

**WATER MANAGEMENT IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION:  
A CASE STUDY OF KARAMOJA**

BY  
**NAKAYENGA LYDIA**

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## DEDICATION

This research paper is dedicated to my late parents: Omulangira Luswata Kiweewa and Omuzaana Cissy Nalubwama.

To my late beloved brother Denis Kiwumulo-lala whose life I will cherish always.

May they rest in peace!

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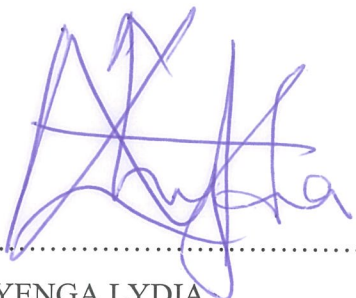
Last but not least, I thank my entire family, all my brothers and sisters, but most especially my brother Abusolomu Mwanga-Musoke, for giving all that I ever needed throughout my education. May the almighty God reward your sacrifices!

L. N. L.  
July, 2003

### DECLARATION

I (Nakayenga Lydia), do here by declare that the work presented here in this dissertation is my own, except where acknowledged, and it has never been submitted for examination in any University as an academic requirement for any award.

Signed



NAKAYENGA LYDIA

22 / APRIL / 2003.

DATE



MR. JOHN KIGULA

23 / 4 / 2003

DATE

## LIST OF STATUTES

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF UGANDA,1995
2. WATER STATUTE , 1995 STATUTE No.9 OF1995
3. UGANDA WILDLIFE STATUTE NO. 14 OF 1996 confirmed Act No.16 of 1998  
S26 (1) C.
4. THE LAND ACT ,1998
5. THE MINING ACT CAP 248
6. KARAMOJA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY STATUTE NO. 4 OF 1987.
7. CATTLE GRAZING ACT CAP 233 1945 confirmed: ACT No. 16 OF 1998 Sec 26  
(1) C
8. VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT CAP 265 Amended: Act No. 12 of 1970  
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## ACRONYMS

WFP -World Food Program

NEAP – National Environment Action plan.

KARD\_ Karamoja Authority for Regional Development

KDP- Karamoja Development Agency

UNO-United Nations Organization.

UNESCO-United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organization.

UNICEF-United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

UNDP- United Nations Development Program

NGO- Non- Governmental Organizations

NURP- Northern Uganda Reconstruction Program.

LC – Local Council

LWF- Lutheran World Federation.

DWD- Directorate of Water Development.

KIU- Karamoja Implementation Unit.

COU- Church of Uganda

KADP-Karamoja Agro-pastoral Development Program

CBR- Center for Basic Research

CHA – Controlled Hunting Area

CHIPS \_ Christian International Peace service

KDC- Karamoja Data Center

ASTU\_ Anti Stock Theft Unit

IGADP- Inter governmental Authority on Drought and Development.

KISP- Karamoja Initiative for Sustainable Peace.

NRM- National Resistance Movement

KAPEPS- Karamoja Association for Peace and Environmental Protection.

RECONCILE- Resources Conflict Resolution.

CECORE-Center for Conflict Resolution

UPDF-Uganda Peoples Defense Forces

# CHAPTER I

## 1.0 Introduction.

Scarcity of water is a worldwide issue. The international community is worried that severe water shortages may actually ignite wars in the 21st century. Recognition has been made of a growing threat of international, regional, national and inter-ethnic disputes over water supplies. An entity that is becoming of great concern is semi-arid pastoral Africa that is prone to long periods of drought and famine leading to a scramble for common use pastoral resources such as water, pasture and food.<sup>1</sup> The UNESCO chief Koichiro Matsuura noted with concern while discussing at the UN summit, that, “Water supplies are falling while the demand is growing at an unsustainable rate.” The report said that the water crisis is so severe it would take almost 30 years to eradicate hunger. According to the World Water Development Report, the crisis over water is likely to get even worse.<sup>2</sup>

The UNICEF water, environment and sanitation technical guidelines indicate that the greatest global challenge of the world today is effective fresh water resource management.<sup>3</sup> In Uganda for example the issue of water rights has become an explosive one. Conflicts over water are already happening, in particular in the semi-arid Karamoja region that is faced with severe hunger as a result of water shortages.<sup>4</sup> In parts of Uganda where water is limited, its distribution has been problematic with conflicts arising due to competing community needs and internal power struggles.

## 1.1 Background

Karamoja, the largest and least populous of Uganda's regions, is located in the North East of Uganda. It borders Sudan and Kenya to the South and East respectively.<sup>5</sup> Since independence Karamoja has been engaged in violent conflict characterized by armed conflict, strife, terrorism, cattle rustling, banditry and rampant murders. These inter- community conflicts seem to date back over a century ago, centered on pastoral resource use.<sup>6</sup>

Karamoja is subdivided into two districts: Kotido and Moroto<sup>7</sup>. However this paper will focus on Moroto District. Moroto is subdivided into three counties; Matheniko, Bokora and Pian. Inhabitants of Moroto are of three tribes, the Karamojong, the Tepeth and Pokot. The Karamojong include: The Matheniko, Bakora and Pian. Although these tribes have differences in culture and language, they share similar socio-economic lifestyle.<sup>8</sup>

Basically the area is semi-arid characterized by an intense hot season lasting from November to March and wet season from April to August. Rainfall is in the range of 300mm-1200mm with temperature ranging from 20°-32°C. The rainfall is also highly variable and its distribution is highly erratic. About 180,000 people of Moroto live in a semi arid area of 14,113 km. The landscape is scarcely decorated with isolated thorny trees, shrubs and scanty grass in some areas.<sup>9</sup>

The Karamojong are semi-nomadic Agro-pastoralists who depend on a combination of livestock herding and subsistence agriculture for their livelihood. Like any other pastoral economy, animals are a key production resource in Karamoja. A household without animals must acquire them by all possible means and when acquired their survival is of paramount importance. Animals therefore mean survival, water and pasture become matters of security and the loss of animals means the loss of life. Such a situation coupled with a harsh ecology creates a competition for the scarce resources, as survival becomes for the fittest. In this respect conflict over pasture and water is inevitable.

It has been argued that conflicts are inevitable among large numbers of people who have to survive amidst limited resources. Gulliver, an anthropologist, pinpoints access to grazing land and water as a historical problem that has been the major cause of tension and conflict among the communities in Karamoja cluster region. He cites wars such as those between the Pokot and Pian as having been fought over pasture and water. This very problem led to the west and eastward migration of the Itesots and Turkana respectively.<sup>10</sup> Another researcher emphasized the importance of water and pasture. He quoted a saying by the Karamojong, "we left Apule in search for water and pasture." Apule is the Karamojong place of origin from which the Karamojong migrated to the present place of settlement.<sup>11</sup>

As much as there is no general theory of conflict, individuals have tried to create theories thought to be root causes of conflict. While at a workshop involving conflict resolution held in Soroti (Teso and Karimojong participants) it was concluded that, "Conflicts is like a tree, which has roots (causes) the stem (support) and the leaves (symptoms). They argued that what is usually seen in a conflict are the leaves (the way conflict manifests itself). They concluded by calling for a real analysis of the causes and escalation of conflict in Karamoja and possible means of attaining peace in the region. Conflict was also equated to a fire, which starts slowly and once it has gained momentum, is very difficult to put out<sup>12</sup> It is no wonder therefore that the causes of conflict in Karamoja have eluded many scholars.

Conflict in Karamoja is divided into three categories:

1. The inter-county raids such as between the Bakora and Matheniko tribes of Karamoja.
2. Conflicts across district boundaries; between the Karimojong and neighboring districts. This happens in the dry season when the Karimojong drive their livestock to the districts of Soroti, Kumi, Katakwi, Lira and Kitgum in search for water and pasture. This movement often triggers off conflict between the Karimojong and the agriculturist communities who stereotype the Karimojong as an uncivilized people who have no respect for private property. Bua Okol, the LC V Councilor of Lira District, for example, is quoted to have complained about the Karimojong as follows, "These people have no instinct, they drive their animals through people's gardens, destroying crops." Recent media reports of hostility between the Karimojong and their neighbors are instructive in this regard.<sup>13</sup>
3. The third category is cross international border conflict; waged across the Kenya-Ugandan border, between the Pokot and the Turkana of Kenya on the one hand, and the Karimojong of Uganda on the other. It is indeed true, that pastoral tribes of Africa disregard international boundaries as they search for water and pasture. Such movements normally occur during the dry season.<sup>14</sup>

Although conflict and wars are not new to Karamoja, analysts have cited the escalation of raids and warfare in recent years. This is explained by the increasing availability of automatic weapons in the region. June Dector of *The Times News paper* was prompted to observe that, “weapons of civilization are threatening to destroy a pastoral tribe, the Karimojong in the far Northeastern Uganda.”<sup>15</sup> The same sentiments have been conveyed by both *The Monitor* and *New Vision* newspapers, which reported respectively that, “Over 1000 people have died in cattle raids, and that, Karimojong had massacred over 400 people in a raid.”<sup>16</sup>

The break down of traditional values among the Karamojong has also helped the escalating conflict. A traditional value like respect for life and elders is becoming less significant. Initially warriors had to first consult with a diviner to receive the blessing of very important elder before mounting a raid. In contemporary Karamoja society, the gun has turned warriors into both the decision makers and executors. It is a common sight to see warriors carry illegal guns and are known to use them indiscriminately in the name of protection of their animals, family and resources.<sup>17</sup>

As much as cattle rustling and insecurity appear to be the main causes of conflict in the region, it has been argued in this paper that it is actually not. The conflict is merely the result of a harsh ecology that demands a struggle for grazing land and watering resources for cattle. The finding of Karamoja wildlife management project of Uganda state that, “*The Karimojong do not want permanent ownership of the land but rather just access rights for watering and grazing of their cattle.*”<sup>18</sup>

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The location of the main causes of pastoral conflict in and around Karamoja has eluded scholars and government. They have failed to ascertain the association of pastoral conflict in and around Karamoja with improprieties in water management.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

1. To ascertain the relationship between conflict and improper water management policies and find out whether proper water management, mechanisms will abate conflict in Karamoja.
2. To examine the methods of resource management systems in respect to accessibility to land (pasture resources), water for cattle and livestock resources.
3. To examine the existing laws governing cattle grazing, natural resource management: water and land management inclusive.
4. To identify problems relating to access to water and other common use pastoral resources among cattle keepers of Karamoja.
5. To identify the possible causes of conflicts in Karamoja and the best way to resolve these conflicts

### **1.4 Scope of the Study.**

This paper intends to look generally at conflict management in Karamoja and particularly at water management in Moroto District. It shall focus on the major causes of conflict in Karamoja and the mechanisms that have been put in place by both government and NGOs and all peace lovers to resolve these conflicts.

