

Past and Current Initiatives in Managing Trans-border Insecurity in Kenya's Turkana

Borderlands: Implications for Future Policy



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Abbreviations

APaD	Agency for Pastoralist Development
CBO	Community Based Organization
DADO	Dodoth Agropastoralist Development Organization
EPADI	Elemi Pastoralist Development Initiative
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
KOPEIN	Kotido Peace Initiative
LOPEO	Lokichoggio Peace Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SAPCONE	St. Peters Community Network-Northern Kenya

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Where international borderland are treated as rigid lines that define territorial boundaries, tendencies to monopolize the adjoining areas are likely to impede cross-border mobility thereby generating tensions between those who share those borderlands. In the Karamoja borderlands of Eastern Africa, the need to access water, pasturelands, and arable land across the borders by pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities living on opposite sides of these borders, while imperative due to the dry-land ecology that dominates this region, has also generated competition over these resources that has in turn produced tensions and conflict between communities. The resulting human insecurity has undermined meaningful relations between these communities.

This study examines the historical and contemporary aspects of cross-border insecurity in the Karamoja borderlands through the relations between the Turkana and their neighbors in Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. It proposes that this insecurity is due to decades of conflicts over resources essential for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist economies. While the study does not treat with hindsight the role of other factors that have facilitated these conflicts—such as proliferation of small arms, and political instability in some of the regional states—consideration is given to climatic shifts, especially drought. Specific focus is also given to the socio-economic impact of insecurity on Turkana women and the broader socio-economic structures of the households to which they are linked. Peace-building initiatives in the region over the years are also examined, with view to identifying those initiatives that hold potential for sustainable peaceful co-existence between the borderlands communities. The study relies on archival and oral sources of information, with actual fieldwork conducted in Turkana County in Kenya and Karamoja Province in Uganda.

The study found out that human insecurity has been, and continues to be a major concern for the Turkana and their neighbors, and attribute this to raids and counter-raids, and facilitated by drought conditions. The impact of insecurity cuts across gender and age, but its impact on women leaves a lasting legacy on the socio-economic welfare of households. The study draws several policy recommendations, chief amongst them the need to integrate human insecurity in general development initiatives in the borderlands, and for an emphasis on “livelihoods approach” to confronting insecurity by addressing the basic needs of pastoralists inhabiting such a dry-land environment.

1.0 Introduction

This study is premised on the view that borderlands should be important spaces for inter-communal interaction, inter-governmental co-operation, economic exchange, and flow of ideas and information relevant to the needs of the communities that live side by side. Recent research on the borders and borderlands of the Horn of Africa has indicated that such areas should be construed as “resourceful”, and not problematic.¹ Yet there have been concerns over tension, conflict, and the resulting insecurity amongst communities living in some parts of Africa’s borderlands, especially the Eastern and Northeastern parts of the continent. Whereas cross-border tensions and conflicts are very complicated whenever they occur, it has been evident that competition to access key natural resources that have sustained community livelihoods for generations have been their major cause. Political borders tend to create localized, often ethnic-based “monopolies” over such resources, so much that attempts by other communities to access them aids in tensions and even conflict.

Climate change is projected to lead to more extreme impacts in Africa’s arid and semi-arid regions that may be on the margins of existence, and where less sustainable food and water supplies are of major concerns for local populations.² Frequent climatic variability in the form of drought or flooding, which lead to scarcity of resources such as water, pasture, and arable land, have the potential of heightening cross-border tensions, but also hold the key to resolving them. Some have already acknowledged that dramatic changes in climate that occasion either floods or drought act as a ‘threat multiplier’ that heightens concerns over water scarcity and food security, thereby posing challenges to human security and development efforts.³

¹ See, for example, Dereje Feyissa & Markus V. Hoehne, eds. (2010). *Borders & Borderlands as Resources in the Horn of Africa* Rochester, NY: James Currey.

² James P. Bruce, Hoesung Lee, and Erik F. Haites, eds. (1995). *Climate Change: Economic and Social Dimensions of Climate Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 97-98; James J. McCarthy, et al, eds. (2001). *Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability: Contribution of Working Group II to the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 523.

³ Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). (29 July 2011). *KENYA: Drought Exacerbates Conflict in Turkana*; Oli Brown, & Alec Crawford. (2009). *Climate Change and Security in Africa: A Study for the Nordic-African Foreign Ministers Meeting*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: International Institute for

For instance, in arid and semi-arid environments such as Turkana borderlands of Kenya where local modes of production—pastoralism and dry land farming— are dependent on natural precipitation, occurrences of famine sometimes tend to be magnified by threats to security during drought.⁴ The broader implications of this reality is that access to pasturelands, water, and any available arable land, has to be guaranteed to avoid human catastrophes that result from conflict following attempts by communities on either sides of these international borders to gain access to these resources. This includes access to alternative sources of food such as fish from Lake Turkana, an invaluable resource for a community whose habitat has over the years defied sustainable cultivation of the land due to the prevailing arid nature of the environment. Political instability in form of armed conflict within Kenya's neighboring states that share borders with Turkana, and the resulting refugee overflows and infiltration of small arms has exacerbated tension and conflict in the borderland areas.

The orientation of political borders in the Karamoja Cluster region, of which Turkana is part, has ensured that water resources, pasturelands, and the limited arable land have become trans-national as they tend to transcend the rigid international borders set up by colonial powers and inherited by independent African governments whose countries share those borders. For instance, pastoralism and fishing as practiced by the Turkana and other communities across the borders are mute to limitations imposed by such boundaries. For years, the 'mobile' nature of local modes of production in this region has often led to conflict and tensions resulting in human insecurity between the Turkana and their neighbors in Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda. Cross-border incursions into either sides of these borders has persisted for decades, and is likely to continue as regional governments, local communities, and organizations seek permanent solutions to recurring insecurity incidents. While preventing resource-based human insecurity has proved elusive since the colonial era, its impact on the vulnerable sections of pastoralist communities particularly women and youth should raise more concern. Yet the youth bear the energy to sustain the mobile nature of dry-land pastoral economies, while women play a critical

Sustainable Development (IISD); Jurngen Scheffran, et.al. (2012). Climate Change and Violent Conflict. *Science*. Washington. 336 (6083), 870-71.

⁴ D. Hendrickson, et al. (1998): The Changing Nature of Conflict and Famine Vulnerability: The Case of Livestock Raiding in Turkana District, Kenya, *Disasters*, 22(3), 185.

role in family-care, resource-use, and development in these communities.⁵ In this sense, persistent insecurity is likely to undermine the productive potential of such members of rangeland communities, as well as the overall development efforts in these fragile borderlands of northeastern Africa. This will be the case unless concrete efforts are made to support their ability to cope with such vagaries. Such insecurity is also likely to exhaust national resources and time directed at improving meaning co-existence between countries that share these borderlands. Intervention to create sustainable cross-border relations has therefore become more critical than before.

2.0 The Research Problem

This study explores past, recent, and ongoing episodes of human insecurity in the international borderlands of Turkana County in Kenya and the neighboring communities across the border in Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Episodes of cross-border conflict leading to insecurity in this region have a long history that stretches back into the 1920s through the 1950s, and have occurred more frequently since independence, causing loss of human lives and depletion of stock in many households.⁶ Communities that have been involved in conflict with the Turkana mainly include the Merille (hereafter Dassenatch), Nyangatom (Ethiopia), Toposa, Donyiro (South Sudan) and the Karamojong communities of Dodoth, Teuso, Jie, Matheniko, and Tepeth (Uganda). Aside from deciphering the nature and some of the causes of this insecurity, the study examines efforts that have been made over the years to mitigate trans-border insecurity and their

⁵ Siri Eriksen, & Jeremy Lind. (June 21-23, 2005). The Impacts of Conflict on Household Vulnerability to Climate Stress: Evidence from Turkana and Kitui Districts in Kenya. *Human Security and Climate Change International Workshop–Oslo*, 16-28; Nancy A. Omolo. (2010): Gender and Climate Change-induced Conflict in Pastoral Communities: Case study of Turkana in Northwestern Kenya. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 10 (2): 81-102.

⁶ Gufu Oba (1992): *Ecological Factors in Land Use Conflicts, Land Administration and Food Insecurity in Turkana, Kenya*. ODI Pastoral Development Network paper 33a, Overseas Development Institute, London, 7-11; Buchanan-Smith, M., & Lind, J. (2005). *Armed Violence and Poverty in Northern Kenya: A Case Study for the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative*. Centre for International Cooperation and Security/Bradford University, Bradford.

effectiveness/ineffectiveness, and identify intervention efforts that hold the potential to promote sustainable, peaceful relations between these borderlands communities. By doing so, the study also seeks to identify community perspectives on this long-standing problems, and explores how these views can reinforce policies aimed at intervening in the lives of these communities to promote socio-economic development with peace-building as a major component. This is important given that insecurity resulting from tensions and cross-border raids has hardly relented in Turkana borderlands, where the Turkana have experienced these incidents recently.⁷ This is so in spite of decades of arbitrary interventions by national administrations that share these borders, and successive peace-building initiatives.

Insecurity as implied here refers to a danger/hazard or actual outcome of conflict in the form of harm to an individual or property. Insecurity can also lead to deprivation of, or loss of material property, and psychological disorientation. The later condition could be the direct result of trauma or lack of access to essential needs such as food and shelter due to the reigning insecure environment. Furthermore, this study perceives a closer connection between insecurity and environmental stress. Thus, it concurs with analyses that have drawn a link between resource-scarcity, unequal access to key resources (such as water, pasture, arable land), and tension, followed sometimes with violence, resulting in insecure communities. Such processes tend to increase with extreme climate changes particularly drought so much that when security is compromised during such times, it negatively affects important aspects of pastoralist livelihoods such as mobility, animal health and productivity, and the social and economic stability of women⁸

⁷ For some of the most recent cross-border attacks on the Turkana, see *Daily Nation*, October 21, 2006; *Daily Nation*, September 29, 2009; *Daily Nation*, March 19, 2013.

