

IGAD-CEWARN Baseline Studies

Time Period:

September 2003 through April 2004

Area of Reporting:

Ethiopian Side of the Karamoja Cluster

Country Coordinator:

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this initial baseline report is to establish the incidence and outcomes of pastoral conflict on the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster from September 2003 through April 2004. The reporting locations on the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster are two in number for the reporting period: that is Kibish and Nebremus. In addition, this report presents both positive and negative precursors to the pastoral conflict situations as a means to illuminate trends that can help signal imminent outbreaks or escalations or mitigate ongoing conflicts in the cluster.

Despite the very limited areas of reporting (only two field monitors reported from the Ethiopian side of the cluster) and the short period of reporting, we documented 38 deaths, and 1685 livestock lost from September 2003 through April 2004. Violence was highest in February 2004. The month in which relative peace was present were September 2003. From February to April several skirmishes and conflicts took place leading up to the “peace and reconciliation meeting” of April.

The absence of adequate official administrative and security presence and the weakness of even existing official administrative and security presence on the ground, lack of infrastructure and public services exacerbate the conflict situation in South Omo and neighboring areas of Kenya and Sudan. The key needs for effective conflict prevention in the region include a stronger official presence, improved food security during drought episodes and pastoral development programs. Environmental factors such as drought exacerbate competition for pastoral resources; food insecurity plays a particularly important role and often leads to livestock raids that serve, as triggers for conflicts, and once started are difficult to resolve. Alleviation of immediate problems of food shortages/food insecurity through access to relief assistance for the most severely affected pastoralist groups in the current drought situation is, thus, desirable.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development’s (IGAD) Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) unit has coordinated the field reporting and editing of this report. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have contributed funds for this effort.

Suggestions and comments on this initial baseline are welcome. Please contact Charles Mwaura (c_mwaura.cewarn@telecom.net.et) at the CEWARN office in Addis Ababa with any questions, comments or suggestions. The next baseline update for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster is scheduled for posting in September 2004 and will cover the period from May through August 2004. Over the next year these baselines will be enhanced with specific response options identified and tied to their associated thresholds of indicator values that signal pastoral conflict escalation, destabilization or violence.

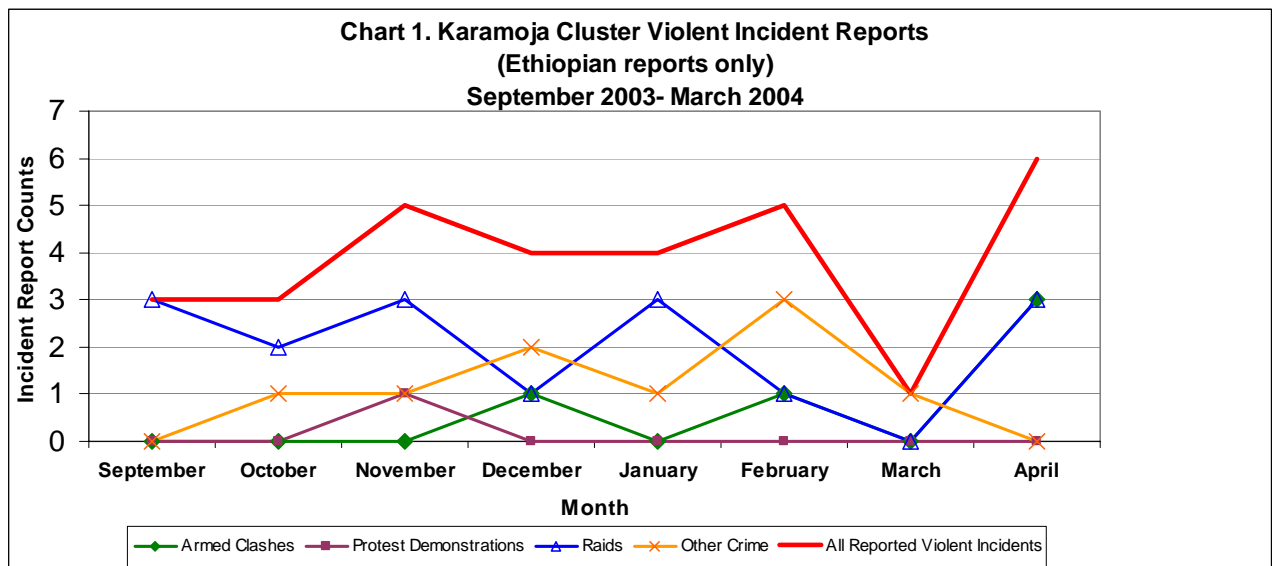
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Current Situation Baselines

NOTE: The y-axes are dynamically scaled on all of the charts presented below. Therefore, the reader should pay special attention to the upper and lower values presented for each chart. The range of values for all “scores” is from 0 to 100.