This paper will elaborate on pastoral resource use, particularly management of water resources, pasture and the land tenure system in Karamoja. It will enlighten us on the nature of state policy on Karamoja and mechanisms put forward to amicably resolve conflicts in the area.

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

There is a close relationship between accessibility to, and management of pastoral land, water resources and pasture on one hand, and pastoral conflicts on the other.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This research paper is intended to build on the prior research done by anthropologists, scholars, government and NGOs on both conflict and conflicts-resolution among pastoral communities of Karamoja and the neighboring communities. Since the literature available on Karamoja is quite outdated, there is a need for fresh research in this area.

The study is further aimed at analyzing the present water regime as the key entry component to development and curbing conflict in and around Karamoja.

It is also aimed at finding practical solutions to water re-allocation that will aid Government NGOs and other peace initiatives to foster and strengthen genuine peace building initiatives.

## **1.7 Methodology**

Due to geographical limitations, time frame, scarce financial resources and insecurity in the region, fieldwork has not been possible.

This research was therefore qualitative and heavily dependant on prior published documents; secondary data, government documents, archives, newspapers, NGO publications, Video Records, Text books and Reports from libraries: of which Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Oxfam, and Karamoja Data Center (KDC), Catholic Church and Church of Uganda were most significant.

Desk research included research works especially done by the Center for Basic Research (CBR), Research done by NGOs based in Karamoja and NGOs based in Kampala but whose focus of work is Karamoja. Other desk research included Government responses by the ministry in charge of Karamoja and Directorate of Water Development. Informal interviews with political leaders, NGO personnel, government representatives and Karamojong living in Kampala were useful.

## **1.8 Literature Review**

Literature on internal conflicts in Karamoja, though numerous, gives scanty attention to management of water and pasture-related resource conflicts. In brief no attempt has been



made to relate conflict or focus on the centrality of water and pasture management to conflict resolution.

Anthropologists have made analysis especially on the social set up of the Karamojong, the culture of cattle rustling and the entry of the gun into Karamojong life style. Writers have ended up summing up this conflict into "Karamoja cattle complex" alienating it from Uganda's central problems. They have criticized pastoralism as a way of life, suggesting agriculture as a better alternative. Government has acted upon it, only to be frustrated. Mamdani discusses these solutions in a section appropriately titled, "Solutions that backfired..."<sup>19</sup>

Among the most prominent studies the researcher came across include; Michael Ochieng Odhiambo (2000), Dyson Hudson (1966) and Ocan Charlse Emunyu (1992) who made various observations on the conflicts between traditional Karamojong pastoralists.

Charles Ocan, in his documentation observed that conflict in Karamoja began way back in the fierce poet war of 1810-1820 in which the Jie one of the dominant Karamojong groups defeated the agricultural people.<sup>20</sup>

According to Brassnet (1958), the Suk (Pokot) were people living inside Kenya but were pressurized into Uganda by British administration and Kenyan white settlers. The Pokot pastoralists lost their rich soils in Kenya; they moved into Uganda and on their way encountered massive raids in 1918 by Turkana, sparking off tension and insecurity in this area. The settling of the Pokot in Upe county (Karamoja) led to the loss of an eastern grazing ground for the Pian, Bakora, and Matheniko which marked the beginning of conflicts between the Pokot (Suk) and Pian over grazing resources and water.<sup>21</sup>

Historical imbalance caused by conflicts over pasture and water subsequently resulted in another major battle between the Pian and Pokot, which came to be known as the Kara-Suk war of 1830. This war marked a turning point in the history of tension and conflict in the Karamojong region as observed by Lamphear (1976).<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, Charles Ocan observed that, before colonial administration, there had been outstanding conflicts between the pastoralists themselves. There existed conflicts over

livestock, grazing areas and water points, for instance the Jie and Bokora often fought over grazing areas in Bokora.

Although Dr. Kisamba Mugerwa, discusses pastoral conflicts and common pastoral resource use, he too falls short of a detailed analysis of the centrality of water and pasture management mechanisms in abetting conflict in North Eastern Uganda.<sup>23</sup> This has prompted a fresh research in pastoral resource use conflict. Hopefully, this research paper will cultivate a new ground in the search for everlasting peace and security in Karamoja.

### **1.9a Chapterisation**

This paper will be divided into five chapters. The first one contains an introduction, background, and statement of the problem, objectives, scope, hypothesis, significance of the study, methodology, literature review, chapterisation, and definitions.

The second chapter discusses the causes of conflict in Karamoja. These include, government policy, the culture of cattle rustling, the gun as a player in the conflict, the existing laws relating to water usage and the nature of land tenure system in Karamoja.

The third chapter will discuss management of water resources in Karamoja generally. It will point out the existing legislation on water resource use in Moroto District, and examine the ways in which Land law and the Mining Act affect water management. It will further point out sources of water in the District, provide a data presentation from secondary sources, conflicts arising out of water usage and migration as a result of scarcity of water.

The fourth chapter will address initiatives aimed at conflict resolution prior to this research.

The final chapter will give a final conclusion to the entire research paper and also offer recommendations.

### **1.9b Definition of Conflict**

Conflict can be defined as, “the breakdown of a relationship between two parties who seem to house incompatible goals. It can also be defined as a situation that exists between two people or group of persons who perceive that they have competing interests relative to a single issue, thing or situation. Each party wants to pursue its own interests to the full and

ends up contradicting, compromising or even defeating the interests of the other. With regard to scarcity of natural resources, in such an ecologically vulnerable location, conflict is inevitable, given the disparity between the availability of the resources and the demands for them. As population of cattle and humans increase the competition for the access to the diminishing resources whether these be pastures, water or salt lick becomes more and more acute.<sup>24</sup>

To resolve conflict on one hand is to bring conflict to an end altogether, while to manage conflict on the other hand is to seek to control conflict and its impacts and to ensure that it does not degenerate into socially disruptive behavior. The latter is thus an attempt to live and work with conflict and is informed by recognition that conflict is part and parcel of social interaction and will always be there.

Water management for purposes of this discussion, refers to the distribution, utilization, communal sharing and preservation of the water resource. It also refers to the process of ensuring that water is utilized carefully without degrading and depleting it. Water resources should be used in such a way as to meet the needs of both present and future generations.

Similarly, according to the Directorate of Water Development, water resources management involves assessment of resources, feasibility for developments, planning and equitable apportioning of use, bearing in mind the environmental demands and other catchment conditions such as land use, soil type and condition, population e.t.c.<sup>25</sup>

## ENDNOTES: CHAPTER ONE.

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- <sup>2</sup> "World Water Day Supplement." *The Monitor news paper*, 22nd March 2003
- <sup>3</sup> LWF (1998). *Water And Environmental Law Review: We Did Not Realize The Water Was For Us... We Thought We Were Stealing*. March at p.2
- <sup>4</sup> "Karamoja Caught in Vicious Circle of Famine, Insecurity." *The Monitor news paper* Thursday, march, 2003
- <sup>5</sup> Karamoja conflict study. (2000). *Figures from the population census show that the population of Moroto District, decreased from 184,900 people in 1980 to 174,000 people in 1991. In 2002 it decreased to 170506. "Moroto movement chairman noted that, the reduction in the population of the region is directly attributable to conflict and insecurity."* Moroto, September
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- <sup>8</sup> Novelli, B. (1988): *Aspects of Karamojong Ethnosociology*. Moroto. Combon missionaries, at pp.81-83
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- <sup>13</sup> Wacha, J. (2003). "Karamojong Invade Lira." *The New vision*, Thursday, 2nd January.
- <sup>14</sup> Lochiam, M.R.(1998-1999) *Peace Together: Field Report On Understanding Violent Conflict, Reconciliation And Peace Building in Karamoja: A Case Study Of Matheniko, Bokora And Tepeth Of Moroto*: KRPC,( The study by Rose is a useful resource on the dynamics of war and insecurity in Moroto District .She does a good job in mapping out the way conflict manifests itself both in the District and with its neighboring Districts and across the Kenya-Ugandan boarder.)
- <sup>15</sup> June Dector, (1998.): *The time's newspaper*, 13th April
- <sup>16</sup> *The Monitor Newspaper*, 14<sup>th</sup> September 1999 and *The New vision* Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1999.
- <sup>17</sup> Office of the Prime Minister, (NURP). (1999.) *District profile study: Karamoja region, Kotido and Moroto District: Final Report*. Volume 11,part V. August at p.7
- <sup>18</sup> Helen De Jodie, (1996-1998) *Finding of the Karamoja wildlife Management project of Uganda*. Funded by the European Commission.
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- <sup>20</sup> Emumyu O.C. (1992) *The Changing Significance of Cattle Raids*. Working paper No.21.CBR publication at PP.111-112.
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- <sup>22</sup> Teko L. G. (1999) Ibid. At P.12.
- <sup>23</sup> Kisamba M. W. (1995). *The Impact of Individualization on Common Grazing Land Resources in Uganda*:Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor for Philosophy of Makerere University.
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- <sup>25</sup> *The Monitor News paper*, Saturday,22 March,2003 "Director of Water Development: World Water day supplement."

## CHAPTER II

### THE MAIN CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN KARAMOJA

#### 2.0 Introduction

The discussion of conflict and its resolution in Karamoja is complex and problematic. A number of factors have been identified as being behind the persistent conflict and insecurity in Karamoja. Different people have developed various theories to explain the persistent conflict in and around Karamoja.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will however cover: absence of a clear government policy, cattle-centered culture, cattle rustling with the help of modern rifles and improper land tenure system as causes of conflict in Karamoja.

#### 2.1 Cattle-Centered Culture

Livestock is a major source of conflict, as it poses a big risk to attainment of peace in Karamoja. Whereas all pastoral communities have a close attachment to their animals, the Karamojong's love for cattle is beyond imagination.<sup>2</sup> The Karamojong derive their livelihood from cattle. They depend on it not only for milk, blood, and meat, but also marriage and all cultural activities. Guns are traded with cattle and in times of crisis like droughts and famine cattle are traded for food. It is such significance attributed to cattle that explains why the Karamojong will stop at nothing to acquire and defend cattle. Over recent decades an increase in Karamoja's human population accompanied by a decrease in per capita number of cattle has led to cattle related conflicts and cattle raids.