⁸ Buchanan-Smith & Lind. *Armed Violence*, 19.

2.1 Research Questions

General:

- a) To what extent is cross-border insecurity a problem between the Turkana community and their cross-border neighbors?
- b) What has been the nature and causes of conflicts that have generated security concerns in the Turkana borderlands over the years?
- c) What past and current initiatives have been attempted to end cross-border conflict as a source of human insecurity in the Karamoja borderlands?

Specific:

- a) In what ways has drought featured in these conflicts?
- b) How have Turkana women been impacted by conflict-related insecurity in these borderlands?
- c) What seems to be a more viable approach (es) to ensuring sustainable peaceful relations between communities sharing these borders with the Turkana?

3.0 Rationale of the Study

This study is part of the effort to widen our understanding of the concept and meaning of “borders” or “borderlands” within the context of resource-use at inter-community and inter-state level. It also seeks to contribute to scholarship focusing on the theoretical and empirical understanding of the concept and process of “security” in relation to the modern state, community relations, resource-use, and human welfare. From a traditional/conventional understanding, security has been linked to the state so much that the survival of the individual and community have been subjected to the state’s ability to provide security for its citizens, usually for national interests. More often than not, this has been conceptualized in terms of ‘military security’ so much that state-centric approaches to understanding security has tended to overlook other essential elements of the process.⁹

Thus, recent developments in many parts of the world have led to the emergence of non-military threats to human security and impeded access to essential environmental resources that

⁹ Jack Mangala, J. (Ed.). (2010). *New Security Threats and Crises in Africa: Regional and International Perspectives*. Palgrave Macmillan, 3-4.

warrant attention. These threats include economic deprivation, environmental degradation, illicit drugs and arms trafficking, refugee migrations across borders, smuggling of essential commodities, and problems induced by climate change, especially drought. The nature of these developments is such that they transcend national borders and pose security challenges to both communities in borderlands areas, and states that share those borderlands. Due to the impact of these developments on human welfare, focus has shifted to *human security approach* as a new paradigm for understanding and confronting insecurity occasioned by cross-border relations. The value of the human security paradigm approach lies in its ability to focus on the interconnectedness of key sectors that have implications on security: the environment, economy, food, health, the individual, community, and national politics.¹⁰ This study is approached from the understanding that insecurity issues in the Turkana borderlands is a result from locally-mediated, community-based forces that themselves are aided by environmental and some economic imperatives, largely present security challenges that border more on human (individual and community), than military (state) concerns.

However, focus on individual or community insecurity should not tempt one to overlook the relevance of *state-centric approach* to understanding security and conflict over issues of transnational nature, especially if these issues relate to matters of national sovereignty and national security. For example, there are security-related issues such as arms and drug trafficking, refugee migrations, and regional climatic challenges that transcend international borders. They become matters of national or even international concern thereby necessitating nation-states to exercise their sovereignty in order to confront the insecurity that these developments bring with them.¹¹ This notwithstanding, and as emphasized by the International Commission on Intervention and State Security (ICISS), state sovereignty should serve as a means, not an end, to providing security to its citizens.¹² Thus, while this study places significance to the local community and other none-state actors in analyzing the evolution of security concerns and efforts to mitigate insecurity in the context of environmental and economic

¹⁰ UNDP, *Human Development Report*. 1994, 22.

¹¹ Mangala, *New Security Threats*, 4.

¹² ICISS. (December 2001). *The Responsibility To Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*. Ottawa, Ontario (Canada).

development as enabled by trans-border relations, there's need to regard the imposing role of governments/states in this process. This is so given that security in the borderlands is of importance not only to local communities in such areas, but also to governments that share the borders. Thus the political—administrative—dimensions of human security are imperative to ensuring peace and development in borderlands areas as the role of governments remain critical as long as borders retain their significance as markers of sovereignty.

4.0 A Brief Overview of Related Literature

The versatility and insecure nature of borders and borderlands in Eastern and Northeastern Africa has attracted considerable interest from researchers. The geophysical conditions of a larger portion of this region that renders them arid or semi-arid, and the subsequent vulnerability of environment-based economies have made the region an interesting point of focus. Research has ranged from the need to demonstrate the resourcefulness of such areas to unpacking the gender, cultural, and patriarchal myths of the pastoralist economies that have predominated this region.¹³

The subject on conflict amongst pastoralist communities in this region has received considerable attention. Such attention has focused mainly on the *causes* of these conflicts, particularly the competition between pastoralist communities for environmental resources such as pasture, water and land.¹⁴ These resource-based conflicts have over the years become more violent (bloody), with loss of considerable lives. A few studies have attempted to unearth this dimension and attribute this to proliferation of small arms into the larger Karamoja region, and

¹³ Feyissa & Hoehne, eds. *Borders & Borderlands as Resources*; Dorothy Hodgson, (ed.) (2000). *Rethinking Pastoralism in Africa: Gender, Culture & the Myth of the Patriarchal Pastoralist*. Oxford: James Curry.

¹⁴ These are many, but a few examples include Oba, *Ecological Factors*; Terrence McCabe T. (2004): *Cattle Bring us to our enemies: Turkana Ecology, Politics, and Raiding in a Disequilibrium System*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press; Rachel Berger. (2003). Conflict over Natural Resources among Pastoralists in Northern Kenya: A Look at Recent Initiatives in Conflict Resolution. *Journal of International Development*, 15(2), 245-257

into Turkana in particular.¹⁵ Another explanation for the exacerbation of these conflicts has been sought from impacts occasioned by climate change. Here, focus on the role of drought has been instructive.¹⁶ There is also a political dimension to these conflicts, whether involving Kenya or the neighboring countries, whereby conflict arises from cattle raiding activities launched as commercial enterprises linked to regional livestock markets in which wealthy and “powerful” individuals are involved. This “commercialization” of conflicts has been aided by the proliferation of small arms in the region.¹⁷

This implies that there is a class and political dimension to conflict-driven insecurity, as well as a socio-economic angle. This therefore reveals the wider impact of this aspect, which has elicited studies that focus on the outcome of these conflicts. Focus has ranged from loss of human life, stock theft, human displacement, curtailed economic initiatives, a shift in regional livestock markets, the rise in women-headed households, and expansion in political patronage.¹⁸ With few exceptions most studies on causes and impact of conflict in Turkana focus on the local communities *within* Kenya to the *exclusion* of their cross-border neighbors whom they tend to mention only as a part of attempting to explain the scope of resource-based conflict in Kenya’s northwestern borderlands. Even those that consider the cross-border element only do so as a part of broader studies that address other issues that pertain the impact of conflict—especially armed violence—and poverty (Buchanan-Smith and Lind, 2005), and household vulnerability to climate stress.¹⁹

¹⁵ Buchanan-Smith & Lind. *Armed Violence*; K. A. Mkutu. (2006): Small Arms and Light Weapons Among Pastoral Groups in the Kenya-Uganda Border Area. *African Affairs*, 106 (422): 47-70; K. A. Mkutu. (2008): *Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley - Pastoralist Conflict and Small Arms*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press

¹⁶ O. M. Theisen. (2012). Climate clashes? Weather variability, Land Pressure, and Organized Violence in Kenya, 1989–2004. *Journal of Peace Research*, 49(1), 81-96.

¹⁷ Ciru Mwaura & Sussane Schmeidl. (2002). *Early Earning and Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa*. Red Sea Press, Lawrenceville, NJ.

¹⁸ Buchanan-Smith & Lind. *Armed Violence*; Omolo. Gender and Climate Change-induced Conflict; K.A. Mkutu (2007). Impact of small arms insecurity on the public health of pastoralists in the Kenya–Uganda border regions. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 47(1), 33-56.

¹⁹ Buchanan-Smith & Lind. *Armed Violence*; Eriksen, & Lind. The Impacts of Conflict on Household Vulnerability.

Thus, while resource-based conflict has been at the core of intra- and inter-ethnic conflict on Kenya's side of the Turkana borderlands, focus on an external, cross-border analysis would add to our understanding of the dynamics that have shaped these processes, and their contributions to insecurity and steps taken to mitigate this problem. Doing so will allow for further perspectives on understanding the nature, and the "regional" scope of the problem. Yet even in doing so, the proposed project regards with great significance the contribution of the above studies in understanding the causes and impact of conflict and related insecurity in the Turkana borderlands.

As is the case with literature on causes and impact of conflict in pastoralist areas in northwestern Kenya, scholarly focus on human insecurity in this region has been partly limited to the Turkana community and their Kenyan neighbors, particularly the Pokot, Samburu, and Gabbra.²⁰ Similar analyses on the Uganda side of the border have only focused on conflict and the resulting insecurity amongst the Karamoja communities.²¹ Of those that have a cross-border focus, a few, such as the study by Eriksen and Lind, have attempted to analyze inter-community negotiations with the objective of mitigating conflict. Their study gives a brief treatment on Turkana-Dodot conflict-resolution through NGO efforts within a larger study whose focus is on comparing household vulnerability to climatic stress in times of conflict as far as the Turkana are concerned.²²

It is only recently that scholarly work on pastoralist conflict in the borderlands under study has reflected a geographical scope that spans the borders of the Uganda-Kenya-Sudan borders. J. Leff's study focuses mainly on the conflict between the Turkana/Pokot (Kenya) and Karamojong (Uganda) communities with a brief consideration of the Toposa (South Sudan).²³ Thus, the Merille of Ethiopia, who have been a major factor in security-related incidences in the

²⁰ Bollig, M. (1993). Intra-and Interethnic Conflict in Northwest Kenya. A Multicausal Analysis of Conflict Behaviour. *Anthropos*, 176-184.

²¹ Saferworld Report, September 2010. Available at [file://max-fsrv.ad.syr.edu/mshanguh\\$/Downloads/Karamoja%20conflict%20and%20security%20assessment%20\(1\).pdf](file://max-fsrv.ad.syr.edu/mshanguh$/Downloads/Karamoja%20conflict%20and%20security%20assessment%20(1).pdf) Accessed November 27, 2014.