Chart 1 (below) presents the counts of armed clashes, violent protests, organized raids, and other crime incidents as reported during the September 2003 – April 2004 reporting period. The overall incidence of violence appears to hold steady until February and March 2004, when it drops to just one incident. This trend is reversed in April, however, a month during which six incidents, including three armed clashes and organized raids, were reported.

Nearly 60% of the incidents reported in Ethiopia involved parties from another country. These cross-border incidents represent the highest proportion of such incidents among the three countries covered, but the total number of incidents from Ethiopia (31) is nearly an order of magnitude less than Uganda’s reported incidents (293), and on par with Kenya’s (32) incidents.



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Chart 2 (below) presents human death counts for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster. The highest numbers of fatalities occurred in February 2004 (10 deaths). Consistent with the low violence trends displayed in Chart 1, there are no deaths in March, but counts rise again in April 2004.

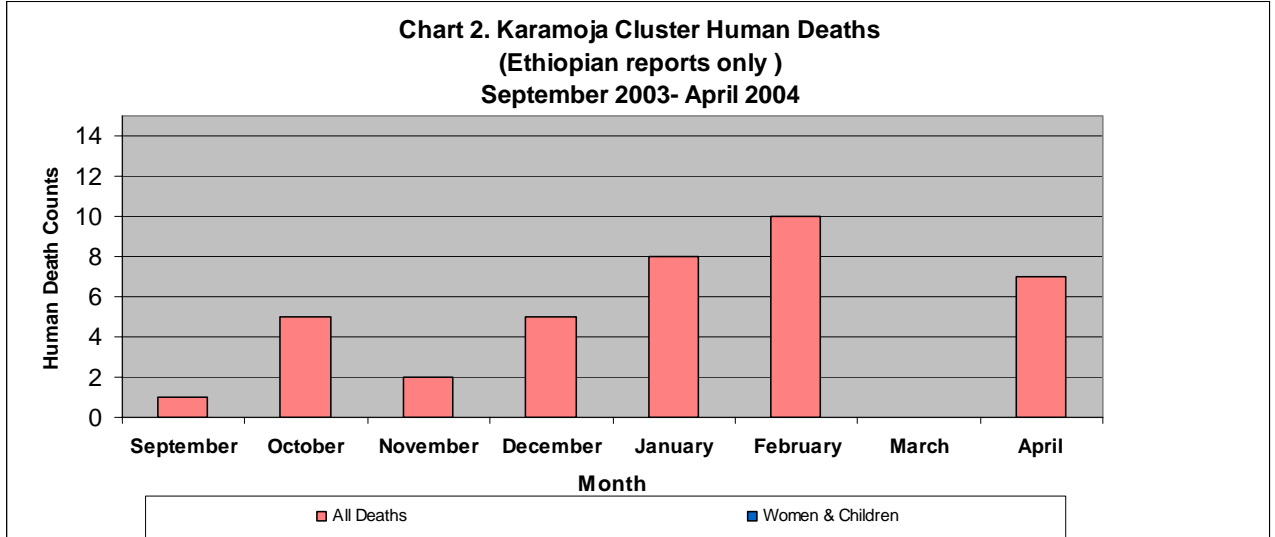
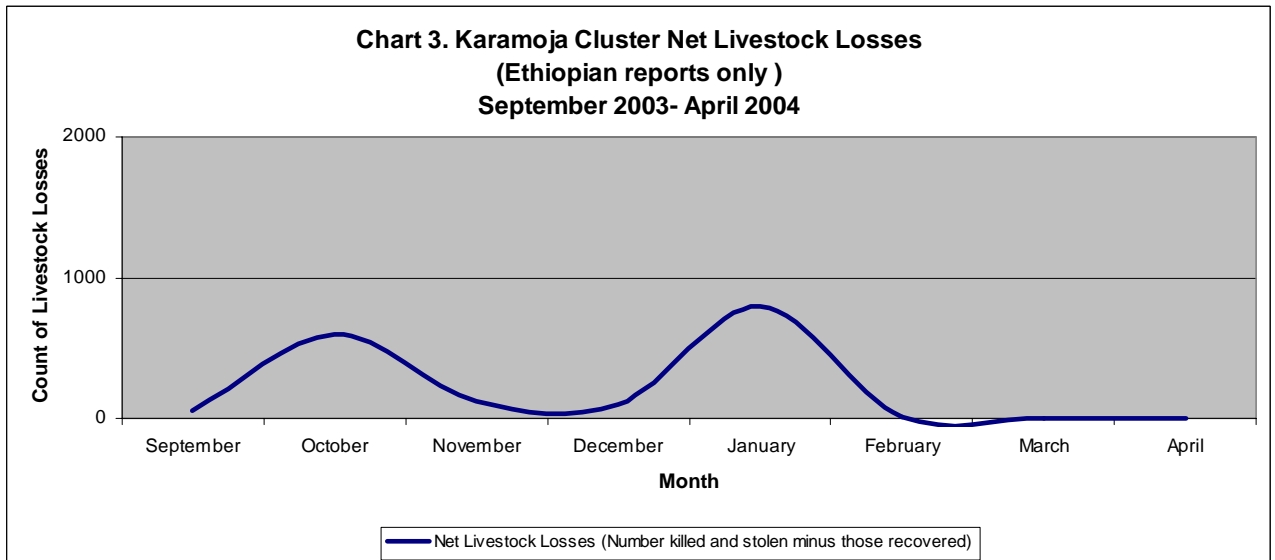
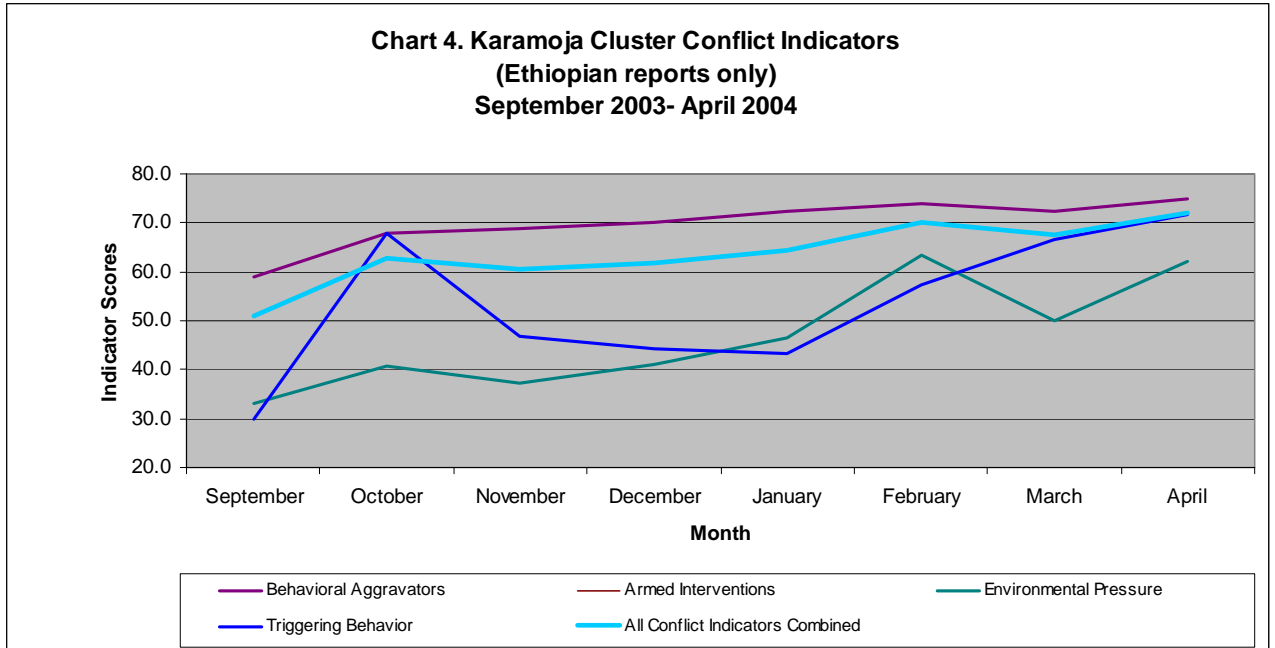


Chart 3 (below) presents counts of livestock losses; the highest counts appear in the months of October 2003 and January 2004. There are no reported livestock losses from February through April 2004. Livestock losses by month range from a low of zero to a high of 799 in January 2004.