When animal diseases cause death of livestock, the local people have to restock through raids from other groups, thus promoting conflict. This is worsened by the constant need to revenge and counter revenge, which leads to further conflict. In September 1999 six UPDF and seven Matheniko were killed. In the same week Bakora allies to the Jie revenged an attack by the Matheniko on the village of Turutuko in July in which 110 Bokora had been killed. In a counter attack 240 Bokora did not leave the field. On 13 September 1999 warriors of the Bokora launched a revenge attack on a Matheniko village killing over 400 Matheniko and raiding more than 2000 heads of cattle. The Helicopter Gunship trying to stop and break

up the pursuit of Bokora by Matheniko shot an unknown number, including Matheniko and Turkana. The Pian were in the same month involved in raiding the Sabiny for cattle. They obtained 70 cattle at the expense of 42 men who were killed by the Sebeny.<sup>3</sup> Such greed for livestock poses a great risk to peace in the region.

The cattle complex is also illustrated by a Karamojong belief that, *all the land belongs to the cow and that individuals were only created to ensure the well being of the cow. As such they are the protectors of the cow following it wherever it goes. For this reason, the Karamojong, it is said, follow the cow not out of choice but because the cow knows exactly where the grass and water can be found at any time and will travel miles to get that water and grass.*<sup>4</sup> This may at times be in disregard of district and international boundaries. This is also done without permits or authority from district veterinary offices.<sup>5</sup>

It is also worth noting that large herds of cattle reduce the carrying capacity of land causing stiff competition for water and pasture. The pressure caused by shortages of water and pasture during the dry season is increasingly generating conflict as the herds men have to move to neighboring districts to find and control water and pasture.

## **2.2 Government Policy**

Inconsistencies, ambiguities and total neglect in the region characterize government policy towards Karamoja.

There is lack of an overall Karamoja development plan to guide projects on intervention priorities, implementation and evaluation. Even the KDA apart from the statute, does not have any regional work plan through which to carry out its duties.<sup>6</sup> The World Food Program Deputy Country Director Edward Kellon has urged government to give priority to sustainable water development for Karamoja. However government has instead insisted on militaristic options like disarmament, rather than to provide water. He said that, "government should provide water for cattle and irrigation so that the Karamoja stop depending on handouts from the WFP and humanitarian agencies." He added that "The world food program has intervened in Karamoja since 1963, however up to today, government has not given priority to developing infrastructure for water for the Karamojong despite the persistent hunger and

drought in the region.<sup>7</sup> In addition Karamoja has not been provided with infrastructure or logistical support to facilitate the peace process. Peacekeepers like the police commander and district CID officers still operate on foot.<sup>8</sup>

Government policy is affected by the history of relations between the government and pastoral people, which stems from the fact that pastoral values tend to be at variance with government. Like other parts of the world, non-pastoralists and policy implementers do not recognize pastoralism as a viable mode of livelihood. Governments resist pastoral activities on one hand while pastoralists resist government development policies on the other.

The Karamajong lack confidence in the government and believe that Karamoja is being deliberately kept in a state of backwardness dating back from the time when Karamoja was described as, “Karamoja the Human Zoo”. The Karamojong continue to see government as an interest group (outsiders) whose policies can be opposed whenever need arises.<sup>9</sup>

The state has been coercive to tame the Karamojong into a sedentary society, using approaches that were indifferent to the indigenous power structures and social organizations. Starting from colonial times the Karamojong have been marginalized and isolated. Mamdani, Kasoma and Katende have described how the history of Karamoja was characterized by military occupation right from the beginning of the colonial experience and how it was always a closed district and only exploited for cattle described as low quality carcass cattle.<sup>10</sup>

Under Amin’s leadership for instance, the Karamojong were forbidden to wear stuns (their traditional dress) and in 1972 over 200 people were killed for refusing to obey this regulation.<sup>11</sup> In 2002 similarly, a policy on dressing was passed so that illegal guns be withdrawn from the Karamojong warriors. Its implementation was equally harsh, in fact over 70 adult Karamojong including women were paraded and ordered to move around Moroto town without clothes as if they were less than human beings.<sup>12</sup>

This attitude and total disrespect for the Karamojong as human beings could be accountable for the hostile relationship between the Karamojong and the central government. Several pieces of research indicate that almost all projects done by government in Karamoja are done without consulting the local population. Such projects are regarded by the



Karamojong as imposition by government, and are often ignored, if not run down by the Karamojong.<sup>13</sup>

This is especially so with regard to dams and boreholes constructed in the area to provide water. The Karamojong believed that this water was not their's. One Karamojong lamented that, "we stole this water at night, and not knowing it was made for us." Another one is quoted to have said that, "when the colonialists left, there was no one to look after 'their dams...'"<sup>14</sup> As such, no one among the Karamojong has taken the trouble to maintain the water resources even if the Karamojong are the sole beneficiaries.

In relation to water, negative economic policies were put in place without much consideration for the Karamojong people. The 1961-1966 economic development plan recommended that particular investments be allocated on the basis of economic contribution that particular dams and water tanks made to the cattle output of the area. So "no cattle sale, no water."<sup>15</sup> It was under this program that the building of dams and drilling of boreholes was made.

### **2.3 Historical Factors**

In 1916 the colonial administration forcefully moved the whole community to the drier eastern border. This disrupted patterns of transhumance. In addition the British settlement policy saw Pokot pastoralists of Kenya pressurized into Uganda. The British white settlers retained the rich Pokot soils in Kenya. The Pokot also known as the Suk were given a tract of land in Karamoja known as Upe County. According to Brassnet (1958), this decision led to the loss of an eastern grazing ground for the Pian, Bakora and the Matheniko and marked the beginning of conflicts between the Pokot (Suk) and Pian over grazing resources and water.<sup>16</sup>

Post independence experience has not been significantly different from that of the colonial administration. Starting with the Bataringaya Commission (1961) a report was made recommending that brutality should be employed against the Karamojong.<sup>17</sup> Similar laws were enacted specifically to handle the Karamojong. One such law is, The Administration of Justice Karamoja Act, which, "*jettisoned the normally strict rules on admissibility of evidence*

*and placed sole discretion in the hands of a single judge. It overturned the time honored legal principles of the presumption of innocence in cases within the district. Indeed any person who was accused of engaging in a cattle raid in which some one had been killed was presumed guilty until they had proven their innocence.*<sup>18</sup>

The entire span of the postcolonial administration has maintained an iron hand approach to the Karamojong situation. In 1983/4 Obote II regime and the Kenya Para-military police brutally murdered hundreds of innocent Pian and Pokot in a bid to stop raids. It has been reported that in November 28<sup>th</sup> 1981 in Katakwi, renown war Lords of Matheniko county, high ranking elders, the District Commissioner of Kotido district were murdered at the hands of government yet they had been heads of a peace seeking delegation to President Obote's government.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike other regimes the NRM Government, in its initial plans, sought to develop Karamoja by including Karamoja development and rehabilitation in its ten-point program. The NRM government created an elaborate institutional framework for dealing with Karamoja. The Karamoja Development Agency (KDA) was created by Statute, in 1987 to oversee the transformation of Karamoja; the Minister of State in charge of Karamoja Development was formed in the Prime Minister's Office and mandated with the supervision of the KDA<sup>20</sup>. The Ministry has established the Karamojong Projects Implementation Unit with the aim of coordinating projects in Karamoja funded by the European Union. Another Ministry (Ministry of State for Northern Uganda Reconstruction) was created to help in the rapid development of Northern Uganda. This program includes Karamoja.

However although government programs focus much attention on Karamoja, they seem to be more on paper than on the ground. They are noted for massive financial losses, and for creating divisions amongst the Karamojong.<sup>21</sup>

The NRM government initiatives on peace building in Karamoja have occurred in isolation, without research about the situation on the ground. These needs should have been studied, prioritized, in addition to consultation with the Karamoja local communities.

However initial government reports and policies from 1991-1996 indicate a tendency of government to coerce the Karamojong into agriculture and settlement. Yet what is important for anyone working in Karamoja is a clear understanding of the economic livelihood of the people. Encouraging settled agriculture is not the answer to the Karamojong pastoral problem. Answers ought to be derived from the culture and economic way of life of the people.

What should be realized is that with such a harsh ecological condition, negligible surface water and livestock based economy, water source provision, would be the key entry point to development and conflict resolution in and around Karamoja.

### **2.3 Culture of Cattle Rustling.**

Traditionally elders sanctioned cattle raids after the family; clan or community stock of cattle had fallen below the threshold necessary for collective survival. This could be after occurrence of disease, epidemic, drought or massive raids.<sup>22</sup>

Revengeful raids were inevitable and rudimentary weapons such as spears and sticks were applied. In a field research, by LWF, a warrior aged 16 of Aworubo is quoted to have said that, "the sole reason for participating in a raid was to revenge over livestock, which the Tipeth had raided from my family at Akuapua the year before." Another warrior aged 20 of Aworubu is quoted to have said, "My mother was killed when collecting fire wood and two weeks latter I mobilized my friends to accompany me to Tapac for revenge. I killed two women fetching water at a spring .The gap the enemy created cannot be filled, I know I have to punish them." This need for vengeance with the aid of modern riffles has escalated the conflict.<sup>23</sup> The member of parliament of Pokot County noted that due to cattle raids between may 1999 and January 2002 over 1758 people had been killed inside Karamoja.<sup>24</sup>

### **2.4 The Gun as a Force Behind Cattle Rustling.**

The position of cattle rustling has a historical bearing on the primitive measures applied by government to 'tame' the Karamojong. The loss of inner grazing territory to the Kenyan Pokot and the restrictions on the mobility of the Karamojong within Karamoja and

neighboring districts where they used to obtain pasture and water during the dry season, culminated into the sharpening of ethnic identities and conflicts. This made survival of the Karamojong mortally precarious and therefore potentially violent. The population in the region could only survive under conditions of fighting over the inadequate and dwindling food base.<sup>25</sup>

This kind of crisis first hit the Turkana and Pokot of Kenya who were restricted to the most precarious ecological areas. As there was more water and pastures to the west, (Uganda) the Turkana and Pokot carried out raids into Karamoja for cattle and the right to graze and water their animals. Unfortunately the Turkana and Pokot had acquired guns from Ethiopia, which they used throughout the 1970s to raid and terrorize the Karamojong.