²² Eriksen, & Lind. The Impacts of Conflict on Household Vulnerability, 23.

²³ Leff, J. (2009). Pastoralists at War: Violence and Security in the Kenya-Sudan-Uganda Border region. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 3(2), 188-203.

Karamoja Clusters region, particularly with regard to the Turkana are clearly absent. Leff's work is innovative for its attempt to examine borderlands conflicts by focusing on this vast area, but in doing so, it runs into lack of in-depth on the theme. Neither does my project on the Turkana borderlands pretend to cover the entire Karamoja expanse since actual field visits were not made to the South Sudan and Ethiopian sides of the Turkana borderlands. This has been made for by reference to the historical record and interviews conducted from the Kenya and Uganda sides of the borders. This notwithstanding, like Leff's study, this project should be considered as offering a starting point on considering the cross-border conflict and peace-building dynamics mitigation in the region.

Generally, the border areas have continued to present challenges to national governments to manage them with the objective of promoting healthy interactions across these imaginary, yet rigid lines. It is for this reason that border areas outside of the Karamoja region have also attracted interests as points of analysis. For instance, studies and subsequent assessments have been made with regard to conflict-resolution and other peace efforts in the Kenya-Somalia borderlands.²⁴

Overall, on few studies have focused on the trans-border dimension of human insecurity resulting from cross-border conflict and climatic shifts in the Karamoja borderlands, as regards the Turkana. This study therefore proceeds on the premise that it is possible to focus on a single community such as the Turkana of Kenya, and still be possible to consider the regional/trans-boundary nature of security challenges that are presented by inter-ethnic cross-border relations, within the context of existing regional historical experiences, local economies, social relations (within and between ethnic communities), cultural relations, environmental resources, and climatic shifts, among other factors. This study is also proposed on the premise that historical antecedents to this problem is critical to confronting the problem through informed policy formation and implementation, while building on current security efforts. The past has lessons for current and future practice with regard to formulating policy targeted at promoting healthy interactions between communities that share international borders and resources in such areas.

²⁴ Bradbury, M., & Kleinman, M. (2010). State-building, Counterterrorism, and Licensing Humanitarianism in Somalia. *Feinstein International Center. Medford, MA: Tufts University.*

5.0 Methodology: Data Collection and Analysis

Data collected related to pre-determined questions that yielded information on the history and current state of cross-border relations, focusing specifically on the nature and causes of conflicts and tensions since the later decade of colonial times when historical memory of some respondents would be able to recall some memorable events related to the study. Two sets of sources were consulted. The first involved archival government documents from the Uganda National Archives in Entebbe and the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi, which yielded historical information relating to the larger Karamoja region (including the borderlands of South Sudan and Ethiopia).

The second source of information involved field work/trips in Turkana borderlands in Kenya and Karamoja, Uganda where oral interviews were conducted in the months of January, February and March 2014. Oral questions were posed at two levels: personal interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Questions mainly focused on the history, nature, causes, and conflict mitigation measures over this period into the present by colonial and postcolonial administrations, local community initiatives, and other agencies such as CBOs and NGOs. Questions also related on the environment, particularly climate change. Information relating to the social dynamics of conflict and peace efforts was adduced by focusing questions on household agents, particularly women. Such questions were directed at both men and women. Questions regarding administrative perspectives on cross-border relations were posed to a few government administrators in both Uganda and Kenya, including District Officers and local chiefs. Agents involving non-state actors, especially representatives of CBOs and NGOs were interviewed particularly with regard to peace-building efforts.

FGDs were widely adopted, and involved visits to kraals in borderlands where, with help of local chiefs and members of the Locational Peace Committees or coordinators of CBOs, community members were mobilized into focus groups. The following were the areas that were visited and the number of FGDs that were held (in parenthesis), and their composition.

In Turkana County:

Lokirama: elders, youths and women (1)

Namoruputh: elders, women (1)

Lorengippi: elders, youths, women (1)

Lobei: Elders, youths, women (1);

Lowaregank: elders, women, youths (3)

Lokichoggio: members of Lokichoggio Peace Organization (LOPEO): women, youths, elders (1)

Letea: Chief, elders, women, youths (1)

Oropoi: Assistant Chief, elders, youths (1)

In Karamoja, Uganda

Moroto: Local Councilor, Elders (1)

Kotido: Youths, mainly “Reformed Warriors” (1)

Kaboong: Youths, mainly “Reformed Warriors”, elders, women.

Personal interviews were selectively done with a few members identified from each of the above FGDs, particularly where there was need for additional details on issues not made clear during group discussions. Personal in-depth interviews were also separately held with the District Officers of Lokirama and Lokitaung, Chief of Ngissiger Location, Resident District Commissioner (RDC) for Moroto, Uganda, top administrators of local CBOs, notably APaD, EPADI, LOPEO, and SAPCONE (all in Turkana County), KOPEIN and DADO (in Karamoja, Uganda).

The resulting data was mainly qualitative, and subjected to textual analysis—of the archival documents—and interview responses and FGD notes classified and also analyzed under the main themes of the study.

6.0 Findings and Discussion

6.1 Conflict and Insecurity over the Years

Drought, food insecurity, inadequate infrastructure (especially roads), water scarcity, health issues, human insecurity amongst other concerns are challenges that many residents in the borderlands of Turkana contend with on a regular basis. But when asked to rank these concerns in their order of importance with regard to frequency of occurrence and impact, most of them tended to regard human insecurity as a major concern. Even where any of the other challenges (for example, food insecurity and drought) topped human insecurity, those challenges were considered to relate to the latter problem.²⁵ This was the case even in areas such as Lokiriamia/Lorengippi and Oropoi/Letea, where cross-border incursions seem to have reduced with increased intervention at regional and local level.



FGD, Letea, Turkana County. Photograph by Author

²⁵ Focused Group Discussion (FGD), Lokiriamia, January 30, 2014; FGD, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; FGD (with local women), Todenyang/Loarengak, February 13, 2014; FGD, Oropoi, February 22, 2014. All transcribed notes and recorded interviews are with the author.

Generally, the implication of such feelings relate to the long history of cross-border conflicts whose legacies remain ingrained in local memories. It is possible that cases of inter-ethnic conflict in the pre-colonial period (prior to 1880s) may have been limited given that up until the period of colonial contact, the Turkana and other Karamoja communities were still expanding to zones that could afford them “ecological comfort”. Thus, formation of colonial states (Uganda Protectorate, British East Africa Protectorate [Kenya], and the Sudan) at the same time that Ethiopia was expanding south led to institutionalization of international borders that stopped expansion in its tracks.²⁶ Thus, while inter-ethnic conflicts in this region before the colonial era cannot be ruled out, political changes introduced by colonialism accelerated them. Establishment of political borders arrested access to water and pasturelands, especially where such resources were perceived to be located across territories under respective colonial regimes.²⁷

Regarding the Kenya-Uganda border in the Loima-Moroto Pass/Lokiriana-Nakiloro Corridor, human insecurity resulting from conflicts between the Turkana and their neighbors on the Uganda side of the border (Tepeth and Matheniko) has a long history that goes back to the colonial years. These conflicts bred widespread tensions and deadly conflicts before the historic Lokiriana Peace Accord was realized in 1973. While the Peace Accord remains the core reason for reduced episodes of cross-border conflict, this has not deterred minor raids that has led to loss of life and livestock in Turkana during the 1980s and 1990s. The need to accumulate livestock herds and access water and grazing areas has been at the heart of the conflicts in the Loima-Moroto borderlands.²⁸

The same applies to the Oropoi-Nawontos area along the Kenya-Uganda border where the Turkana engaged the Dodoth and Jie regularly engaged in cross-border feuds in the colonial period. Conflicts here started in the late 1920s, but occurred frequently between 1957 and 1962, with a single raid by armed Turkana against the Dodoth of Lodoi Village in 1958 leading to considerable loss of human life and almost 251 livestock taken. Bloody raids and counter-raids

²⁶ For an early account on these aspects, see P.H. Gulliver, *The Family Herds: A Study of Two Pastoral Herds; The Jie and Turkana* (London: Routledge & Keagan Paul Ltd., 1955).

²⁷ Lochimoe Edom, Oral Interview, Oropoi, Turkana County, February 22, 2014.

²⁸ FGD, Lokiriana, January 30, 2014; Acheme Lokuwon and Maraka Lomariakipi, Oral Interview, Lobei, January 31, 2014.

over water sources, cattle, or revenge resulted in more deaths involving the Turkana on one hand, and the Dodoth, Teuso, Didinga, and Toposa, on the other.²⁹



FGDs at Lorengippi (above) and Lobei (Below), Turkana County. Photographs by Author



²⁹ Uganda National Archives (UNA)/S7326 I, Security in Karamoja District, September 4, 1958; UNA/S7362 I, PC Eastern Province, Uganda to Permanent Secretary and External Relations, Entebbe, July 11, 1960.

Conflicts in this border area have been sporadic and bloody when they occurred after independence, particularly in the early 1980s. Except for local fears of insecurity during times of drought, this area remains relatively peaceful.³⁰



FGD, Namoruputh, Turkana County. Photograph by author

The socio-economic dynamics of the causes of insecurity involves the need to accumulate enough livestock for purposes of payment of dowry. A focused group discussion in Lodiko Sub-County near Kaboong, in Karamoja, Uganda revealed that the high cost of dowry played a role in past raiding activities across the border into Turkana, involving Dodoth youth (young men and women). Community level-decision amongst the Dodoth to lower the number of livestock required for dowry from about 200 to 50, has helped alleviate the urge to engage in raiding for dowry purposes.³¹

Relations between the Turkana and the Dassanetch across the Kenya-Ethiopia border have been even less amicable for decades when compared to the other Turkana borderlands. Cross-border intrigues here were reinforced by the fluid nature of this border from the early 1900s. By 1928, almost a decade after the Turkana were effectively brought under British

³⁰ FGD, Oropoi, Turkana County, February 22, 2014; F.G.D., Lokichiggio, Turkana County, Friday February 22, 2014.