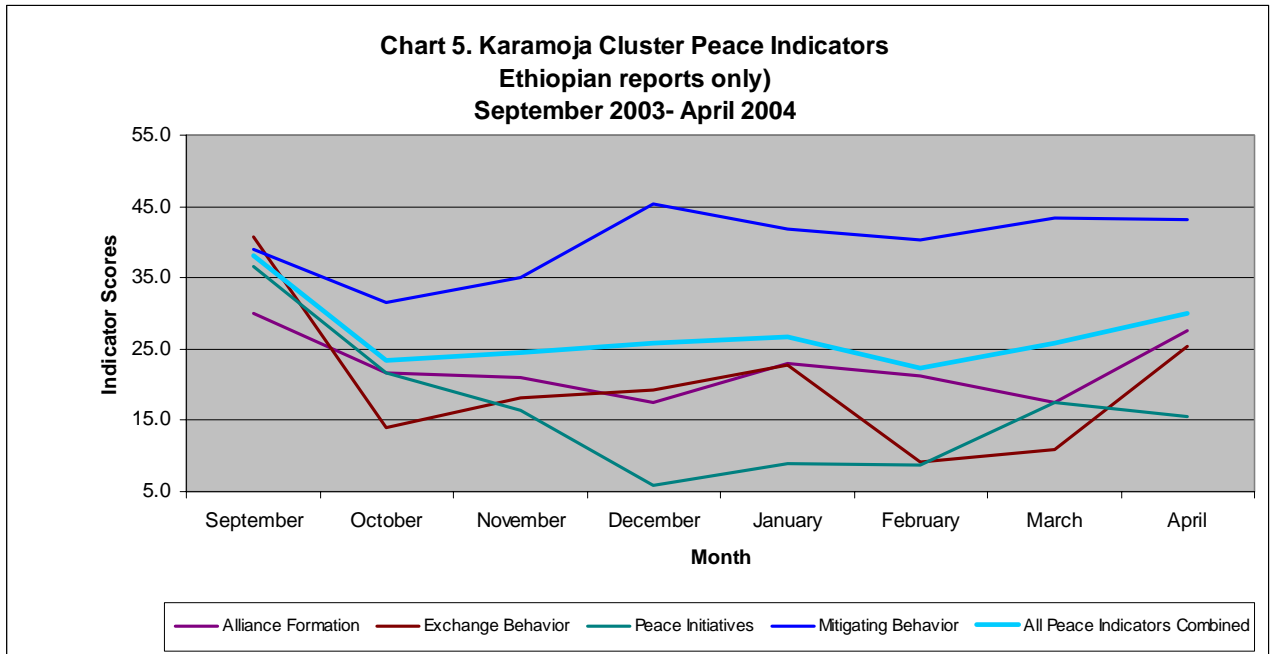
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Conflict indicators in Chart 4 (below) describe behavioral aggravators, triggering behavior, armed interventions, environmental pressure, and the combined conflict indicators. Armed intervention indicators are at zero for the entire report period. During the months of October 2003 and February and April 2004, the set of non-null conflict indicators tend to rise together; in other words, there may be some association among increases in behavioral aggravators, triggering behavior, and environmental pressure indicators during this report period. Please refer to the Appendix for a description of the conflict indicators.