Under extreme pressure, the Karamojong invented guns locally known as *amatida*. With the overthrow of Amin in 1979 his soldiers abandoned the armory in Moroto Barracks leaving the Matheniko to acquire an estimated number of 12,000 guns. Successive falls of government gave more opportunities to the Karamojong to acquire guns, which they initially used to defend their animals and latter turned on each other for cattle.<sup>26</sup>

Today guns have become so important in that no one dares to go for a raid without one. The gun has become part of the attire of Karamong male youth and men. A single gun can be traded for as high as 15 heads of cattle. It should be noted that the availability of guns in Karamoja at saturation levels occurred at a time of serious food deficit and a precarious ecological resource base. The little available resources had to be fought for. Since the neighboring districts of Kitgum, Katakwi, Kumi, Lira, Kapchorwa and Mbale had better pastures on account of better rains, cattle rustling spilled over into these districts. The crisis was such that within a decade cattle rustling burst the traditional institutional framework. Government failure to implement its own programs, particularly of providing water (valley dams and boreholes) to the Karamojong worsened the situation.<sup>27</sup>

The negligence on the part of government and failure of government to provide water, pasture, and food to the armed pastoralists in the late 1970s and early 1980s drought introduced a new struggle. It was reported that, it was during this time of brutality that the

different sectors of Karamojong, (the Matheniko, Bakora, Pian) began raiding each other.<sup>28</sup>

The tables below show historical trends of raiding and killings done in Moroto district over time.

**Table: No.1**

**Historical Trends of Raids and Killing between the Tepeth v. Matheniko**

Year	Events	Victim	Culprits
1953	Chief Lorika, Akol, Apa, Koryang the judge (mualmos) and Awuatun Ejakait parish chief killed in a peace meeting	Aworobu	Pokot/Upe
1957	Cattle thieves started stealing live stock	Lia of Tepeth	Matheniko
1958	A large number of livestock was stolen	Lia of Tepeth	Matheniko
1960	Raids and fighting by use of local made gun ( <i>Amatida</i> )	Kakingol	Matheniko of Rupa & Turkana
1961	Apangimu thio Anyiro the Tepeth chief and Korobe the parish chiefs. As a result the colonial government forced the innocent Matheniko to compensate with animals	Aworobu/Lia	Lotome Lorengedwat and Matheniko
1962	Many elders killed and so many cattle raided	Loroo Kraal Kakingol Lokila	Rupa, Turkana and Pian
1970	Large number of livestock lost and several people killed. Raid of Lobokakwangan	Lia, Kakingol	A Worobu Matheniko
1980	Li women collecting firewood and a man burning charcoal were killed. Ajore Lopietu in Nakonyen and Tapoc	Aworobu Lia	Tepeth, Matheniko, Jie and Bakora
1994	7 people killed at Nadiket 2 local councilors killed when returning from the town	Lia Aworobu	Matheniko Tepeth
1998	220 livestock lost and 10 people killed	Aworobu	Tepeth

**Table: No.2****Historical Trends of Raids and Killing between the Matheniko vs Bakora**

Year	Events	Victims	Culprits
1974	Large numbers of livestock and property lost Large numbers of livestock lost	Lopei Lopei	- Matheniko Turkana & - Matheniko and - Turkana
1975	Extreme famine as a result of raids	Lopei and Kaitakou	Matheniko
1989	12 people killed at Nathepewae	Lopei	Matheniko
1990	Frequent killing, Numerous and frequent thefts.	Kaitakou Lopei	Matheniko Nadunget Matheniko
1993	30 people killed at the kraal of Turtuko. 90 cattle raided & 2 people killed	Lopei Lokilala	Matheniko Bakora
1994	140 people killed at kraal of Apakapel, kraals 400 people killed	Lopei Matheniko	Bakora
2000	782 people killed, 1125 cattle taken in five consecutive raids.	Bakora.	Matheniko

**TABLE: No.3****Historical Trends of Raids and Killing between the Turkana vs Tepeth**

Year	Events	Victim	Culprit
1960	Raids of Nginaketop at Kalotharic*. Lotirir, Lakumoit. Raid at Lotakero	Musupo	Turkana
1968	Elder Lomeran was killed*	Kakingol	Turkana
1970	Raid at Moruarengan	Musupo	Turkana
1972	Raid at Nakiloro	Nakiloro Kakingol	Turkana
1973	Raid at Kakemer	Musupo	Turkana
1979	Lopetu raid at Nakonga*	Kakingol Kakingol	Turkana N/A
1980	Ajore Lopetu in Nakonyen and Tapoc Raid at Lopeta, Lobengorua and Lokwathinyon	Aworobu Musupo	Turkana Turkana Toposa and Jie

**Source;LWF Field Report August 1998-2000.**

**Note:** The \* stands for incidences when victims were hit badly by culprits who were armed with more automatics. From the events in the tables, the killing of the chiefs contributed greatly to revenge and to the history of fighting and killings in Karamoja.

**Table: No.4**

**Summary of Moroto District Achieves on Cattle Raids**

Year	Raids by Karamojong and others	Raids by Turkana	Murders	Cattle stolen	Cattle received
1956	76	No records	19	No records	No records
1957	161	11	33	9,213	1,118
1958	328	8	56	20,354	3,944
1959	204	9	59	9,825	3,216
1960	381	23	87	32,523	6,897
1961	380	83	336	54,471	16,164
1962	242	10	160	21,165	3,684
1969	43	13	66	6,851	4,406
1970	78	40	39	10,563	2,486
1971	207	45	120	52,037	25,947
1972	32	5	41	6,220	1,531
1979	12	2	28	4,935	-
1980	64	-	544	22,907	20
1981	3	-	15	45	15
1982	27	-	82	619	13
1983	3	-	15	24,191	30
1984	7	1	56	1,592	1,500
1985	-	4	14	265	-
1989	2	-	24	3,640	-
1991	22	-	93	9,333	-
1993	-	1	2	-	-
1994	2	-	2	-	-
1999	1	1	7	6,000	
2000	5	-	782	1125	

**Source: LWF field report. August 1998-2000.**

From Table No.4 it would appear that there were numerous raids and killings in the past

Compared to today. This is not the case. The record keeping and reporting systems have

broken down and the cases are not reported as they were from 1956 to 1980. The actual

Situation now indicates that the number of raids and killings has increased with the increase in firearms in the hands of the warriors<sup>29</sup>

If Tables No.1, 2,3 and 4 are compared to the information on drought reported by Oxfam, a close relationship between drought and conflict can easily be identified.

Oxfam reports that Karamoja experiences severe drought at least once in every four years often followed by famine. It is indicated that Karamoja experienced famine in 1980/81, 1984/87, 1990/91, 1994/5 and mild famine in 1997/98.<sup>30</sup>To date (2003) thousands of people are thought to be in great danger of food shortage as a result of drought over the past five years. The Danish envoy Thomas Durjuhum in his call to government, said that, "three hundred people have been reported dead due to famine since October 2002 to January 2003."<sup>31</sup> This information in addition to secondary data in the tables above could be interpreted to mean that, conflicts in Moroto District heighten with a drought. There is a close relation between famine and deterioration in security in Moroto District, as Karamojong warriors rob homes and ambush vehicle in search of food. Policy implementers should therefore think about the provision of water and food as solution to the drought related crisis. While disarming Karamojong is paramount, extensive research into drought must be done to relate famine, drought and conflict.

### **2.5 Land Tenure System in Karamoja.**

Pastoral land rights rooted in customary tenure have been marginalized all over East Africa in preference to agrarian rights on one hand and statutory rights on the other<sup>32</sup>. In Karamoja land is communally owned under customary tenure system. Several issues arise including transhumance, international and district boundary relations, ownership of land and access rights to water, pasture and other grazing resources. Karamojong clans and ethnic tribes have rights to graze their animals in their fathers' land. Rights to use pastoral resources like grazing is tribal circumscribed by one's membership to a specific social group. People belonging to a specific social group have exclusive rights to exclude non-members and unannounced entry into land belonging to another group. Once these resources are exhausted especially during the dry season they migrate to other areas with fresh pasture and water for



their animals. The resultant effect is conflict, with the neighboring agro communities whose reaction is normally hostile.<sup>33</sup>

Land related conflicts in Karamoja have a lot to do with the political history of the area. The creation of imposed boundaries by the colonial state restricted access to land. Fencing off farmland by agriculturalists was another colonial restriction that sparked off conflict between agriculturalists and pastoralists, especially so in neighboring districts. Subsequent governments have been insensitive to land matters in Karamoja. Laws and policies that disregard pastoralism as a major land usage in the area have been enacted rendering the Karimajong insecure. For instance, way back in 1968, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Water and Mineral Resources recognized the complex land questions in some parts of Karamoja. He said that land is a very sensitive matter, which if not properly handled can lead to ill feeling and upheavals in Karamoja District.

Government officials did not take this warning seriously. In 1964 the Commissioner of Prisons in Namalu asked for 1000 acres of land to add to prison land. No compensation was given to the Karamojong. The District Commissioner explained that, "compensation was not necessary because the land had no owner." However, this was not exactly true and soon conflicts between the prison officials and the Karamojong broke out. Despite all these conflicts over the land, the prison was acceded 7150 acres of land without consideration of access rights to pastoralists who needed to graze in the area."<sup>34</sup>

As much as Article 237(3) of the 1995 Constitution and section 4 of the 1998 Land Act provide for the customary tenure system of holding land which presupposes pastoral usage and access right the Karamojong lack security of tenure. The application of the Land Act in Karamoja is believed to be theoretical. The language is complex even to elite members of the society. Section 9 of the land Act provides that a certificate of customary ownership confers in the holder of the certificate such rights as to use of his land. He can lease a part or the whole of the land, mortgage it or do whatever he wants with it except as may be restricted by the certificate.

This brings the issue of ideals and realities. Because the Karamojong are a nomadic community due to the fact that the climatic conditions require them to move from place to place in search of water and pasture for their animals, they do not own any land titles. In fact, some neighboring tribes are now used to leaving their land up to seven months a year because Karamojong herders have occupied it during the dry season.

Under customary system, pastures and grazing lands are considered common use resources to which the pastoral communities have both collective rights of management and control and individual land rights of use (akin to collective ownership). The awareness and sensitivity to land rights of pastoralist communities has yet to enter government machinery.

Several statutory instruments contradict pastoralism as a land use. For instance, the Mining Act, cap 248 as amended by Act No.7 of 1985 restricts mining rights in relation to owners of houses and land cleared for agricultural crop production. However, it does not extend such restrictions to pastures and grazing areas, yet government is quite aware of Karamoja's Gold Mining potential and pastoralism as their economic livelihood. Under S 60(1)(a) a holder of a mining right may be granted a permit in respect of any water supply to utilize any water existing within the boundaries of his mining right. This will further lead to competition and conflict over water.