³¹ FGD, Reformed Youth, Lodiko Sub-County, Kaboong, Uganda, March 11, 2014; Lokol Mariko and Kiyonga Emanuela, Oral Interviews, Lodiko Sub-County, Kaboong, Uganda, March 11, 2014.

colonial administration, the local District Commissioner reported that: “The Nkwatela (section of the Turkana) have always remained hostile to the Merille and Donyiro since 1918 and would rather try their strength against their enemies than sue for peace”.³² A combined Dassanetch and Donyiro raid in Northern Turkana in 1927 led to the loss of about 110 Turkana and large quantities of livestock taken. A Dassanetch attack in March 1929 left 30 Turkana killed and an undisclosed number of cattle belonging to the Turkana taken.³³ Throughout the colonial period, this borderland generated the most intense and frequent raids and counter-raids that resulted in loss of human life and property, and general insecurity.

After independence, tensions and conflict especially in Todenyang at the head of Lake Turkana border area have persisted.³⁴ This is partly attributable to how well this lake area is well endowed with essential basic resources. Thus, compared to the rest of Turkana international borderlands areas—probably with the exception of Kibish and much of the Illemi Triangle—the northeastern part of Turkana in the Lake area including Todenyang village offers the greatest potential for development and a source of sustained food supplies due to fishing and arable land in the Omo Delta and the adjoining areas. Documented historical and oral evidence acknowledge that local competition over land and fishing resources as the key cause of trans-border conflict and insecurity in this area.³⁵ However, there are also cultural differences between the Turkana and Dassanetch highlighted by linguistic disparities and initiation rites that tend to factor into age-old conflicts between both communities.³⁶ While those interviewed tend to consider these cultural differences as irreconcilable, these differences should be seen to aid, but not cause conflict and the resulting insecurity in this borderlands area.

³² Northern Turkana Annual Report, 1928, Kenya National Archives (KNA)/DC/TURK/1/2.

³³ UNA/C739 II.

³⁴ The insecurity in Todenyang and the surrounding borderlands is a well-established development that Turkana residents in the area treat with much concern. Many of them have relocated as “internally displaced persons” (IDPs) further south to Loaregank, a village that also continues to experience Merille raids via the Lake Turkana. FGD, Loarengak, February 11, 2014.

³⁵ FGD, Loaregank, February 11, 2014; Teresa Ekwom, Oral Interview, Loaregank, February 13, 2014.

³⁶ F.G.D. Lowaregank, February 11, 2014; Nancy Mukoo, Oral Interview, Loarengak, February 12, 2014.

The violent nature of the borderlands conflicts, particularly their bloody outcome attests to their “militarization” by way of adoption and use of firearms. The prevalence of firearms by many of the Karamoja Cluster communities is as old as the establishment of colonial rule in the region. Colonial authorities grappled with this problem, as have the postcolonial governments. While the use of traditional weapons such as spears and knives were not uncommon in conflicts by the late 1950s, British colonial administrations in the East African territories noted with concern the widespread use of firearms in the bloody nature of cross-border raids and counter-raids along all Turkana international borderlands between 1958 and 1960.³⁷ Political instability in Uganda and Ethiopia during the first half of the 1980s and early 1990s, respectively, contributed to the proliferation of small firearms that landed in the hands of pastoralists and of the agrarian communities of southern Ethiopia in the environs of the Omo Delta.³⁸ Like cultural differences, the adoption of small arms facilitated, but did not cause the cross-border conflicts aimed at accumulating livestock or accessing watering and pasture areas. Even where relative calm has reigned in areas previously undermined by raids or conflict, presence of such arms in isolated areas remains a threat to human security in the entire Turkana borderlands.

6.2 Climatic Shifts and Insecurity

The arid environment in Turkana and the larger part of the Karamoja region implies that climate has a major influence on resource spread and availability. The arid nature of the area is sometimes complicated by prolonged shifts in climate, especially where the few months that tend to record modicum precipitation (April and May) experience absence of rainfall. Any two consecutive years without “normal” rainfall translates into drought conditions, some which last even longer, with serious implications on community relations over livestock resources. Whereas drought occurrence in this region has a long history, the 1930s recorded some of the worst episodes of this environmental problem. Between 1931 and 1933 a major drought struck,

³⁷ See, for example, Acting Permanent Secretary, Civil Service, to Chief Secretary Uganda Protectorate, July 9, 1958, and Governor, Uganda Protectorate, to Chief Secretary, Entebbe, June 6, 1960, all correspondence available in UNA/S7326I.

³⁸ FGD, Disarmed Warriors, Kaboong, Uganda, March 10, 2014; Lokidi Japesa Nalibe and Longeri Longorikori, Oral Interviews, Kaboong, Uganda, March 10, 2014; Mary Adoket, Oral interview, Laorengank, Turkana County, February 13, 2014; Emael Kalei, Oral interview, Lowareng/Todenyang, Turkana County, February 12, 2014.

decimated the landscape, limited grazing areas, and resulted in the death of thousands of livestock.³⁹ The last years of that decade were hit by serious drought that necessitated migration into border areas in search of pasture and water. The consequences were severe for the Turkana herders, following raids and murders by the Dassanetch, Donyiro, and Toposa.⁴⁰

Not all drought episodes before independence led to cross-border conflict. For instance, drought that hit Turkana in 1952 and 1958, while still ingrained in the memory of many local residents, were not marked by any serious conflicts over pasture and water in the borderlands. Probable reasons for this was the short-lived nature of those droughts, and more important, to the emergency measures that were put in place by the colonial administration with regard to food relief aid.⁴¹ In any case, meeting the subsistence requirements of the herders prevented potential conflict.

However, spells of drought after independence and the related violence and insecurity have provided more challenges to the Turkana more than before. Local residents confirm that climate change has continued to limit the ability of the environment to provision their subsistence and commercial needs, while resulting in tensions and even conflict with their cross-border neighbors over water and pasturelands. They point to drought that has occurred with high degree of frequency since 1962. The year in question, frequently cited by Turkana elders in their narratives, is remembered not only for its prolonged drought, but also due to cross-border raids that accompanied it.⁴² According to Elder Peter Ekiru, in normal circumstances, six years of rainfall is usually interrupted by at least two years of drought. This climatic pattern has shifted, so that according to many local residents, it has not been uncommon since the 1980s to experience a pattern whereby only two years of rainfall occur within every span of six years. This implies that prolonged episodes of drought have increased, most recently since the year

³⁹ Turkana Provincial Political Records, 1931, Kenya National Archives (hereafter KNA)/DC/TURK/1/4; Turkana District Annual Report, 1932, KNA/DC/TUR/1/3; Turkana District Annual Report, 1933 (also under Turkana District Political Records), KNA: DC/TURK/1/2.

⁴⁰ Turkana District Annual Report, 1938; Turkana Annual Report, 1939.

⁴¹ Kokoi Namojong, Oral Interview, Lorengippi, Turkana County, January 31, 2014.

⁴² Lokale Ekali, Oral Interview, Oropoi, Turkana County, February 22, 2014; Kapus Ikoel, Oral Interview, Lorengippi, Turkana County, January 31, 2014; Natapal Etaan, Oral Interview, Namoruputh, Turkana County, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lokiriama, Turkana County, January 30, 2014.

2000. As a result incidences of tension along in the border areas over pasturelands and other rangeland resources have been evident.⁴³

Long periods of drought elicit shocks against local livelihoods, particularly in the livestock economy, as it causes common watering sources along Laghs and wells as well as vegetation to dry off, leading to hardship. Drought, more than anything else, increases regional mobility to areas that are relatively endowed with water, pasture, and food. For the Turkana, destination areas during such times have traditionally been towards well-endowed environments, usually further west on the Karamoja Plateau in Uganda, or towards West Pokot County borders within Kenya. Historically, these destination areas have been the scenes of insecurity resulting from these temporary migrations brought about by drought.⁴⁴ Realizations that drought is imminent tends to cause local anxieties. This is because drought for these communities implies scarcity and hardship, not just for the people, but their livestock as well. The two options that such conditions offers to them is to negotiate with their neighbors, usually those inhabiting the relatively well-watered and pastured regions higher up on the Karamoja plateau in Uganda and the mountainous areas in the South Sudan, or brace for tensions and even conflict in the absence of a consensus on accessing these areas.⁴⁵ These developments confirm the assertion by Hendrickson, Armon, and Mearns that the moral economy on which the Turkana tend to rely—notably wild foods and local markets—have been undermined by violence and insecurity.⁴⁶

6.3 Women and Borderlands Insecurity

Insecurity resulting from cross-border conflict over resources impacts negatively on all ethnic communities involved. Furthermore, the impact does not discriminate between age and gender, so much that deaths and injuries are common amongst men, women, the elderly, youth, and

⁴³ Peter Ekiru, Oral Interview, Lobei, Turkana County, January 31, 2014.

⁴⁴ FGD, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; Hellen Takwo, Oral Interview, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lobei, Turkana County, January 31, 2014; FGD, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014.

⁴⁵ FGD, Lokiriama, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; FGD, Loarengak, February 12, 2014; Achemee Lokwam, Oral Interview, Lobei, January 31, 2014.

⁴⁶ Dyland Hendrickson, Jeremy Armon, and Robin Mearns, “The Changing Nature of Conflict and Famine Vulnerability: The Case of Livestock Raiding in Turkana District, Kenya”, *Disasters*, 1998, 22(3), 194.

children. Everyone within the community is affected.⁴⁷ For example, mortality rates usually tend to be high amongst the youth—both young men and women—who have been involved in actual raids. The elderly, women, and children form the highest number of casualties in the event of an attack on a *manyatta* where they are left behind by their kin who are out either tending livestock, doing business in nearest market centers, or out on regional peace meetings and campaigns.⁴⁸ Of the affected members of the households, there were general feelings that the impact of the conflicts and the resulting insecurity on women had far-reaching consequences for the household.