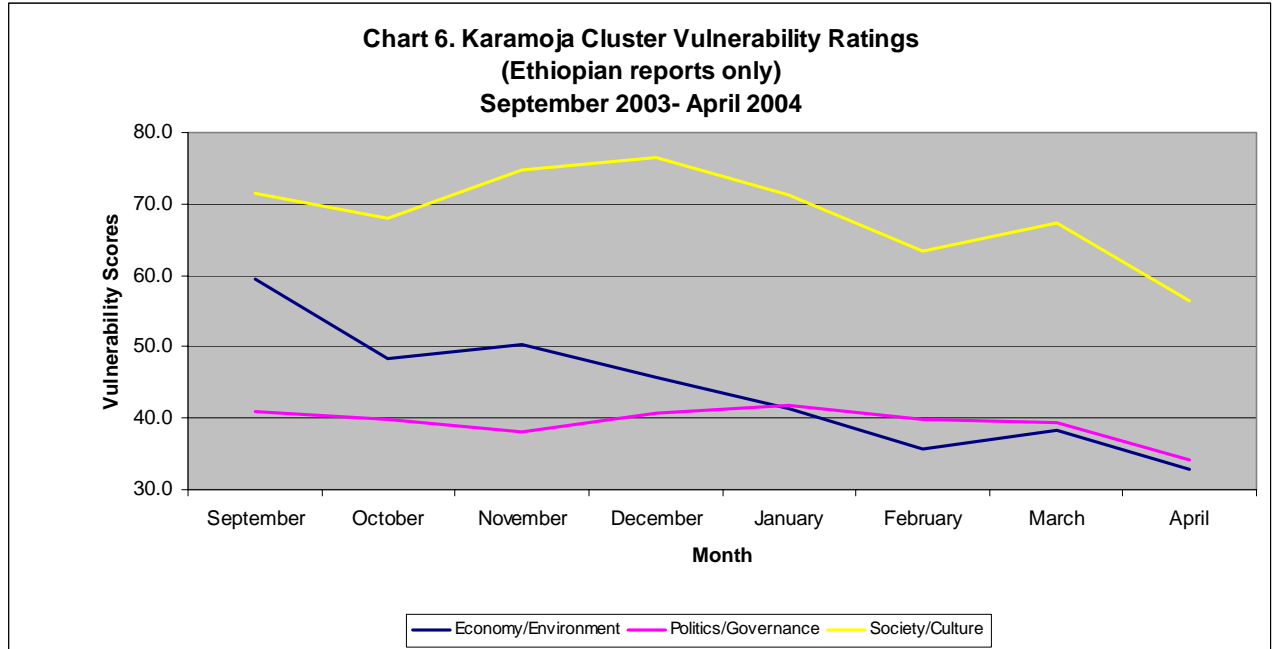
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Chart 5 (below) presents peace indicators for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster. The score for the mitigating behavior indicator is high throughout the period, indicating that moderate levels of mitigating behavior are occurring in the area of responsibility or AOR. Peace initiatives, one of the lowest scoring indicators for the report period, decrease from September through December 2003, but appear to be on the rise thereafter. The combined, All Peace Indicators statistic shows a similar trend over time; decreasing levels of peace indicators after September 2003 but an increase in peace indicator levels after February 2004. Please refer to the Appendix for a description of the peace indicators.



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Chart 6 (below) presents vulnerability ratings for the report period. Social/cultural vulnerability ratings are high throughout the period, suggesting that this context is problematic in the AOR. While the economic/environmental vulnerability rating was initially at a high level at the beginning of the report period, it appears that vulnerability associated with this context has lessened over time. Political/governance vulnerability remains more or less stable throughout the report period, and even tends to decrease in March and end of April 2004. These vulnerability ratings offer an alternative view or “cut” of the same indicators used above (peace and conflict); in other words, they can help triangulate a conflict situation by presenting a sectoral (as opposed to analytical) aggregation of the indicators.



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Proximate Conflict Aggravating Factors

The Nyangatom, Dassanech, Turkana and Hamar, among others, are increasingly desperate. Their crops have failed over the past three consecutive years due to lack of rain. Their livestock are also endangered by lack of grazing and water, and thus far, no provisions are in place to provide relief assistance. This has led to rising tension among the various pastoral groups manifested in increased livestock rustling, incursions into grazing lands of other groups, commandeering of boats and stealing /confiscation of fishing nets. The local residents identify their main problem as 'hunger.' The major reason for increasing tensions and conflict appears to be the economic/livelihood stress experienced by all of these groups and the intensified competition among them for the meager resources available in the area.

As depicted in Chart 4, the composite indicator combining all conflict indicators is steadily increasing over the reporting period. Environmental pressures appear cyclical and increasing in intensity over the reporting period. Significant rain shortages were evident in southern Ethiopia during the month of October 2003, which may have contributed to the first peak in Environmental Pressures depicted in Chart 4. As depicted in Charts 1 and 3, these factors may have contributed to the increase in cattle raiding from October to November 2003 and the corresponding peak in livestock losses experienced during that time period. Human deaths also peaked in October according to Chart 2. While second season rains in November were below average for Ethiopia, the rains brought at least some relief to the region, which may have contributed to a relative decline in environmental pressure and subsequent decline in cattle raiding during the month of November.