On the other hand conflict is bound to occur between the agro-pastoralist Karamojong and mining companies because clearly these two land uses are not compatible. Worse still, it is very expensive to restore land after mining operations to a state where it can be used for grazing.

Similarly, under the 1995 Wildlife Statute Regulations, almost the entire Karamoja region is under some form of environmental protection. That is to say, Controlled Hunting Areas, gazetted wildlife zones, and Game Reserves. Technically therefore a lot of human activity in Game Reserves would be illegal. Conservation of wildlife for tourist purposes and grazing and agriculture of local communities are not always compatible. In fragile areas, pasture, and grazing lands, hotel facilities for tourism for example came in conflict with the water needs of the local communities. In Moroto District, over 20,000 sq. miles is Controlled

Hunting Area (CHA) established by government to protect wildlife. This was done without any consultation with the local population. It restricted pastoral resource use by gazetting off land for wildlife.<sup>35</sup>

S93 (2) of Uganda Wildlife Statute suggests that CHAs can be declared National Parks. The entire region of Karamoja has the status of wildlife protected area, comprising Kidepo valley National Park, three wildlife reserves and three Controlled Hunting Areas declared in 1950s and 60s. In 1961 all the CHAs were gazetted while in 1962 Kidepo valley was up graded to a National Park. In 1964 Pian-Upe Game Reserves was created as an expansion of the former Debasian game sanctuary, while in the same year Matheniko was upgraded from CHA status to Game Reserve. Bakora corridor was declared too. More livestock was alienated from valuable dry season grazing grounds yet these are better endowed with pasture and water.<sup>36</sup> The South and North of Matheniko Game Reserves occupy a fertile corridor that stretches from Pian to Bokora through Matheniko. Jie and Dodoth communities in these areas are prohibited from encroaching on the Game Reserves. This makes them think that the government cares for animals than human beings.

As resource availability reaches a critical level, the issue now is to determine who has the right to dictate the usage of the land gazetted for Wildlife. The Karamojong do not want permanent ownership of the land but rather just access rights for grazing and water. Yet similarly on the other hand the Game Department do not want permanent ownership of the land so much as access rights for wildlife. The observation to be made is that once these two competing interests interact, conflict often results.<sup>37</sup>

In conclusion, government ought to develop a tenure system that encompasses pastoral rights to facilitate easy access to pasture and water and also revise land related laws so that they permit grazing of animals in “protected” areas especially during the dry season when water and pasture are scarce.

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<sup>28</sup> Pulkol, David: (1991) *Karamoja Inter-County Raids and Road Insecurity: The Leadership Crisis (The Case of Bokora nd Matheniko Counties): A report to the NRC.* at PP.4-5

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## **CHAPTER III**

### **WATER MANAGEMENT IN MOROTO DISTRICT**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

Water is the most prominent resource that causes a lot of conflict in Karamoja. Disputes over water take place not only within pastoralist of different ethnic groups and other tribes in Uganda neighboring the Karamojong but also between states like Southern Sudan and Northwestern Kenya.<sup>1</sup> The absence of water determines both humans and livestock survival. A field report by KAPD indicates that there is a recurring water shortage that happens four times in every ten years in Karamoja.<sup>2</sup> Such a crisis coupled with extreme poverty in the region forces the Karamojong to adopt the worst means of survival involving cattle rustling, theft, murder, and migrations.

It is no wonder therefore that distribution, utility and conservation of water has been one of the greatest subjects of discussion among the politicians in Uganda as away of limiting Karamojong movements with animals to neighboring districts. Until a solution to drought related crisis is realized, conflicts in and around Karamoja will continue to elude many. Water related conflicts in Karamoja have been broken down into two categories in this chapter: conflict over shared water resources within and that that results from migration to neighboring districts to obtain water and pasture.<sup>3</sup>

#### **3.1 A legal Analysis of Ugandan Legislation Governing Water Management.**

The 1995 Constitution National Objectives and Direct Principles of State Policy XXI provide that; the state shall take all practical measures to promote a good water system at all levels. This is inclusive of Karamoja.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly Section 4 of the 1995 Water Statute aims at promoting the rational management and use of water through application of appropriate standards, techniques for investigations, use, control, protection, management and administration of water resources. It

further aims at coordination of all public and private activities, which may influence the quality, quantity, distribution, use or management of water resources.

Section 8(1) (c) of the Water Statute also provides the Minister with power to regulate any water source in times of shortage or anticipated shortage. It provides that the minister can declare any such part of Uganda to be a controlled area and establish comparative and integrated plan for management of land, water, and other natural resources. Such resources in Karamoja would include, water, livestock and pasture. However since 1995 no documentation has been made to indicate the existence of such plans despite the fact that Karamoja faces severe water shortages every year.<sup>5</sup> The directorate of water development and Karamoja data center do not have any information to this effect.

Another practical aspect of the Water Statute is found in Section 50(1). This allows for the formation of water user groups or association to collectively plan and manage water points and water supply. This would be ideal in places like Moroto where the right to use water is by virtue of being a member of the tribe or clan that owns the land on which the water point is located. This would not only lead to joint responsibility in management but also would reduce conflicts that arise from struggles over ownership of a given water point. However formation of these water user groups are yet to be formed in Karamoja.

It is worthy noting that almost all the laws relating to water management do not recognize pastoralism as a viable economic activity. While the Directorate of Water Development is the lead agency responsible for managing water resources, coordinating and regulating water sector activities as stipulated by the Water Statute, has its priority sector in agricultural production excluding nomadism, which is the predominant economic activity in Karamoja.

The DWD aims at promoting development of sustainable water supply within easy reach of 65% of rural population and 80% of urban population by the year 2005. However at the time of writing this research paper, supply of clean safe water is still very limited in Moroto district with 25% of house holds traveling over 15 km to obtain water<sup>6</sup>. This would

imply that government policy does not equitably apply to Karamoja in matters of water resource provision as it applies to the rest of Uganda.

In relations to the Water Statute, S3 of the Cattle Grazing Act, imposes certain restrictions on maximum number of cattle that any person may be permitted to graze on any particular area of land. If this statute is properly utilized, it would not only control over grazing and carrying capacity and its effect on water availability but also guide or regulate dry season migration, which is a source of conflict in this area. It is observed that there is a need to educate the local people on good water management practices including water pan protection, and water quality maintenance.

Under S 60(1)(a) of the Mining Act, cap 248 as amended by Act No.7 of 1985 a holder of a mining right may be granted a permit in respect of any water supply to utilize any water existing within the boundaries of his mining right. This will further lead to competition and conflict over water.

On the other hand conflict is bound to occur between the agro-pastoralists Karamojong and mining companies because clearly these two land uses are not compatible. Worse still, it is very expensive to restore land after mining operations to a state where it can be used for grazing.

### **3.2 Water Sources in Moroto District.**

Historically livestock and human population were dependent on traditional water sources dug in shallow wells in seasonal river beds called 'ecor' or 'akcare' and rain water clay lined ponds traditionally known as 'atapar' whose storage capacity in both cases is very limited. 'Ecor' and 'atapar' were dug under the guidance of elders who ensured that water was equally and peacefully distributed without conflict. Responsibility of maintaining the resource was on every resource user who was expected to dig mud and silt out of the 'atapar' in exchange for water use.<sup>7</sup>

Boreholes are another source of water in this area. Construction and maintenance was all done without any community participation. By 1970s out of the 574 government-



constructed boreholes 320 were nor functional largely because, the water table had dropped, power pumped boreholes had broken down, while others had turned saline due to over abstraction.

The situation was worsened by dry season insecurities in which many bore holes were vandalized, pumps removed and rods used for making guns locally known as '*amatida*'. It is worse, that many first phrase boreholes were located besides roadsides and many of them (about 31%) were destroyed during 1970s and 1980s. The pumps were removed and the raising mains were used by the Karimojong to make rifles. The empty boreholes were then filled up with stones, which was irreparable damage.<sup>8</sup>

The maintenance of the area around the bore-holes was less good, non were protected with fences and most of them had damaged concrete work, poor drainage, animals standing, urinating and defecating near to the pump head. Worse still, distribution of boreholes in Moroto District has been uneven, both in terms of distribution by parish and distribution by population of different traditional sections. Government recommends that 1 borehole with a hand pump should serve 200-230 people. However the actual ratio of yielding boreholes is 1:480. The ratio of hand pumps in good condition is 1:560. This is very low and does not meet the DWD standard. Distribution has been influenced by politics, resulting in very high numbers in the municipality and other trading centers.<sup>9</sup>

Some rural communities have very limited access. For instance the only borehole that people in Lotop use for human consumption is located 10 km from Lotop. Access to this water source is highly determined by relations to the Ngipei clans .Any strain in the relationship means lack of clean drinking water. Other areas like Lomosingo have no boreholes at all. The only available opportunity is sinking wells, in absence of which pastoralist have to migrate to other areas in search of water and pasture often leading to conflict.<sup>10</sup>

The condition of boreholes is very appalling, yet boreholes are very expensive to repair, costing over 8,000 to 10,000 US dollars to install a single hand pump. In absence of traditional water sources the situation may often get out of hand.<sup>11</sup>

In the dry season for example, large numbers of livestock, which is watered and feed on the pasture surrounding the boreholes, overcrowds the few existing boreholes. It is worse that, some of the boreholes are found near retreating routes, it is at such locations that collision of migrating sections of the Karamojong usually occur.

Other sources of water in Moroto district include, dams and springs valley tanks and a few rivers that dry up in the dry season. To date most of the water sources have dried up due to drought.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that rivers follow seasonally leads to shortages of water for animals and human beings hence struggle for the few water points in the region and neighboring districts. This state of affairs has resulted in resource conflict within and outside Karamoja. Because the rivers are seasonal, there is little water in the region leading to migrations in search of water for animals and human consumption.

### **3.3 Analysis of Drought Related Conflicts in Moroto District.**

Conflict in Karamoja arises over water whenever there is disputed ownership between the different Karamojong ethnic groups. This occurs during periods of drought. Some examples of such areas of conflict include Ochorichori water point in Pokot, which has a permanent water point that is a source of conflict between the Matheniko, Pian and Pokot. Similarly Lia water springs near Moroto town, which has been the source of conflict between the Tepeth and the Matheniko. Longorikipi water point in Bokora on the other hand has been a source of conflict between the Matheniko, Bokora and Jie while Lomoratoiti bore hole is another area of violence and bloodshed in the dry season along the Kenya-Ugandan border.<sup>13</sup>

Apart from the disputes directly arising from ownership of water resources, drought has several implications on livestock herding and availability of food. In absence of water and pasture, pastoralists migrate with their animals to neighboring districts. This is characterized by bloodshed. On the other hand, in the absence of food and water, people starve and die or migrate to areas where they can obtain food. In both cases the migration is never peaceful.