Women are easy targets for raiders yet defenseless because they do not bear any arms. Their vulnerability also comes from the fact that they are responsible for gathering stray livestock, fetching water, and supplementing household food requirements through gathering wild fruits. When a *mayatta* is attacked in a cattle raid, women are unable to escape, and stoically hold on in the hope of securing their children.⁴⁹ Many more others are actively involved in formal economies such as fishing, agriculture, and trade along Lake Turkana, where they interact with the Dassanetch or Nyangatom whom relations with the Turkana have been sour over the years. They get exposed to insecurity posed by the predatorial attacks by the well-armed Dassanetch, not only at Todenyang, but as far south as Loarengak. Some have remained resilient by insisting on their fishing and trading activities for lack of alternatives. However, as a precaution, many of these women and their families have re-located to the later area, where their security—and that of “native” residents—is far from guaranteed. They have had to abandon their fishing and trading enterprises, and only tend to engage in these activities when temporary peace tends to return in this region. The most hard-hit sector is their agricultural activities in the Omo

⁴⁷ Natapal Etaan, Oral Interview, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014.

⁴⁸ This tended to be a consistent feeling amongst most of the FGDs that were held in Lokirama, Lorengippi, Lobei, Letea, and Loarengak. Todenyang and Loarengak residents recall with concern an attack on Loarengak by the Dassanetch in July 2011 that left scores dead, even as peace-talks at community-level were going on in Todenyang. FGD, Loarengak, February 11, 2014.

⁴⁹ Paulina Areng, Oral Interview, Lokirama, January 30, 2014; Lomekwi Etaan, Oral Interview, January 30, 2014.

Delta that have been completely abandoned as the Dassanetch have expanded into these arable lands.⁵⁰

There is also the psychological dimension. Turkana women are usually charged with taking care of those wounded in cross-border conflicts, usually their sons, husbands, or children and elderly victims of *manyatta* raids. These women usually have to deal with the psychological consequences of losing their children and husbands, who often provide social security that these members of the household provide. Such women usually have to cope with increased household economic and social responsibilities. While the rest of the *mayatta* community could offer economic and social support, the psychological impact on women victims tends to linger for years.⁵¹ The more the women deal with the lasting impact of insecurity, the more this tends to undermine the economic welfare of the households. This facilitates long-term poverty for the affected households especially where the livestock are lost to a raid.⁵²

6.4 Securing the Borders: Past and Present Approaches

The complicated dynamics of insecurity along the Turkana borderlands, and the multi-ethnic groups involved in raids and resulting conflicts has ensured that intervention over the years has involved multilateral agencies. Role of multilateral parties has also been made necessary by the various nation-states that share these fluid boundaries, and by the fact that the economies of these region are highly predicated on mobility by the residents, or movement of goods around the region. This is so, whether it is pastoralism that thrives on frequent migration by the herders and their livestock as dictated by the dispersed nature of water and pasture in times of drought, or land cultivation in parts of Karamoja and the Omo Delta whose viability depends on agricultural produce fast finding its ways uninterrupted into regional markets for an area badly served by inadequate roads.

Due to these dynamics, intervention aimed at building a peaceful culture between communities in Karamoja, has also taken on various forms. Since the colonial times, intervention

⁵⁰ Women FGD, Loarengak, February 13, 2014.

⁵¹ Pauline Areng, Cecilia Nakwawi, Mary Ikolom, and Philip Lokoyen, Oral Interviews, Lokirama, January 30, 2014; Alice Imbunya, Oral Interview, Lobei, January 31, 2014; Nancy Mukoo, Oral Interview, Loarengak, February 12, 2014.

⁵² Paul Akadeli, Oral Interview, Lokirama, January 30, 2014.

with view to stabilizing relations between the Karamoja communities has been engaged by various agencies. In doing so, colonial administrations were mainly driven by the need to maintain the territorial integrity of areas under their jurisdiction, and to achieve social control of the ethnic communities in those areas. Thus initial measures were arbitrary and extreme, such as vacating sections of the Turkana community from the northwestern shores of Lake Turkana to a few miles down the lake. This aimed at creating a buffer between the Turkana and the Dassenatch, following increased conflicts between them.⁵³ This, however, failed to prevent constant conflict between the two communities, which continued for the rest of the colonial era. It has to be emphasized that colonial measures aimed at securing colonial boundaries by creating buffer zones and enacting ant-trespass laws disputed access to grazing areas by both the Turkana and the Dassenatch.

A high-handed approach was the norm, whether through direct confrontation of those perceived to have perpetrated raiding, or through institutional, legal processes. Thus, colonial authorities in Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan addressed the conflicts and insecurity within the legal framework of colonial law and order, so that raiding and the resulting conflicts were criminalized. For example, in 1933, a Karamojong who murdered a Turkana was tried, convicted and executed in Uganda.⁵⁴ Furthermore, in 1958, Uganda colonial administration introduced the Special Regions Ordinance to reinforce government sanctions against livestock raiding and “trespass” into its territory along the Karamoja boundary. The government was empowered by the Ordinance to seize cattle from the guilty parties. Since the guilty individuals were hardly identified, as they tended to infiltrate the community, the Ordinance empowered the District Commissioner to impound cattle from the rest of the community and restore it to the aggrieved party. On its part, the Kenya administration effected its legal sanctions against the Turkana through the Special Districts Ordinance.⁵⁵ This approach reveals the extent by which colonial administrations confronted the border problem through “collective punishment”.

⁵³ Turkana District Annual Report 1929, KNA: DC/TUR/1/2.

⁵⁴ Turkana District Political Records, 1933 KNA: DC/TURK/1/2.

⁵⁵ Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, Uganda, to Permanent Secretary, External Relations, Entebbe, July 11, 1960, UNA/S/7326 I; Karamoja District Memo, Northern Province, March 16, 1961, UNA/REL12/5.

Furthermore, given the geographical vastness of the area and its challenges to effectiveness administration, colonial territories that shared these borders proceeded along an inter-territorial initiative to contain the restive nature of the inhabitants.⁵⁶ The sheer size of the border area to be policed offered major challenges to the colonial administration, and has remained so to the independence regimes. The success of colonial administrations at District and Provincial levels was weighed against their ability to contain “lawlessness” of the kind generated by conflicts over grazing areas and raiding of livestock across boundaries. Efforts were therefore put in place to secure certain border areas by building monitoring units and administration centers in “hot spot” areas. For instance, in the bid to safeguard areas of Turkana bordering Karamoja/Mogilla/Labur on the Uganda and Sudan boundaries in the 1950s and early 1960s, the Kenya colonial administration posted trained African military and police units in Oropoi, Lokichioggio, and Lokitaung, while the Uganda administration was obliged to do the same for the Kaboong area.⁵⁷ Sudan’s colonial administration was also involved given the highly permeable borders in the southwest that bordered Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya. This area, the Illemi Triangle, provided administrative challenges to the Sudan, which lacked adequate administrative financial and administrative resources to help control the Donyiro and sections of the Dassanetch from using this corridor to pose security challenges to the Turkana in Kenya.⁵⁸

The colonial administrations in Uganda and Kenya also had zero tolerance over the ownership and indiscriminate use of firearms in the borderlands. Given the fatal nature of the conflicts due to the use of guns, these administrations were obliged to intervene more than before in securing these border areas. During the early colonial period, firearms had already infiltrated Turkana through Ethiopia and Sudan, but most of the arms possessed by the Turkana and their

⁵⁶ One such early initiative between Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan administrations was held in 1927 following incessant Donyiro-Turkana feuds. Acting Governor, Uganda Protectorate, Telegram to the Governor General at Khartoum, June 13, 1927, UNA/C/739 II.

⁵⁷ DC Karamoja, Letter to Permanent Secretary for Security and External Relations, Entebbe, July 9, 1960, UNA/S7326 I.

⁵⁸ For a brief but informative study on the administrative state of the Illemi Triangle from the early twentieth century up until the 1990s, see Robert O. Collins, “The Illemi Triangle”, *Annales d’Ethiopie*, Vol. XX (2005): 5-12; As relates to pastoralism and conflict in the Triangle, see Mburu Nene, “Contemporary Banditry in the Horn of Africa: Causes, History, and Political Implications”, *The Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 8, 2 (1988).

neighbors were those acquired during the Second World War.⁵⁹ Colonial policy therefore focused on gun control measures, as disarmament efforts were stepped up between 1958 and 1962 following widespread use of firearms in raiding, counter-raids, and self-protection by the Turkana and their neighbors.

However, lack of consensus on disarmament between Uganda and Kenya undermined efforts at this initiative. The former perceived a durable solution to the insecurity in the Karamoja borderlands to reside in permanently disarming the Turkana who regarded Dodoth as “easy meat” given that the latter community was not armed. On its part, the Kenya administration was split between disarming the Turkana and help secure the Karamoja borderlands (a policy passionately desired by Uganda), and allowing the Turkana retain any firearms in their possession as a necessary measure to guard themselves against the Dassanetch across the Ethiopian border who thrived on armed raids against the Turkana. Instead of disarmament, colonial authorities in Kenya in the later colonial period preferred securing all watering points to punish the Turkana in the event of their involvement in fatal raids across the border areas.⁶⁰

This did not prevent the Kenya government from implementing any disarmament measures amongst the Turkana. In a crackdown launched during 1957, about 400 rifles were recovered in the District, but such efforts seemed to have yielded little given that armed Turkana continued to raid and render insecure the Karamoja border areas in Dodoth and Matheniko inhabited areas during the early 1960s.⁶¹ Lack of success in disarmament of communities in the borderlands by the time of independence implied that the new administrations inherited a much complicated security problem that they have since struggled to address.

