for the trial of the mechanism. Though details are yet to be worked out, substantive collaboration between IGAD and OAU/IBAR is expected to happen. Lessons learnt from the PCH initiative are bound to enrich the collaboration.

Containment of insecurity regionally

As has been pointed out in the fore-going analysis, insecurity in the horn is regional and not limited to the cluster. Lasting stability in the cluster can only happen if the whole region is secure. Governments of the affected countries must work together for regional security to be realised. The initiative must, especially and increasingly, target governments with messages from the suffering pastoral communities. The last international forum, for example, recommended that OAU/IBAR should organise a special meeting for members of parliament from across the Horn of Africa, in the near future, to mainstream the cries of the pastoral communities. Law and policy makers need to be continually reminded of their responsibilities through all the means available to the initiative.

Guaranteeing continued peace through development projects

It has already been pointed out that pervasive poverty is at the core of insecurity in the pastoral areas, and that unless development activities are accelerated, insecurity will always loom over the horizon. Poverty cannot be wiped out overnight. Initiatives targeting poverty alleviation need to have a long-term view. Nevertheless, there are many isolated efforts targeting specific sectors in small areas all over the cluster that NGOs, CBOs and religious organisations are carrying out. Insecurity greatly and largely limits their impact and effectiveness. These efforts need to be directly linked to the PCH initiative and their design and implementation need to incorporate components of fostering increased peaceful co-existence

among the target communities.

It may be possible, for example, to develop water resources in such a way that the resulting projects—call them ‘Water-for-Peace Projects’—benefit two or more neighbouring communities. Shared schools, health centres, markets, among others, could be deliberately used to foster understanding and co-operation rather than conflict. The development agencies concerned would still be carrying out their mandated roles while adding value to peace-building initiatives.

The next phase of the PCH initiative

IBAR has its work cut out for it in the next two years of the peace initiative.

Community meetings and the peace dividend

Community meetings must continue. IBAR must also intensify the women and youth meetings. For meaningful discussions, the participants must move away from, ‘we are suffering, we need peace’ phase, into the realm of ‘what we can do, together, to foster the necessary peace’. Warring communities should identify small projects or activities that they can undertake together with some help from friends during each meeting. These need not be grandiose projects but small efforts that the two communities can implement together, for example, the communities may choose to repair a silted water pan. They would only require some tools, and may be, some food aid. In another meeting, they may identify a small bridge that they could repair with some cement and expert guidance. In yet another meeting, the communities may need a few radio sets that do not need battery power, for their schools. They would only require assistance in sourcing these and some little capital to add to their insubstantial contributions.

The role of OAU/IBAR would be to link such community initiatives to potential ‘friends’. These may

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be agencies that are already operating in the cluster. OAU/IBAR might also wish to establish a ‘Small-projects-for-peace’ grant, out of which it could make minor contributions when appropriate donors cannot be found. The grants could be limited to amounts not exceeding Kshs. 50 000/- per project. If during each meeting, the communities identified one small project and received funding then over two years, the 12 meetings of adjacent communities would gain grants amounting to Kshs 600 000/- and perhaps another Kshs 300 000 to service such grants.

The message that the PCH initiative would be sending out to the communities is that they should not wait for governments to bring development to them but they can, in small ways, initiate their own development and foster co-operation among themselves.

IBAR needs to organise some community meetings in Ethiopia to increase participation from that country. This move will not be easy, but it is a necessary step.

Village peace committees

The CAPE Unit recently commissioned a study in the potential role of the traditional elders’ councils, in peace making. From the study, the following recommendations were made: -

- > An immediate follow-up of the village committees should be conducted. Village committees will be trained and their duties and expectations prescribed;
- > A trader sensitisation exercise should be conducted to solicit for their support for the village committees. This exercise may be tied up to the follow-up of village committees;
- > In the short-run, there is need to provide the village committees with communication

equipment that will help them to disseminate information across the common border. This issue is sensitive and OAU/IBAR needs to hold further discussions with relevant government organs;

> There is need, in the short-run, to establish a rapid response team comprising elders, the youth and government security personnel that will complement the efforts of the village elders in diffusing conflicts. Such a team would benefit from the experience of the Wajir Peace and Development Committee;

> In the long-run, governments will need to open up access roads on both sides of the border. This will ease movement for the elders and the rapid response team. It will also ease cross-border trade that, hopefully, will eventually tone down tension between cross-border neighbours;

> The governments need to speed up the disarmament programme in the cluster to revert power from the youth to the elders.

While the study presents a persuasive argument for mimicking the traditional elders’ councils, it does not adequately make a case for the viability and sustainability of such ‘renewed’ committees. The key question is, “Are the proposed committees the most appropriate mechanisms for building and maintaining peace in the cluster?” The problem is that the terms of reference for the study assumed that this question has already been answered. More discussion and research are necessary to provide adequate answers and fill in the gaps on viability and sustainability. The terms of reference also assumed that traders would offer material and financial support to sustain such committees. In the study this assumption is not sustainable because the number of traders and the volume of trade in the area is too low to support these

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initiatives. The traders are unlikely to maintain the support for an activity that they feel that the government should be responsible for.