The normal rainfall pattern for Karamoja region starts in April continuing to August. There is however, a dry spell in June/July. The dry season sets in immediately in September

up to March the following year. Since 1998 rainfall amounts and duration have been decreasing. In 1999 there was very little rainfall hence hunger.<sup>14</sup> Recent reports show that as a result of the drought September 2002 to January 2003 over two hundred people had died of famine in Karamoja region with 75 in Moroto District. In the same report Karamoja parliamentary group chairman Ark Lodou said that this famine could kill more people compared to the 1980 famine where over 1000 Karamojong starved to death. He said that families from Sidok, Karenga and Kalapata sub counties had fled in Southern Sudan in search for food, while those in Matheniko in Moroto District had fled into Turkana, Kenya with six of them under detention for trespass in Lodwer prison.<sup>15</sup>

Due to scarcity of water, coping strategies are adopted. Individuals can go on for days without bathing, with only one or no meal at all per day. Women can travel for long distances to obtain water for their families, while male youth communally assist each other in collecting water. They line up in a human chain of up to six individuals, working round the clock as ladders to fetch water from under the ground for watering their animals. In severe cases however, the Karamojong have to migrate with cattle to far off places in other Districts in search of water and pasture. The principal risk or hazard of water shortage coping strategies is insecurity; meeting enemies from other tribes. Karamojong warriors can rape girls and women on the way to water points, steal water containers or kill people. The dry season is further characterized by the spread of diseases and hence mortality of livestock. David Pulkol is reported to have said that, "one of the principal cause of inter-county raids in 1989 in Karamoja was the need to restock kraals after most kraal owners had lost cattle due to East coast fever, an epidemic that spread in the dry season."<sup>16</sup>

It is at this point that I will emphasize that conflict among the Karamajong, is not so much a case of culture but a case of survival amidst limited resources and harsh ecological conditions. Limited rainfall means limited agriculture and food production hence famine. It also means less livestock productivity and hence, seasonal migrations and cattle rustling. It can be argued that, cattle raids, violence and conflicts intensify in the dry season as a matter of survival amidst limited resources.

Live stock migration to kraals starts in October and ends in December. Animals usually return to the settlements in April when there is rain, water and grass. However since 1998, the animal movement pattern has changed drastically largely due to insecurity and prolonged drought.

In Pokot, since 1998, the animal movement pattern has changed drastically due to insecurity and prolonged drought. Since Pokot animals were massively raided at Moruita in January 1998, the Pokot from Karita and Amudat no longer take their cattle to graze there. The animals now stay camp at Achorchor in Loroo sub-country.

In Dodoth County, the shepherds migrate with their livestock to areas in the neighboring Districts, such as Kitgum and Lira in search of pasture and water. Also the Bakorans migrate to other Districts like Katakwi and Soroti to obtain pasture and water, as they migrate, tension rises and at times fights over land, water and cattle occur.

During scarcity of pasture and water, Pokot animals are driven to Kadom Mountain where water flows through Amudat River and a number of seasonal streams. Due to insecurity, however, households subdivide the herds among the boys who then move in different directions and also camp separately. The negative impact of this is that the Pokot fall prey to other raiding bands since collective strength is lost.<sup>17</sup>

The Bakora and Pian Karamojong graze their cattle westwards during the dry season to take advantage of perennial grasslands in the wetter Western edge of Karamoja towards Teso and Lira. In December the cattle herds are at the Western extremity of the livestock range and in February to March return them Eastwards towards the main settlement centers.

The Matheniko on the other hand graze their cattle North of Mountain Moroto in Matheniko Wildlife Reserve in the wet season, moving westwards along the Apule River towards Bakora Wildlife Reserve in the dry season. As the Matheniko cattle move Westwards, their place in Matheniko Wildlife Reserve is taken by the cattle sheep, goats, and camels of the Kenyan Turkana with whom the Matheniko Karimojong maintain an alliance.<sup>18</sup>

It should be realized that this constant unguided/ unrestricted movement of the Karamojong clans with their animals, in search for water and pasture, poses a serious security

threat not only to people living in Karamoja but also those living in Districts neighboring Karamoja. One of the negative results of the Migrations is the confrontation and abuse committed by the Karamojong against their neighbors and vice versa. These conflicts often result in serious losses of life, revenge and counter revenge.

In addition, resentment of the Karamojong by other tribes like the Iteso has been growing unchecked. On the other hand, the Karamojong, say that other Ugandans tribes looked down upon them as uncivilized. While other Ugandan tribes consider the Karamojong as arrogant and insensitive individuals who only care about cattle. Attitudes like "we shall not wait for Karamojong to develop" further alienate them from Uganda, making peaceful resolution really difficult.

For instance, in the March and April 2000 raids in Teso, the level of aggression against the Karamojong was very high. In the public discourse no differentiation was made between the Karamojong and the Karamojong warriors. Without discrimination all people living in Kotido and Moroto were turned into cattle thieves including the Minister for Karamoja.<sup>19</sup>

Another angle of the conflict in Karamoja arises in the joint sharing of pastoral resources between or across the Kenya-Ugandan boundaries. It should be noted that the dry season in Northeastern Uganda affects Western Kenya to the same extent. The population in Moroto and Kotido are similar to Turkana people. These two have no respect for the Kenya-Ugandan border and tend to migrate over the border for water or grazing.

The well-armed Turkana and Kenyan Pokot will raid animals leaving several Karamojong dead. Unfortunately it is normally very difficult to pursue them into Kenya. To make matters worse, the recently concluded disarmament program while well intended has proved fruitless. On the other hand, the well-armed Pokot of Kenya have found it easy to kill and raid the unarmed Karamojong in the presence of UPDF security forces. As the drought approached, the Karamojong began re-arming with both local and modern rifles against themselves and neighboring districts.<sup>20</sup>

### 3.4 Data Presentation From Secondary Sources.

Data on water management and conflict is very scanty in Moroto District, however the few available figures will be used to give a picture of conflict in Karamoja.

Karamoja region has been so severely affected by water shortages. Since 1997 areas in the Eastern weather belt of Moroto i.e. Areas nearest to the Kenya-Ugandan border: Pokot, Tapac and parts of Rupa, Nadunget, Lorengedwart, Loyoro, Siduk and Kalapata barely experienced 750mm of rainfall.<sup>21</sup>

*It has been estimated that Moroto district alone requires three billion liters of water to sustain its cattle for the five months when the region experiences drought. With an estimated million cattle with each requiring an average of 20 liters of water per day, Moroto alone would require at least 300 valley dams to provide the required water for at least five months of drought.*<sup>22</sup>

However the available water is not enough with only three valley dams in the whole District of Moroto. There is a deficiency of water mostly felt in the dry season, leading to competition over the resource. The ratio of water resource to livestock and human population is really low. The tables below illustrate this.

**TABLE No..5**

**Estimated Human and Livestock population and water demand, for the year 2010, Moroto District.**

(1)HUMAN	TOTAL POPULATION		RURAL WATER DEMAND (M3M/YEAR)		URBAN WATER DEMAND M3M/YEAR	
	1991	2010	1991	2019	1991	2010
Human population and water demand.	172,000	185,000	1440,000	1,553,000	376,000	405,500

(Continuation Table No.5).

(II) Livestock	Total no. Of livestock (Livestock Equivalent)		Water Demand M3/Year	
	1989	2010	1989	2010
Livestock population and water demand.	34,000	59,000	629,000	1,083,000

**SOURCE:** Directorate of Water Development, 1995.

These two tables indicate that the demand for water is increasing yet construction of new sources is slow. It implies that water shortage will result in competition and conflict if nothing is done to increase availability.

**TABLE No.6: MOROTO DISTRICT POPULATION BY SUB COUNTY**

COUNTY	SUBCOUNTY	TOTAL POPULATION
BOKORA	Irii	25,742
	Lokopo	6,882
	Lopei	14,112
	Lotome	21,857
	Matany	13,316
	Ngoleriet	15,866
MATHENIKO	Katikekile	16,022
	Nadunget	26,124
	Rupa	20,409
	Kraals	2,672
MOROTO MUNICIPALITY	North division	4,119
	South division	3,385
<b>TOTAL</b>		170,506

**Source:** Karamoja Data Center.

From Table No.6 above and Table No.7 below, an equitable distribution of water is clearly shown. For instance, Moroto Municipality with only 7,504 people has the biggest number of boreholes, 38, yet Lopei with over 41112 people has only 6 boreholes, no dams and only one temporarily abandoned borehole.

In Bokora with 9,7775 people the bore hole coverage is 77 with only 1 dam, yet

Matheniko with a population of 65,227 has almost the same number of boreholes and two dams. Such distribution is not equitable and often results in competition for water especially in areas with many people leading to conflict in the dry season.



**TABLE No.7****Summary of water points in Moroto**

County	Sub county	No. Of boreholes.	No of .dams
Bokora	Irii	10	1
	Lokopo	13	0
	Lopei	7	0
	Lotome	19	0
	Matany	12	0
	Ngoroleriet	16	0
Matheniko	Katikelkile	8	0
	Nadunget	42	0
	Rupa	26	2
Moroto	South division	14	0
Municipality.	North division	24	0
District total		191	3

**SOURCE: KARAMOJA DATA CENTER.**

Tables No.6 and No.7 show that Moroto District has insufficient water supplies. This, coupled with the fact that there are no permanent water sources, and erratic rainfall means serious water shortages. Hence there is competition that leads to conflict over water and pasture and migration during the dry months.<sup>23</sup> The dry season is the most difficult time for the Karamojong, with neither food nor water and pasture, migration and its resultant effects becomes inevitable.