Aside from state-level measures during the colonial period, peace-building initiatives were directed at community level cooperation. This took various forms, such as involving local chiefs of the feuding communities in organizing inter-ethnic peace ceremonies. Elderly Turkana

⁵⁹ Governor, Uganda Protectorate, to Chief Secretary, Entebbe, Uganda, June 6, 1960, UNA/S/7326I; Collins, “The Illemi Triangle”, 9.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Record of Meeting Held in Moroto on June 23, 1960, between Kenya and Uganda Officials to Discuss the Security Situation between the Turkana and Dodoth; DC Karamoja, Letter to Permanent Secretary for Security and External Relations, Entebbe, July 9, 1960, UNA/S7326I.

residents in Todenyang and Loarengak fondly recall the peaceful times that reigned in the Kenya-Ethiopia borderlands during the chieftainships of Tapo of the Dassanetch and Ekali Lotabomoe of Northern Turkana in the colonial period. Both chiefs, aided by their respective state governments, helped enforce disarmament and ensure peace that in turn helped facilitate socio-economic interaction between the two communities. The end of their reign, amongst other developments, relapsed these communities into old rivalries from which they have not fully recovered.⁶² The temporary peace that was achieved by both communities was also the result of traditional border courts that were pushed by Kenya's colonial administration as from 1931. These courts, staffed by an equal number of elders from the Dassanetch and Turkana, were aimed at settling claims and counter-claims on human lives and numbers of livestock lost during conflict. They were characterized by mistrust and partiality, and what authorities in Kenya perceived as lack of Ethiopia's support on the initiative, so much that they became ineffective as traditional means to ensure justice for the aggrieved parties.⁶³ This resulted in persistent confrontation between both communities in the years that followed.

Restitution as a "traditional" means of deterring conflict and compensating the victims seemed to have been more popular on the Karamoja-Turkana borderlands in the period preceding independence. The penalties involved in this arrangement were, however, set and supported by the colonial administrations of both Kenya and Uganda, which suffered from scarce administrative manpower to man the borderlands and hoped to tap into the "natives" to help bring peace in the border areas. One such arrangement between the Dodoth and Turkana during the 1960s required that for each person killed or wounded on either side in a bloody raid, 60 heads of livestock were paid (30 cattle and 30 sheep or goats). Furthermore, the perpetrators, if identified, were charged under criminal law within the territory where the crime was committed.⁶⁴ Such penalties were considered stiff by the resident communities given that they exacted tribute from them by requiring that they part with their traditional wealth as invested in livestock. Furthermore, these penalties promoted a sense of "collective responsibility" that

⁶² Natedek Nakanyi and Emael Kalei, Oral Interviews, Loarengak, February 12, 2014.

⁶³ Turkana Province Annual Report, 1931, KNA: DC/TURK/1/2; Turkana District Annual Report, 1934, KNA: DC/TURK/1/3.

⁶⁴ Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, Uganda Protectorate, to Permanent Secretary and External Relations, Entebbe, July 11, 1960.

helped to deter raids and counter raids. This approach, and considerable investment by the colonial administrations in Uganda and Kenya in training and deploying police patrol units in “trouble” spots, utilizing telecommunication surveillance systems, adopting air surveillance of “escape routes”, and construction of motor tracks in previously less accessible borderland areas, considerably helped to minimize, but not eliminate cross-border conflict that resulted in insecurity.⁶⁵

6.5 Creating Safer Borderlands Communities: Post-Independence Initiatives

In as much as colonial measures to secure the borderlands seemed authoritarian and arbitrary, the fact that they succeeded in minimizing acts that bred insecurity is acknowledged by a large cross section of Turkana residents that either lived through the later years of colonial rule, or are familiar with those trends. When asked to comment on the success of colonial measures in deterring cross-border aggressive acts as compared to post-colonial government initiatives, most of the elderly residents unreservedly recounted the colonial administration’s dedication at confronting the problem. They pointed to the institutionalization of restitution by which they were bound, colonial government’s commitment to applying the law against aggressive acts that led to indiscriminate murders, injuries and loss of livestock, and constant patrols of border areas, as evidence of “success” at promoting peaceful relations between the Turkana and their neighbors.⁶⁶ Inter-community restitution has survived the colonial period and are still used to deter cross border raids that can degenerate in insecurity. For instance today, Dodoth elders in Uganda complement the government national laws that deter crime by requiring that households that allow their youth to stage livestock raids pay double the number of cattle, goats, or sheep raided, so that the recovered stock are restored to the victim. This has helped to tame the youth and reduce cross-border acts of aggression by members of this community.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ For an elaboration on these measures undertaken by both the Kenya authorities in Turkana and Uganda administration in Karamoja Province in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, Uganda Protectorate, to Permanent Secretary and External Relations, Entebbe, July 11, 1960.

⁶⁶ This feeling was clear amongst all the Focused Group Discussions held in Lokirima, Namoruputh, Lorengippi, Lobei, Loarengak, Letea, and Oropoi centers. It was corroborated by FGDs in Karamoja, Uganda, especially by the Dodoth Elders at Kabong, March 11, 2014.

⁶⁷ Joseph Lomoe, Oral Interview, Kaboong, March 11, 2014.

Such feelings are indicative of the extent to which insecurity in the borderlands has remained a critical issue for the Turkana and their neighbors many years since independence. Such concerns have been driven by continued loss of lives and property over need to access sustainable resources across borders, and insecurity experienced by those who trek to local markets to acquire essential commodities. This realization, and a rational perception of the tangible dividends that peace can offer vis a vis conflict, expanded opportunities for brokering lasting peace at the level of community engagement, outside of the purview of the state governments. Search perceptions were responsible for the eventuation of the now famous Lokirama Peace Accord of 1973 that resolved long-standing cross-border feuds over resources on the edge of the Karamoja Plateau between the Turkana on one hand, and the Matheniko, on the other. The success of the Accord required the summoning of the willingness of the traditional leaders on both sides—Apaloris Dengael Ebei of Matheniko, and Imana Ebei, a Turkana Paramount Chief.⁶⁸ Celebrated September of every year, the Lokirama Accord has deterred conflict between the Matheniko and the Turkana, and has persuaded the Dodoth and Jie into this “alliance” of friendly relations. The Accord remains an example to the many communities in the Karamoja Cluster region as to what dividends of peace can achieve. It is the lynchpin around which regional peace campaigns are pushed, given that even ethnic communities from the borderlands that were not signatories of the Accord are usually invited to its annual celebrations at its revered shrine in Lokirama in Loima Sub-County.⁶⁹

However, such dividends are reversed by communities such as the Tepeth and Pokot (of Uganda and Kenya) who feel less bound by the Accord, and therefore still engage in cross-border and inter-County feuds against the Turkana and the Matheniko, with the latter forced to respond accordingly. Many within the latter two communities consider Tepeth and Pokot intransigence to reside in their linguistic differences with the Turkana and the Matheniko.⁷⁰ If

⁶⁸ FGD, Lokirama, January 30, 2014; Cecilia Nakwawi and Phili Lokoyen, Oral Interviews, Lokirama, January 30, 2014.

⁶⁹ Davis Wafula, Chief Executive Director, Agency for Pastoralists Development (APAD), Oral Interview, Lodwar, Turkana, January 27, 2014; Paul Otiang’a and Amodoi Lwenyang, Oral Interviews, Moroto, Uganda, February 7, 2014.

⁷⁰ FGD, Lokirama, January 30, 2014; FGD, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; FGD, Lobei, January 31, 2014.

this local interpretation holds any water, then cultural reasons remain a major obstacle to peaceful relations in the Kenya-Uganda borderlands as is the case with the Turkana and Dassanetch on the Kenya-Ethiopia border areas. Raids and counter-raids, as well as tensions have therefore taken on local ethnic alliances in the southern Karamoja borderlands. In spite of the wide-recognition of the Lokirima Peace Accord, residents in this region recall deadly incidences such as the Nakiloro murders of early 1980s, attacks in Lobei in 1997, the Kalapata raids of 2004, and isolated raids in Lorengippi between 2008 and 2010 as caution against optimism as regards successive peace initiatives on the Karamoja-Turkana frontier.⁷¹

At inter-governmental level, common efforts have been forged in various directions to ensure peace and normalcy in the Karamoja borderlands since independence. These inter-territorial efforts have largely been a follow-up on colonial initiatives particularly regarding disarmament of the pastoralist communities. Uganda has largely taken the lead on this front, with Karamoja residents pointing to the early Uganda government's efforts in the 1960s in promoting peaceful, unarmed residents. The Collapse of Idi Amin's regime in 1979 curtailed those efforts while aiding in the proliferation of small arms amongst the Karamoja communities that were largely used in raiding the Turkana. Ever since the coming to power by the National Resistance Movement in 1986, success has been achieved by the Uganda administration in disarming many of the communities in Karamoja.⁷² Uganda is widely acclaimed by both the Turkana and their Karamoja neighbors (especially the Matheniko, Jie, and Dodoth) in successfully disarming communities on the Karamoja side of the border, and for providing security to its citizens in the borderlands.

By extension, the Turkana have been the largest beneficiary of these disarmament achievements on the Uganda side of the border. This is the case whether they are Turkana pastoralists seeking water and pasture in Karamoja during drought, or local traders traveling to local markets in Moroto, Kotido, or Kaboong to acquire grain and vegetables. All of them

⁷¹ Lokwayen Sikiria, Eworon Emun, and Mary Ikolom, Oral Interviews, Lokirima, January 30, 2014; James Edapal, Oral Interview, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; Joseph Lochoro, Oral Interview, Kaboong, Uganda, March 11, 2013.