Triggering Behavior increased substantially during the months of September to October 2003, which also experienced an increase in Environmental Pressures. A forest fire and competition over arable land or watering points was reported in Kibish during the last week of September. Pre-raid blessings and traditional forecasting took place in both Kibish and Nebremus throughout the month of October. The forecasts warned of impending conflict and raiding. Pre-raid blessings took place, reflecting preparations for the expected conflict. Unusual movements of all-male groups were also reported during this time period, which suggests mobilization for conflict.

The area of Nebremus reported lack of rain and growing famine due to the absence of timely rainfall and lack of arable land. At the same time, tensions between the Dassanech and Turkana may have contributed to the abandonment of traditional grazing areas. Five forest fires were reported in Kibish in mid-October, further exacerbating Environmental Pressures. Additional traditional forecasts and pre-raid blessings took place at the end of October with another forest fire reported on the last day of the month. During the first week of November, a Situation Report indicated that the Dassanech forecasted conflict with the Turkanas, which led to the unusual movement of Dassanech all-male groups and the abandonment of traditional grazing. The report also indicated that famine in the area was severe.

Chart 4 demonstrates that Triggering Behavior decreased steadily from November 2003 to January 2004. Environmental Pressures continued to increase gradually after November 2003 but grew rapidly after January 2004 – coinciding with a similar increase in Triggering Behavior. Charts 1 and 3 indicate that cattle raiding and livestock losses both peaked in January 2004. Human deaths continued to increase in January and peaked in February. This also coincided with a peak in crime and banditry according to Chart 2.

Situation reports in early February 2004 indicate that regular rains had not come in the Nebremus area, thus severely limiting the availability of arable land. Unusual movements of all-male groups were reported in Kibish, particularly in Kajamakin, Natkar and Lopakor villages. These movements may have been prompted by the Elders of Natkar Kebelle who forecasted looting and death in their territory. In mid-October, reports from Nebremus indicate an outbreak of livestock diseases. Growing tensions between the Dassanech and Turkana was also reported while an unusual movement of all-made groups was observed at watering points and grazing areas in

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Kibish. Situation Reports during the end of February indicate continued drought in the Nebremus area, which may have contributed to the second peak in Environmental Pressure during the month of February. Referring to Chart 4, heavy rains in March and April 2004 may have served to relieve the Environmental Pressures as depicted by the decline in Environmental Pressure in March 2004.

According to Chart 4, Triggering Behavior continued to increase with traditional forecasts, pre-blessing raids, and unusual movements of all-male groups throughout the rest of the reporting period. Charts 1 and 2 depict expected increases in cattle raiding and human deaths in April 2004, which correspond to the increase in Triggering Behavior reported.

Structural Conflict Aggravating Factors

The politicization of ethnic identity by local elites, may have contributed to the sense of marginalization of some groups. However, in many cases, the exacerbating factor seems to be more structural and marginalization of the area altogether. This situation may be exacerbated by perceptions in some quarters of differential access for different groups. The entire region and neighboring areas are affected by recurrent drought. The combination of frequent drought, land degradation and declining productivity of rangeland contributes to increased competition for water and pastoral resources.

According to numerous Situation Reports, the poor security situation in the area of the Karamojong cluster and political instability in the region has increased the availability of illegal arms. The arms flow in the region over the past two decades has put huge quantities of sophisticated weaponry on the market and led to an arms race in the pastoral areas. In many areas modern weapons have become part of the essential equipment for sustainable existence in the pastoral sector. Indeed, proliferation of modern arms (largely AK 47s and M-16s) into South Omo from southern Sudan is a challenge for the area. The flow of small arms is continuing, facilitated by the contacts of local pastoralist groups with ethnic militias in southern Sudan, for example, the Toposa, the longtime suppliers of the Nyangatom.

The region is almost entirely dependent for livelihood upon a subsistence pastoralist economy, and is affected by an endemic lack of employment or other means of livelihood. In most of the region there is little or no presence of the formal economy, or sources of formal employment, outside of a handful of posts in the local administrations. There is little in the way of development of the private sector. This is probably due, at least in part, to lack of transport facilities, market access, and the region's poor communication infrastructure. Another important factor is the absence of an adequate pastoral development policy to encourage development of the region's pastoral potential and provide the necessary infrastructure and policy environment.

Poor governance and lack of effective administration on the ground, particularly at the local level, where local government needs to be carried out and basic services delivered. For example, the Kuruz Woreda administration was found to be weak and disorganized. A seven-member council governs the Woreda, which at the time of the field visit had not been able to elect a chairman or an administrator.