According to various records, including newspaper reports, it is these months of famine and drought that the Karamojong begin migrating to neighboring districts or even

across international borders. It is still during this time of the year that the highest recorded figures of death and cattle rustling are witnessed.<sup>24</sup>

The LWF annual report 2000 indicates that at the beginning of 1999 inter tribal raids and ambushes increased due to famine and drought in the district. While in previous years the use of the pastures and water resources of the neighboring districts by Karamojong had not led to large scale conflict, the movement during the dry season of 1999 -2000 caused violence all along the borders of Karamoja. By April 2000, 135,000 people had been displaced by the fighting; 80,000 in Kitgum, 35,000 in Katakwi, 15,000 in Lira, 2,500 in Kumi and 2,500 in Soroti district. In the same period inter- ethnic tensions remained high with an estimated 782 people killed and 11250 heads of cattle lost.<sup>25</sup>

In another press report of Wednesday, 12th, June 2002 *The New Vision* newspaper, it was predicted that insecurity was bound to worsen with the dry season. It was said that pastoral movement was characterized by bloodshed due to cattle raids and fights over water among the communities where the Karamojong migrate. In December 2002 it was reported that Karamojong cattle herders had entered Kumi District, displacing hundreds of people and raiding large numbers of cattle.<sup>26</sup> This year alone more than 300 hundred Karamojong have been reported dead due to famine while others have been forced to migrate with their cattle.<sup>27</sup>

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion it is valuable to note that provision of water and related pastoral resources would be the only way forward in curbing pastoral conflict in Northeastern Uganda. Water management and drought control holds a key role in conflict resolution in the area. What government needs to address should be more than the security question of the area but should also intensify its programs on provision of water and pasture, animal health and provision of food. It should recognize the fact that survival in such harsh climatic condition amidst poverty is often the root cause of the conflict.

## END NOTES: CHAPTER THREE

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## CHAPTER IV

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN KARAMOJA

#### 4.0 Introduction.

Several methods of conflict resolution have been applied to Karamoja over time. Such mechanisms include traditional conflict management mechanisms, government initiatives, and NGO peace initiatives to mention but few.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will however, discuss only traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution, NGO contributions to peace, and a few government efforts in the attainment of peace in this area.

#### 4.1 Traditional Mechanism

Customary institutions have and continue to play an important role in Karamoja society. Elders, traditional witchdoctors have much influence over decisions and matters relating to cattle raids and rustling. They discuss serious issues relating to socio-political affairs and decision making to do with natural resources utilization and management. Each clan has got its style of resolving issues. If peace is to be attained there is a need to revisit traditional mechanisms as the only valid mechanism for resolving conflict in the region.

The Karamojong have several traditional mechanisms for conflict management. Peter Abraham Lokii gives some scenarios and says, that, “conflicts that always arise among the Karamojong and Bakora are conflicts on cattle raids...” He then indicates how individual conflicting clans handle such conflicts. He gives examples of conflict resolution in Bakora county; where the Ngitopo Vs Ngilemuyak conflict: the Ngikopo resolve this conflict because it is a conflict of two clans (brothers) within the Ngikopo subsection. That for the Ngiepel Vs Ngitopon, Ngiper and Ngikopo preside over conflict resolution meeting because Ngiper are a subsection bigger and Ngikopo are also a subsection of which Ngitopon are a clan. (Two equals meet). For Ngibobal vs Ngikatap, he says the Ngitopan will resolve such conflicts. He notes that most of the conflicts between the Ngikopo are resolved in the “Akiriket,” a traditional

ceremony. During the resolution of conflicts, people gather to discuss the causes of such conflicts and punishments for the offender.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.2 Customary Peace Process.

Locally the people of Karamoja resolve violent conflict at different levels depending on the nature of the conflict.<sup>3</sup> The Karamojong sections come together for peace when the violence has reached its climax. This is when many lives and property have been lost. There is also a local community defense force that informs and recovers animals during a raid on a voluntary basis. Offering a bull for roasting when they have recovered the animal rewards their service. The initiators of peace are well versed with the historical incidents and personalities lost, and attach value in order to convince the community to opt for peace. Convincing of society is done at different levels: at the family, with the peer group, the clan, at the *Akiriket*, with the working groups, at watering and grazing places. The members of the society then take over the process of peace, which is voluntary. All participants recognize that the peace process takes along time to achieve out comes, between 3-6months, because the conflicting parties are to be prepared adequately. Members from the neutral categories in the society help to broker peace. The categories of people include the following:

- Members who are not directly involved in raiding: female youth, women and the very old;
- Those who belong to both sides as a result of intermarriages;
- Neutral leaders who for some reason belong to both parties (those with a special skill, which benefits both groups, e.g. herbalists and black smiths.
- Those who can express themselves clearly and can influence peacefully by the use of selected words which cannot anger, but which can invite quality listening, positive judgment and sound decision making. <sup>4</sup>

Customarily, the *akiriket* also play a lead role in the peace process. The elders of both parties conduct a customary prayer in turn at the *akiriket*. The male youth participate and listen to advice and also help in making traditional fire and meat roasting. Both parties in the

reconciliation contribute white bulls. Among the Bakora and Matheniko, the sitting arrangement is such that the parties sit separately from each other at the beginning of discussion. When they have come to a positive resolution during the initial discussion, they converge at the *akiriket*. Whereas traditional methods of conflict resolution play a big role, in Karamoja peace process, they have limitations and as such alternative methods should be used to complement the peace process. Methods relied upon should include dialogue in form of peace talks, performance of traditional rituals whose main goal is to create room for forgiveness and reconciliation.

#### 4.3 Government Peace Initiatives

Over time, government has also intervened in the peace process in the region. The government security institutions involved include the police, the army, the local councils, vigilantes, the Local Defense Unit, Prison and Local administrative police. The government recently instituted the Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) in and around Karamoja to recover stolen livestock. The army and the police personnel are the sole managers of ASTU. The disarmament program has equally been launched by Government to obtain illegal guns from the Karamojong but without much success.<sup>5</sup>

Government through its officers has also initiated peace meetings. An example is that in which Hon. David Pulkol, is quoted to have said, *"I was present at a meeting of 21st May 1991 organized by the D.A. and division commander Moroto, district, Col. Okola."* It was attended by Mzee Lowakobong (Matheniko) and Mzee Alonga (Bakora) together with their influential warriors, they identified communal grazing as one means by which inter county raids could be stopped out. In the same meeting, the Matheniko elders told the Bakora cattle camp leaders that *"in the interest of peace we are no longer demanding the return of the animals raided by your boys in the last three big raids, but must ensure that your warriors do not raid our Kraals for a fourth time otherwise we will be forced to respond severely."*<sup>6</sup>

Peace meetings are becoming more important in Karamoja, they are often geared by traditional leaders whom by virtual of their positions form vital entry points to understanding issues that have hampered resolution of conflict.

Some of the peace initiatives involving influence of traditional leaders among others included;

- A national peace conference of people from Karamoja and neighboring regions held at Makerere University in September 1994.
- A reconciliation meeting held between the Karamojong and the Turkana leaders in Moroto in June 1996.
- Series of reconciliation meetings between representatives of people from Karamoja and Turkana held in 1996.
- The Moroto II Peace Conference 1994, in which representatives of the Pokot, Sabiny and Karamojong met again with the Pokot and Turkana of Kenya.
- Moroto Training workshop December 2000 held between the Teso elders and Karamojong elders.<sup>7</sup>

#### **4.4The Role of NGOs.**

The NGOs and church organizations are also involved in the peace crusade. The NGOs include the Karamoja projects implementation unit (KPIU), the Christian initiative for peace services (CHIPS) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

The KPIU is supporting the Karamojong elders who are moving in the region to preach peace. The elders have formed a local peace organization called the Karamoja Initiative for Sustainable Peace (KISP). Most of these, elders are considered to be leaders who matter in decision making issues of livestock management in the region. By virtual of their positions they form vital entry points to the improvement of livestock production and food security in the region.

LWF has made peace and reconciliation one of the three major components of intervention strategy in its program of work. The program facilitated 20 out of 50 community initiated peace meetings during the year 2000. Eight cease-fire agreements were brokered by LWF with the help of local district authorities. However the Matheniko violated a peace agreement between

the Matheniko and Bakora when they conducted 5 consecutive raids on the Bakora. However successful peace agreements were held between the Tepeth and Matheniko, on the one hand and the Pian, Tepeth and the Matheniko on the other. As a result of such agreements, the Matheniko were allowed to graze and water their animals in Bakora County without fear of a vengeful raid. In addition to such peace agreements LWF has also been involved in the construction and repairing of boreholes in addition to training and equipping the local people with modern skills of conflict resolution.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand CHIPS a Christian NGO has used supply of water as a tool for reducing conflict in the eastern side of Karamoja along the Kenya-Ugandan boarder. In its 2002 report it is discussed that, “the scarcity of water resources in these remote boarder areas often leads to conflict. It further adds that, unprotected water holes can become contaminated when used by passing livestock, causing tension between the nomadic Karamojong cattle herders and the settled Iteso communities. It pointed out that one way to curb such conflict is to provide water for both animals and humans.”<sup>9</sup>

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

Modern and customary institutions have their limitations and challenges. Both institutions have failed to strike a balance between conflict management and conflict resolution. They work in isolation and as a result, they duplicate each other’s role and leave important issues un-attended.



## ENDNOTES: CHAPTER FOUR

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<sup>1</sup> Odiambo, O. M. (2000). *Karamoja conflict study: A report to Oxfam GB in Uganda*, Kampala, March pp12-25.

<sup>2</sup> Lokii, P. A. (1997). *In Search for Water We Left Apule, in Search of Water and Pasture: A Report of PRA Training Exercise for LWF Staff in Kangole-Bokora County*. January At PP.6-18

<sup>3</sup> Sabiiti, M. S. (2000). *Natural Resources Based Conflict in the Greater Horn Of Africa. Experiences and Strategies for Intervention, The Case of Karamoja*. March 27<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>. At. Pp. 5-7.

<sup>4</sup> Sabiiti, M. S. (2000). Ibid. at pp5-7.

<sup>5</sup> Pax, c. (2000). *Voluntary disarmament of pastoralists; an integrated phased community based strategy: Pilot project; Karamoja, Northeastern Uganda*. May.

<sup>6</sup> Pulkol, D. (1991). *Karamoja Inter-County Raids and Road Insecurities: The Leadership Crisis (The Case of The Bokora And Matheniko Counties): A report to the NRC* at p.4

<sup>7</sup> Center for Conflict Resolution, (2000). *Resources Handbook Moroto Training Workshop: Hands across the Border Peace-Bridges between the People of Teso and Karamoja*. December

<sup>8</sup> The Lutheran World Federation: Annual Report .2000. At. Pp.10-15.

<sup>9</sup> Christian International Peace Service (CHIPS): Annual Report 2000 at p.2

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 CONCLUSION.

Violent conflict and general insecurity is a complete set back to the development in the Karamoja region. The response to this situation by both government and NGOs has been either inadequate or simply only symptoms treated with the result that the trend has continued for generations. It is observed that if no appropriate steps and methods are taken, the situation is likely to continue and may even become worse.