⁷² FGD, Dodoth Elders, Kabbong, Uganda, March 11, 2014; FGD, Moroto, Uganda, February 7, 2014.

venture across the border into Uganda assured of security by the administration in Karamoja.⁷³ Indeed, and as witnessed by the author during fieldwork trips between Moroto and Kaboong, the Museveni administration has successfully deployed considerable defense personnel in Karamoja, so much that both the police and military institutions have been very helpful in securing this once insecure plateau. Economic developments in the form of improvement in infrastructure, businesses in townships, and agricultural initiatives are proceeding unimpeded by insecurity. It is for this improved security on the Uganda side of the Nakabat Escarpment that the Turkana herders and traders have been able to safely interact with the Karamoja ethnic communities, except the Tepeth and Pokot with whom relations remain sour. Not surprising, therefore, many in Turkana make comparisons with these positive security developments in Uganda as a rallying call for the Kenya administration to step up security efforts on its side of the border so as to complement Uganda's achievements.⁷⁴ Governments sharing these border areas have also relied on international help to facilitate disarmament. Safer World has been actively involved in these efforts, so much that with cooperation from local communities, this organization has contributed to making the Karamoja a secure the area.⁷⁵



FGD Participants, Moroto, Uganda. Photo by Author

⁷³ FGD, Lokiriama, January 30, 2014; FGD, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; Paul Otita and Zacharia Ocheyi, Oral Interview, February 7, 2014.

⁷⁴ FGD, Lokiriama, January 30, 2014; FGD, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; FGD, Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; FGD, Lobei, January 31, 2014.

⁷⁵ IRIN News, The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, July 29, 2011

While the Turkana living in the Karamoja borderlands enjoy relative peace arising from Uganda's successful disarmament program, the same cannot be said of sections of this community that inhabit the northern portions of Lake Turkana. Here, armed Dassenatch continue to pose threats to the peace in the Kenya-Ethiopia borderlands areas, and especially to Turkana fishing and farming communities in Todenyang and Loarengak. Local residents largely see this as a result of failure by the Ethiopian administration to reign in errant armed Dassenatch, many who have few options than push further south across the border into the Omo Delta to access arable land and fish resources at the expense of local Turkana residents. Their movement south across the border is also partly the result of infiltration of commercial agricultural enterprises that vie with the Dassenatch for arable land in southern Ethiopia.⁷⁶ Peace efforts here have progressed both at inter-governmental and community levels. Local residents deprecate the shortcomings of inter-governmental negotiations as too "elitist" and high level, so much that they are bankrupt of the existing realities on the ground, and that they hardly integrate local voices on the local security problem. As far as the Turkana residents of the region are concerned, this is the major reason for the persistent conflict in this borderland area.⁷⁷

Intercommunity peace-building efforts in the region have largely been pushed by local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), chief amongst them the SAPCONE. SAPCONE's intervention has taken the form of campaigns for behavior change, conflict mitigation, strengthening of local capacities towards peace initiatives, and engaging both local and national governments with regard to the security situation on the Kenya-Ethiopia borderlands.⁷⁸ It is also important to note that other regional state-holders have aggressively been involved in tracking potential conflict and encouraging inter-community peace efforts in the Kenya-Ethiopia borderlands. For instance, EPADI, a local CBO active in North Turkana, has fruitfully engaged the Nyangatom community of Ethiopia in peace meetings. The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism of IGAD has also been instrumental in monitoring Turkana-Nyangatom

⁷⁶ FGD, Locational Peace Committee, Loarengak, February 12, 2014; FGD, Women, Loarengak, February 13, 2014

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Amfry Amoni, Executive Director, SAPCONE, Oral Interview, Lodwar, February 7, 2014; The Nyangatom-Turkana Rapid Response Report, January 31-February 3, 2014.

relations and promoting inter-communal interactions.⁷⁹ As already noted, cultural differences between the Dassanetch and Turkana, though not irreconcilable, remain major hindrances to forging successful inter-community peaceful initiatives. Only a few months before this project commenced in October 2013, bilateral government-level deliberations between Kenya and Ethiopian authorities were underway to help seek sustainable solutions to on-going cross-border feuds over fishing, water, and pasture resources between the Turkana and the Dassanetch, following the latter's attack on Turkana fishermen in Todenyang.⁸⁰ The active but genuine involvement by both the Kenya and Ethiopian administrations may help achieve sustainable peace in this borderland area.

The complex nature of inter-ethnic relations in the Karamoja borderlands, the environmental role in those relations, the widespread causes of cross-border tensions, and the expanse of the area within which these issues are played out has led to a multilateral intervention in the period commencing the 1980s. Aside from government initiatives at either state or inter-state level, efforts by CBOs have been obvious. Aside from SAPCONE and EPADI, APaD has engaged the inherent causes of conflict between pastoralists along the Karamoja border, especially amongst the Turkana of Loima. APaD's success is reflected in its coordination of the annual memorial celebration of the Lokiriana Peace Accord.⁸¹

Role of CBOs have been even more successful in the Karamoja Province in Uganda. For instance, KOPEIN has been efficacious at mobilizing sections of the Jie community that previously perpetrated cross-border raids and counter-raids into Turkana, and oriented them towards sustainable livelihoods economic activities. Youth previously involved in raiding have been rehabilitated as "Reformed Warriors", and have been aided in acquiring crop seedlings to start market-gardening activities, resulting in productive agricultural enterprises that are locally referred to as "peace-gardens". Loans have also been disbursed, with the help of external funding, to women and youths who wish to start group savings credit associations. Elders, seers, and other community leaders who previously fuelled cross-border conflict for purposes of cattle

⁷⁹ See, for example, CEWARN Situation Update, "Seizing the opportunity for peace in the Nyangatom - Turkana Corridor: Ethiopian Side of the Karamoja Cluster", National Research Institute, InterAfrica Group, October 11, 2011; Johnstone Ekamais, Oral Interview, Lodwar, February 5, 2014.

⁸⁰ *Daily Nation*, May 15, 2013

⁸¹ Davis Wafula, Executive Director, APaD, Oral Interview, Lodwar, January 27, 2014.

raiding, have now been coopted into local government machinery to deter potential raiding activities and recovery of livestock raided from neighboring communities.⁸² Similar efforts, also in Karamoja, Uganda, have only been effectively achieved by DADO. Aside from focusing on livelihoods as a strategy for peace, DADO has collaborated with other regional organizations to promote peaceful co-existence by helping organize inter-community cultural activities such as sporting events. DADO's engagement with peace-building programs in Dodoth-Turkana borderlands is by extension the result of foundational efforts established by the collaboration between the Uganda government and Oxfam.⁸³



“Reformed Warriors”, Kotido, Uganda. Photograph by author

The “Livelihoods Approach” to meeting the essential needs of the Karamoja pastoralists, and which have been integrated in peace-building efforts, is reflected in the development initiatives launched in the region by a number of NGOs. For instance, this is the hallmark of Practical Action’s (Eastern Africa) engagement with communities in this area. Practical Action has focused on water provision through digging of wells, supplying manual and wind-driven water pumps, solar panels, and offering veterinary services across the entire Karamoja region.

⁸² Benson Otoke, Finance Administrator, KOPEIN, Kotido, Uganda, Oral Interview, March 10, 2014

⁸³ Joseph Lochoro Lokamar, Peace Committee Member, DADO, Oral Interview, Kaboong, Uganda, March 11, 2014; Lokidi Japesa Naliba, Oral Interview, Kaboong, Uganda, March 11, 2014.

Furthermore, rain-fed agricultural programs have also been introduced in viable areas, so have been efforts at building community livestock and grain centers at some strategic borderland areas. Residents have relished the value of these initiatives in meeting their basic needs and in minimizing regional conflicts especially where market centers have acted as melting pots for long-standing inter-ethnic hatred.⁸⁴

Given that women have been actively involved in the conflict dynamics of the Karamoja borderlands as both instigators and victims, peace-building efforts have also integrated their participation as much as possible. This involvement has been the result of two motivations. The first regards developments at the community level where women, as victims, have felt the need to push for peaceful co-existence between communities. As noted before, this is because women bear the brunt of the negative consequences of cross-border insecurity from psychological, economic, and social perspectives. Secondly, women involvement results from mainstreaming gender in community, regional, and national development initiatives that regard peace-initiatives not a prerogative of agents that exclude women. Women in Karamoja have come to realize that modern conventional peace efforts in many parts of the world require input from womenfolk. This realization has ruptured into the traditional establishment of the Karamoja communities where elderly men have been peace-brokers for generations. Women involvement in cross-border peace-building initiatives is well advanced in the northwestern areas of Turkana under the umbrella of Lokichoggio Peace Organization (LOPEO). LOPEO ministers to peace initiatives that involve the Dodoth and Jie of Uganda, and the Toposa of South Sudan, mainly through songs and drama shows.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ FGD, Lokirama, January 30, 2014; FGD Namoruputh, January 30, 2014; FGD Lorengippi, January 31, 2014; FGD Lobei, January 31, 2014.

⁸⁵ Emmanuel Erega, Executive Officer, LOPEO, Oral Interview, Lokichoggio, February 22, 2014; FGD, LOPEO, Lokichoggio, February 22, 2014; Teresa Arangi, Oral Interview, Lokichoggio, February 22, 2014; LOPEO Women Peace Dance Demonstration, Lokichoggio, February 22, 2014.



Members of LOPEO, Lokichoggio, Turkana County: Photo by Author

7.0 Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

By using the Turkana community as an “entry point”, this study has attempted to reflect on human insecurity in the Karamoja borderlands, including Kenya’s borderlands with South Sudan and Ethiopia. From historical evidence, and extensive conversation with Turkana residents and Karamoja communities in Uganda—notably the Matheniko, Jie, and Dodoth, it is clear that human-induced insecurity has been the norm in the border areas that also act as frontier zones for these pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities. This also applies to the South Sudan and Ethiopia borderlands with Kenya where cross-border feuds have been common between the Toposa, Nyangatom, and Dassanetch on one hand, and the Turkana, on the other.