Of particular importance, the security forces seemed to be understaffed and under-equipped, lacking the necessary manpower, vehicles and communication equipment to effectively apprehend and bring to justice those who routinely break the law. There were also reports of a lack of efficiency of the administration which led to the subsequent removal of the Woreda administrator. The Federal Police were not as effective as they might otherwise have been because they were engaged in a buildup activity and were thus somewhat distracted. Lack of adequate security forces and lack of demarcation of the border between Ethiopia and Kenya, making it difficult to chase and apprehend suspects in the border zone, further aggravated the problems of monitoring and maintaining peace in the area.

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The prevailing weakness/absence of administration and basic services contributed to a sense of marginalization and alienation of affected local pastoral communities. Among others, the principal social services available in the Woreda seemed to consist of four health posts and four schools run by government or NGOs.

At present a new effort is underway to improve government understanding of pastoralist problems and needs, as a basis for the formulation of an appropriate pastoralism policy. Administrative decentralization down to Woreda and Kebele levels aimed at improvement of governance and development activities at the local level, and minority rights.

Proximate Conflict Mitigating Factors

Chart 5 reveals that peace initiatives dropped continually from September to December 2003 while exchange behavior such as trade declined sharply from September to October 2003. Mitigating factors also hit a low in October 2003 while combined conflict indicators in Chart 4 reached a peak during this time period. Mitigating behavior grew steadily after October and reached a peak in December 2003. Peace initiatives, however, were reported at an all time low during that month.

A closer study of mitigating behavior in December 2003 reveals two anomalies based on two indicators, arms disclosure and bride price. While the disclosure of small arms is generally considered as mitigating behavior, the Situation Reports analyzed indicate that the disclosure of small arms is often observed during the movement of all-male groups carrying those arms. This may thus be an aggravating factor. In addition, Situation Reports in December 2003 reveal that the bride price remains stable. While this is generally considered a mitigating factor, the Situation Reports indicate that the price stability is due to the on-going conflict between various ethnic groups.

Structural Conflict Mitigating Factors

Civil society/NGO activities are still at a minimal level in Kuruz Woreda. At present there are only four NGOs operational in the Woreda. All the four are connected to missionary organizations and one of the four groups, the Swedish Philadelphi Church Missionaries (SPCM) has phased out its operations by the end of December 2003.

A second NGO, the Society of International Missionaries (SIM) works in the water sector and is currently distributing water windmills to pastoralists in the area. The third, Mekane Yesus is an Ethiopian evangelical NGO and a recent entrant in the area. It has built health posts in different parts of Kuruz Woreda where it provides primary health services and women's health education programmes.

An important development is the increase in interest, research and advocacy on Ethiopian pastoral communities. Of particular importance is the recent training programme on pastoralism organized for senior Ministry of Federal Affairs' officials, by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the United Kingdom. This is expected to make a significant contribution to enhancement of the capacities of key policymakers with respect to the making of adequate pastoral policies.

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Appendix: Description of Indicators (from the Situation Reports)

<u>Alliance Formation</u>		
Inter-ethnic group alliance	Ethnic group – government alliance	
<u>Armed Intervention</u>		
Internal armed support	External armed support	
<u>Behavioral Aggravators</u>		
Interrupt other activities	Pastoral migration	Bullets as commodities
Development aid problems	Harmful migration policy	Protest
Media controls	Harmful livestock policy	Student attendance interrupted
Migrant laborers	Influx of IDPs	Separation of groups
New Markets	Security escorts	Livestock prices dropped
Negative media coverage	Small arms availability	Post-raid blessing
		Livestock sales increase
<u>Environmental Pressure</u>		
Natural disaster grazing areas abandoned	Land competition Livestock disease	More livestock in secure areas
<u>Exchange Behavior</u>		
Celebration Inter-group sharing	Inter-group marriage Cross-border trade	Gift offering
<u>Mitigating Behavior</u>		
Access to health care	Relief distributions	Law enforcement
Small arms disclosure	Markets remain open	Bride price stable
Access to education	Positive media coverage	Negotiations taking place
<u>Peace Initiatives</u>		
Women peace messengers	Weapons reduction program	Local peace initiatives
Religious peace building	NGO peace initiatives	
<u>Triggering Behavior</u>		
All-male migration	Pre-raid blessing	Traditional forecasting