The research reveals that human life and livestock and property has been lost and destroyed in and around Karamoja. It also shows that most of the efforts date back to policies of the colonial and postcolonial governments. Past governments ignored the Karamojong and considered the whole region as a human zoo, which did not require development. Another problem is that neighboring districts are prejudiced against the Karamojong; even today, they stereotype the Karimojong as having a raiding culture. This situation has made the policy makers and implementers think raiding is a Karimojong issue without thinking of its implications to themselves and the nation.

The Karimojong do raid but do so as an environmental response to the harsh climatic conditions of the region.

There are usually four intervals of drought in every ten years with the result of food insecurity characterized by famine and drought. The response to such disaster is the extreme survival strategies applied by the Karamojong. It should be mentioned here that the response by the government with relief food to avert food shortages has been done inappropriately in that the Karimojong have developed a dependency syndrome.<sup>1</sup>

Government efforts to avert the pastoral conflict have been wanting. There is a leadership crisis with no law enforcement mechanisms in the region. Government legal instruments on the one hand show little sympathy to the pastoral needs while on the other, aim at exploiting the region through Wildlife conservation, and mineral exploitation.

Such government policies have left the Karamojong in a state of underdevelopment and maximum poverty to the extent that, the only means of survival left to them is primitive livestock herding, characterized by overgrazing, land degradation and conflict.

While an observation and comparison can be made of pastoral conflicts in Western Uganda, among the Bahima pastoralists, its magnitude is way below that of Karamoja. The major explanation for the difference could be that while all pastoralists living in the cattle corridor of Uganda face harsh ecological conditions, with no water and pasture, the situation has been worse in Karamoja. This coupled with the absence of alternative means of survival due to poverty has resulted in a recurring conflict especially in the dry season to such an extent that some individuals have classified it as a Karamajong culture. With growing hunger has come a security problem as Karamojong warriors robe homes and ambush vehicles in search for food. Hunger resulting from water shortages in the dry season results in absence of pasture and later migration to neighboring districts.

### **5.1 General Recommendations.**

Generally, the researcher has found it hard to access data on conflicts, cattle raids, and water management due to poor records keeping in Karamoja. The record keeping system in Moroto District like other parts of Karamoja has been falling over time. To the extent that records of people who die due to water shortages and famine is non-existent except for newspaper records. This has made it very hard for the researcher to make a qualitative analysis to relate water shortage with conflict in Karamoja, while backing it up with figures. Even the data provided by Karamoja Data Center does not cover the whole area of research. I recommend that government encourages record keeping and up to date comprehensive inventory as this will help

to discover the history of water related conflicts and give a stepping stone from which some conflicts can be handled while explaining the root causes of some of the other conflicts.

Consensus of all stakeholders should be ascertained, as it is not safe to assume that all the Karimojong and the people working in or on Karamajong perceive of conflict as a threat and a hindrance to the achievement of certain objectives. It is quite possible that there are certain individuals or groups within Karamoja whose interests and purposes are well served by the conflict and insecurity in the region. Unless there is commitment to overcome the problem at all levels of the continuum it is obvious that little can be achieved in real terms.

The failure to consult with all the actors in a situation of conflict may lead to failure in its resolution. For instance there have been many agreements between the Karimojong and Teso, but they have not worked because the warriors were not invited to participate in the process. Consensus building done was not enough.

Government should create a peace fund for Karamoja to provide logistical support to the relevant District institutions to facilitate peace building and conflict resolution programs. The local people's participation should be seriously upheld so that local people have constant access to decision-making and see themselves as part of the solution to the conflict in the area.

There is a need for law reform in which government recognizes pastoralism as an economic activity that can lead to economic development in Karamoja. The Land Act, 1998, the Wildlife Statute 1995, the Mining Act Cap 245 and Water Statute of 1995, should all be reviewed to include pastoralism, and further give guidelines on resource utilization. In addition government should develop laws, to conserve, preserve, efficient use and management of available water resources. This could be done with community participation

## **5.2 Specific Recommendations**

All project designs must remember that need for water is not isolated from other community needs. Water must be looked at holistically, not only the extraction of water for

drinking purposes but managing water in such a manner as to give primacy to both pastoralists and livestock while also ensuring ecological protection.

Government should create water points away from the dam edges to prevent overcrowding of cattle, stampedes, conflict, soil erosion and gradual environmental degradation.

Impact on the environment should be measured and monitored effectively as part of any water project before any water resources projects are undertaken; it is prudent to conclude an Environmental Impact Assessment. This will summarize anticipated positive and negative environmental impacts of a project and recommend remedial measures that may be required. Effective monitoring and evaluation of a project and its impacts can assist a community to design timely and appropriate intervention to protect pastoralists, their livestock and the environment as well. By comparing rainfall data with past rainfall records and combining this with rangeland status, it is possible to predict future rangeland conditions.

Since drought is a recurrent phenomenon in Karamoja region, government and all stakeholders should build capacity to handle drought and resultant migrations as when they arise. It would be helpful if government created specific dry season grazing areas, where the Karamojong can lawfully take their animals in the dry season. Early mitigation of drought effects in the livestock sector would be a more effective way of saving the livelihood of pastoralists than waiting for emergency operations. It should be noted that drought and conflict in this region is not a surprising occurrence, which is why government should not be caught off guard. An effective disaster management system must go hand in hand with an appropriate community based development approach that aims to increase community capacities and to reduce socio-economic environmental problems.

Both NGOs and government have invested funds in isolated components of pastoral development and conflict resolution. They have in the process duplicated each other's work and have failed to achieve sustainable peace. Such government departments include Directorate of Water Development, CHIPS and LWF that are working towards provision of water. These

organizations should join hands and resources for proper coordination of water resource provision and conflict resolution.

Lastly water resource development programs should consider collaborating with viable local institutions particularly that of the elders. These institutions are appropriate grassroots institutions capable of motivating and catalyzing the people to take responsibility in community development and local resource management.

#### ENDNOTES: CHAPTER FIVE.

1. Oyang, S. *The Monitor newspaper*, Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2003. (*World Food Program Deputy Country Director Edward Kallon urged government to give priority to sustainable water development for Karamoja. He said government should provide water for cattle and irrigation so that the Karamojong stop depending on handouts from the WFP and humanitarian agencies.*)

## APPENDIX:

*1960: There were no cattle raiding previously. Cattle-keepers had no guns but spears. Raiding began in a place called Angulebwai-Morulem struggle over water wells. The water well was serving communities of Jie, Bakora etc. But the fighting over the water wells during dry seasons was with local non-lethal weapons-especially sticks and clubs in Ladwor County. In the same period, the struggle and wars over water wells developed/row clubs to spears and shields and dose combats.*

*1966-1967: The Turkans joined cattle raiding in the district/region using rifles referred to locally as “Ngamichiro”*

*1972: Amin-Dada forced Karamojong to put on clothes-not skins. The Karamajong refused and rebelled insisting that the bare feet; skins and beads were (their cultural wear). Amin ordered people into two groups: Those who wanted to put on modern clothes and those that did not want to put on clothes. Those who refused to put on clothes were shot down/spread with gun bullets and were killed at a place called “Nawikorot” in Bokora. Over 200 people were killed.*

*1972: Conflict, hatred and wars began between those who had lost relations at the hands of Amin for refusing to dress up in modern clothes and those who were spared for accepting to dress in modern clothes instead of skins and beads and other cultural attires. Since that time there is historical conflict between the Bakora and Matheniko on the issues of Amin’s killings of some community members- who refused to put on dress.*

*1973/1974: Karamojong started manufacturing homemade guns for wars/raiding by local artisans. The technique is similar to a catapult gun.*

*1977-1978: Amin gave orders to Karamojng to stop cattle raiding. The order was “no more raiding”. The cattle raiders “faced firing squad” and six warriors were killed at a place called Namuru Adwang (place of white stone).*



*1979: Amin government was overthrown, Moroto Barracks was raided and guns removed by warriors including modern weapons. Matheniko Karamajong used the guns they raided/looted from Army Barracks to attack their neighbours Bakora. Bakora community/flew in disarrays in other districts notably Mbale, Kampala, Jinja etc. Up to now, some Bakora people are settled in these districts.*

*1981: There was cattle raiding by militias at Kachwezi and Lokipacha commanded by Army Officer Major Obonyowing helicopter gunships.*

*1979-1983: There was famine, Cholera outbreak and raiding by the Acholi and Langi militias at Kachweri-many people died in the raid.*

*1983: Serious drought was experienced in Karamoja-Kotitdo district. Some people; Lochoro Martin, Geto Rhina and Aparupe Nuurieng were suspected to have cursed rain. They were alleged to have had to control over rain they were only rescued from being hunched by elders in their respective communities.*

*1986: Museveni (NRM) overthrew Tito Okello government. Soldiers fleeing were disarmed and killed by Karamojong warriors who acquired more guns three (3) Piece Human manhandling 'Kandoya' methods was used on Karamojong by NRM Government to force to recover /arms or disarm Karimojong like Tito Okello Government did before but failed. Many Karimojong warriors were tied "3 -Piece -Kandoya" and returned guns. For instance Apeyo Paul. And Lodoumoe Samuel were a few victims of the 3 -piece Kandoya.*

*1991: Rebels group in Soroti (Teso Region) commanded by Erego was defeated the NRA. But on their way to Kenya at a place called Ambler the warriors intercepted the UPC rebels killed them, disarmed and removed their guns. The Government (NRM) rewarded the Karimojong worriers with more guns.*

*In the same period the Karamojong warriors were encouraged to fight anti-government elements that chanced to cross through Karamoja. The reward: more guns' Karamojong participated*

*infighting Lakwena rebels up to Iganga to the gun. The government again rewarded Karimonjo with more guns.*

*1992: Road ambushes and thuggery began at the following places: Nakichumet (Beirut) and Lorengokora (No-man's -land) by Matanyi and Namulu youths because of poverty and famine. The volunteer's warriors punished the thugs and their neighboring village by raiding the area of 72 herds of cattle and destroyed homes in Kangole. Out of the 4 thugs the volunteer warriors shot one. The same animals recovered by the volunteer warriors were taken to Kangole. The volunteer warriors were transformed into: "Vigilantes" by Government and given more guns and identity cards, ammunitions, clothes and allowances – because they were assisting the government in reducing insecurity and the road thuggery and ambushes.*

*The above timeline shows that armed cattle rustling and insecurity goes a very long way among the Karamojong. (Adopted from Karamoja Data Center.)*

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