The drawing of rigid borders by colonial powers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and inheritance of those borders by post-independence governments have raised the stakes on the need to access water, pasture and arable land for communities living here leading to tensions and conflict over the years. In fact, insecurity tends to reinforce the thinking that national borders represents limits that must be respected, a pretext that has been used in the past by some ethnic communities and some territorial governments alike to either impede or strictly regulate the access to essential resources by herders and farmers who are in greatest need of those resources. It is not surprising, therefore, that one Turkana elder, while pondering over the question as to what he thought about national borders, stated philosophically that: “When there is peace, there is no borders”.⁸⁶ Access to resources across national borders is made necessary by the arid and semi-arid nature of large portions of the region, particularly for the Turkana whose

⁸⁶ Long’oli Ewoi, Oral Interview, Namoruputh, January 30, 2014.

County experiences typical desert-like climatic conditions. Such environmental conditions render arable land unavailable thereby enhancing local dependence on livestock. Even dependence on livestock economy over the years has become less viable due to a strain on water and pasture resources by incessant drought conditions, and by human insecurity resulting largely from cross-border raiding and counter-raids that either deplete livestock or cause mayhem to human lives.

Intensive discussions with communities in Turkana and Karamoja borderlands confirm that human insecurity remains a top priority in the entire Karamoja region. This feeling was expressed even in border areas such as Loima/Karamoja, Oropoi/Letea/Karamoja, and Lokichoggio/Kapoeta where there has been relative calm in recent years except for isolated incidences. Since the colonial times, peace-building efforts have been pursued by various agencies, with state-governments taking the lead. The complex nature of the causes of insecurity, and the wider impacts of the conflicts (and lately minor incidences of cattle thefts), as well as the sheer expanse of the borderlands have defied the efficiency of state interventions, thereby calling on the involvement of multi-agencies. Currently, non-state actors particularly CBOs and NGOs largely complement state efforts. In many places in Turkana, these agencies have virtually taken over community-driven peace-building efforts, on the realization that government personnel and resources are so thin to effectively manage security in the borderlands.⁸⁷ Community-based, non-state involvement in securing borderlands confirms that concerns about human security are no longer a domain of the nation-state; rather, it is a civil matter that invokes the involvement of those on the ground that are most affected, usually the local communities.

Furthermore, the realization that human insecurity in these areas is driven by the need to survive the limits imposed by the natural environment, peace-building efforts that seek to integrate provisions of agricultural technologies, improvement in pastoralists practices, and provision of water, energy, and markets have been largely successful. However, this livelihoods approach in turn highly depends on the development of necessary infrastructure particularly motorized roads and telecommunication services, otherwise the poor status of these services will

⁸⁷ This is particularly true on the Kenya-Ethiopia border where residents pointed to this problem as the reason for Kenya government failure to fend off Dassanetch raids. FGD, Lowaregank, February 2, 2014. While the government acknowledges the strain on security personnel, it is evident that efforts have been made to utilize the available security resources. Oral interviews with District Officer Loima, at Lodwar, February 3, 2014, and with District Officer, Lokitaung, February 13, 2014.

complicate efforts at peace in Turkana borderlands. Thus, while the Kenya government may be inadequate to secure its side of these border areas on the account of inadequate security and administrative personnel and other resources, a commitment to facilitating the construction of regional infrastructure, especially roads, would benefit the various non-government agencies involved in peace-building initiatives in this second largest County in the country, and one where many areas remain inaccessible.

This study was undertaken with a key objective of understanding the past, recent, and current conflict dynamics and peace-building efforts in the Turkana borderlands, with view to drawing some conclusions that should pass as recommendations for policies that are formulated to address human insecurity in the region, by states and non-state actors alike. Since this study was not comprehensive by any means—given that many of those interviewed are based mainly in Turkana in Kenya and Karamoja in Uganda, the following recommendations can be considered partial, as they pertain to findings expressed by inhabitants in these two areas. A field study covering the entire expansive region, to include Southern Sudan and Ethiopia, is instructive as it would prove inclusive. Nevertheless, these recommendations offer a starting point for drawing informed policies that would also be relevant to communities living in the Karamoja region and stake-holders operating there. The following are the suggested key areas of policy follow-up:

1. Human security a top priority in development intervention: External, cross-border security remains a necessary component in development programs and in promoting the welfare of the Turkana communities and their borderlands neighbors. This aspect must be considered in policy development plans at County and National Government levels, and all stakeholders involved in the Karamoja area. The creation of the office of County Peace Ambassador by the Turkana County Government is a welcome starting point.⁸⁸ With major resources having been recently discovered in the County—water and oil—local security concerns have expanded to include local apprehensions that internal relations (within Kenya) between Turkana and their neighbors

⁸⁸ The Turkana County Peace Ambassador was one of the key attendants of the Lodwar Workshop held on July 30, 2014 where the preliminary findings and recommendations of this study were presented. He outlined the vision and challenges of peace-efforts in the County.

(particularly Pokot), that have not been friendly over the years, could be complicated by the latter's claims to the newly-discovered resources.⁸⁹

2. Links between climate change and insecurity are reality in the Karamoja Borderlands. While climate change will continue to be a challenge to peaceful initiatives in the borderlands, it has to provide the incentive for brokering lasting co-existence between the Turkana and their borderlands neighbors. If assertion by Turkana elders that there is an established frequency of less regular rainfall seasons that have yielded to frequent drought since the 1960s is anything to go by, and that drought is likely to lead to tension and possible conflict in the borderlands due to scarcity of water and pasture, then this should be enough reason for multi-agencies involved in peace-building efforts, facilitated by the national governments, to establish a permanent framework that would aid all Karamoja communities to access these resources unimpeded during drought. Already, this arrangement is in place across the border in Matheniko, Jie, and Dodoth regions. This continues to benefit the Turkana, as long as peace prevails.

3. Unlimited support for community-based peace-building efforts: Local communities account for the greatest percentage of peace initiatives in the borderlands areas of Karamoja. National governments should identify meaningful and practical ways of supporting these communities. The existing community initiatives are largely the result of CBOs, most notably APaD, LOPEO, SAPCONE, EPADI, DADO, and KOPEIN, all which were very open to discussions about the nature of insecurity, and their role in peace initiatives in the border areas. By all means, these CBOs require not only the financial means, but also government and international institutional moral and logistical support.

4. Conflict and Peace-Building are complicated processes: Intervention requires a multi-pronged approach. While deploying state security resources and personnel is an obvious traditional approach to securing the borderlands, a focus on the "Livelihoods Approach" is highly appreciated by local communities in the borderlands. Such an approach, spearheaded by Practical Action, amongst other local and international NGOs, must be encouraged and accorded inter-governmental support. During FGD meetings and personal interviews with local leaders, many talked about the need for "common" markets, watering areas, schools, roads, and energy

⁸⁹ This feeling was largely expressed by the FGDs at Lorrengippi, Lokirama, and Lobei, which tended to relate the insecurity in the Karamoja borderlands with a Pokot connection. If such feelings are indeed genuine, then the borderlands insecurity is far less an external affair than it is "internal" for the Turkana.

resources as critical to peace-building efforts. Livelihoods approach, with multi-stakeholders involved, holds the key to improving inter-ethnic relations in border areas.

5. Inter-governmental intervention needs to be urgently stepped up in conflict-systemic zones such as the northeast Lake region on the Ethiopia-Kenya borderlands. Here, CBOs seem to be holding on in the interim, but given the little gains made by these organizations, inter-governmental initiative is more critical. It was very clear from group discussions in the Todenyang/Loarengak area that insecurity in the northern areas of Lake Turkana is complicated by competition between the Turkana and Dassanetch to access fishing and arable land in the Omo Delta. Conflict arising from this competition has been the most persistent and bloody for many decades, and its end remains far from sight. It was also clear that government-to-government negotiations, while they have taken place (and only when bloody incidences occur), have yielded little. To achieve any rational, long-term solution to the impasse, direct and sustained involvement by IGAD, or a non-partisan agency, is necessary.

6. While the consequences of conflict over resources in the border areas knows no age or gender, increasing role of women in peace crusades needs moral and material support. The “LOPEO model” in Lokichoggio needs to be replicated in most of the borderland areas where insecurity remains a problem. Support for women peace initiatives will help reinforce the increasing realization amongst the Karamoja communities that women are the most exposed to the economic, social, and psychological impact of insecurity, yet they are a vital link in the quest by these communities to survive the challenges posed by the environment.

7. Uganda’s peace-building success should serve as a model. Uganda’s success story at enhancing security in Karamoja needs to be complemented by governments on their sides of the borders.⁹⁰ Persistence of insecurity in certain parts of the Turkana have reinforced local perceptions that not enough is being done by the Kenya Government with regard to securing Turkana sides of the border. Local residents requested for increased presence of security personnel (such as the National Police units) to secure major border corridors that mark points of

⁹⁰ For an integrated approach to managing conflict in Karamoja, Uganda, including role of government institutions, see the report by MercyCorps, “The Conflict Management System in Karamoja: An assessment of strengths and weaknesses” (April, 2013). Also available at <http://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Uganda%20Conflict%20Report%20FINAL%20PUBLIC.pdf> accessed November 26, 2014.

entry into the much safer areas on the Uganda side, as well as an increase in well-trained and armed police reservists around *manyattas* (Kraals). It is also quite untrue that the Kenya administration has not deferred itself of this responsibility, only that its efforts, whatever their scale, are rendered futile by the vastness of the border areas.

8. Bordelands insecurity in the Karamoja region is not just “Kraal Problem”.⁹¹ It is clear that conflict across borders in Karamoja has been contested around village settlements, so much that it is widely perceived to be a rural “*manyatta* problem”. Consequently, both victims and villains have been thought to reside with these rural communities, to the extent that these sections of the Karamoja communities have been left to wrestle with the problems of insecurity and its solutions over the years. The elite members of these communities, many who live in urban centers or outside the region, are perceived to be absent, yet they have the wherewithal to aid in shaping healthy inter-communal relations. Consequently, a suggestion by the Resident District Commissioner for Moroto, Uganda, on the need for an inter-ethnic “Elite Forum” to help bridge the gap in regional peace efforts is worth considering.⁹²

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⁹¹ Remark by the Resident District Commissioner, Moroto, Personal Interview, March 7, 2014.

⁹² Ibid.

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