Other similar initiatives in the region have considered forming some sort of ‘community-based peace-corps’. Many such activities have shown encouraging signs of viability. Many, however, according to the information available, are yet to develop replicable models. The following questions should be addressed prior to creating such committees.

- > How will these committees relate to established government machinery like the police, chiefs, county-authorities and district administration?
- > Will the committees be replicas of the traditional elders’ councils, or can they be adapted to include women and youth representatives?
- > The premise that without development there cannot be sustainable peace is now accepted universally. Shouldn’t these committees be fabricated in such a manner that promotion of development work is part of their core mandate? This way, the clear linkages between peaceful co-existence among communities and their shared development, will be firmly established.
- > Where would such committees obtain their mandate, hence, authority? Is it from the traditions, government or the community? Without clarity and full agreement of the sources of such mandate, any committee that is formed would have a false start.
- > Since the quest for peace is a long-term goal, how would the government institutionalize such committees in harmony with other already existing mechanisms?
- > Who will pay for the running of these committees in the long-run? While in the short haul NGOs, donors, traders and even government departments could contribute to the committees’ continuity, the community would have to assume full responsibility for them, otherwise, they will have very short lives.
- > What measures will they use to enforce peace? It should be remembered that the traditional councils have failed, partly because the youth no longer regard them as wielders of power and authority.

Women’s Crusades

The CAPE Unit organized two women’s crusades in August 2000. The crusades are modelled on the traditional mechanism, the *alokita*, which allowed women to group and publicly point out the excesses and failings of the men folk. These ‘telling-off’ sessions were conducted when it became apparent that certain aspects of social governance were receiving inadequate or wrong attention. The process of conveying the messages would be through dance, song and poetry. The *alokita* was considered as a serious wake-up calls to the elders.

In the August crusades, women from Turkana, Nyang’atom, Toposa and Diding’a, travelled across the land, imparting messages on the need to cease hostilities and establish peaceful co-existence among the communities.

The crusades are an effective way of spreading messages of peace while involving whole communities in the quest. Though these crusades are expensive and time consuming, they should continue side by side with focused inter-communal meetings.

Co-ordinating and creating linkages among the stakeholders

Many agencies that sent representatives to the last international conference in Mbale, Uganda committed themselves to carrying out certain peace promoting development activities that are within their current mandates. What was lacking is how to link those activities to the peace-building initiatives. The participants requested OAU/IBAR to ensure information flow across sectors and agencies. OAU/IBAR might achieve this by setting up a Karamojong Cluster Website, among other things, and encouraging the agencies to exchange information through it. Meanwhile, the organisations that were given lead responsibility in the core areas that the participants identified may require occasional prodding from OAU/IBAR to maintain momentum.

Organisation of a high profile meeting of parliamentarians

Members of parliaments representing communities in the cluster are a useful voice in mainstreaming issues facing their constituents. Participants of the Mbale conference expressed a need to organise a high profile meeting for members of parliament to devise ways of pushing their governments into action, regionally. This good idea needs to be implemented in the coming year. OAU/IBAR might request IGAD and the OAU Secretariat to co-host the meeting, partly to draw them closer to the initiative and also to boost the need for continuity of the initiative. Either IGAD or OAU/IBAR will take the lead. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia would be an ideal venue for such a meeting.

Extending the initiative into Sudan

Several inter-communal peace initiatives have been ongoing in the pastoral areas of Sudan, adjacent to the cluster. NGOs and church organisations undertake these initiatives that are closely linked to livestock development and animal disease control. The Government of Sudan has expressed an interest in supporting the extension of

the cluster's initiative to cover the adjacent areas. OAU/IBAR should consider this offer because livestock disease control is hampered by insecurity in that part of Sudan. Besides the civil war, insecurity is rooted, as in the Karamojong Cluster, in inter-communal conflict. Disease and conflict subsequently spill over into the cluster, further worsening the deteriorated situation. This move might be a first step towards going regional with the initiative.

Increased research and documentation

A lot has been written on the PCH initiative. Videotapes of deliberations during the communities' meetings have been produced. Issues that require further research keep cropping up. OAU/IBAR needs to consolidate the documentation on the initiative, partly to retain this unique experience and for eventual handing-over of the initiative to the agency that carries the process forward.

The third international conference

To maintain the momentum, as resolved in the Mbale meeting, a third international conference is necessary in the coming eighteen months. The first meeting was held in Kenya, and the second one in Uganda. The third meeting should be planned for Ethiopia to enhance participation from that country and to create an opportune moment to start the handing-over process. OAU/IBAR needs to undertake more groundwork, prior to the meeting planned for Ethiopia, than was required for the Kenyan and the Ugandan meetings.

Conclusion

The PCH Initiative may have been started in a small way, by an agency that did not consider itself competent to undertake peace-building work, and in a region that appeared to be hopelessly steeped in perpetual conflict. In the last two years of the initiative's existence, OAU/IBAR staff have learnt a lot of lessons, and built a lot of expertise. Various development agencies, including government departments, NGOs, CBOs and churches have not only taken a keen interest in the initiative, but have come forward to contribute to its progress. Hope for a better future has been rekindled among the pastoral communities of the Karamojong Cluster. It is a unique experience that must be supported and allowed to mature. The PCH initiative might just be the key that 'breaks the spears and cools the earth' in the Karamojong Cluster and beyond.