

The Conflict Early Warning and Response mechanism (CEWARN)



in the

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (**IGAD**)
Region

CEWARN Regional Report

First Regional Report on the Karamoja Cluster

CEWARN, Addis Ababa.

I. Executive Summary

This first regional report of the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in the IGAD region seeks to provide member states, policy makers, development partners and other stakeholders with a coherent and informed understanding of the nature, characteristics and dynamics of the national and cross-border pastoral conflict in the Karamoja cluster. The report has been compiled using information from weekly field reports and country analysis from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, it constitutes an ongoing effort by CEWARN to provide and share information on conflict early warning in the Karamoja cluster.

The report provides the initial insights of CEWARN's information gathering in three countries of the Karamoja cluster (It does not cover the Sudanese side of the Karamoja cluster). The three Country Baseline Baselines critically examine the socio-economic context and the historical underlying causes of pastoral conflict in the three parts that constitute what is referred to as the Karamoja cluster. It provides an assessment of the structural influences and constraints in the prevention of pastoral conflicts while giving broad policy recommendations.

The Karamoja cluster which covers the cross-border areas of Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda is a region affected by seasonal patterns of drought and famine, seasonal movements of armed pastoralists and livestock within districts and across borders, a continuing degradation of the environment leading to food insecurity and increased competition for scarce resources mainly water and pasture. The characteristic features of the region are marked underdevelopment when compared to regions within each country of study, high level of insecurity and violence leading to lack of investment and marginalization.

The pastoral communities that inhabit the region live in poverty and insecurity due to the proliferation of small arms. The poor infrastructural network hampers the provision of services while curtailing the capacity of security forces to respond to the increasing violence and cattle rustling that have such a devastating impact on the livelihood of pastoral communities.

In the areas of reporting in this report there were **725** deaths the total livestock lost was **18,875** if this trend continues it not only represents a high number of human loss but also loss of resources in an area that exhibits resource scarcity. This will lead to greater internal displacement of pastoral and continued reliance of pastoral communities on relief assistance that is bound to a negative impact on development in the region.

Purpose and scope

The purpose of this regional report is to inform decision makers on the nature of cross-border pastoral conflict in three countries in the Karamoja cluster and to inform the development of regional response options that would de-escalate pastoral conflicts along the border areas of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. Its specific focus is on a better understanding of pastoral conflicts, their underlying causes and dynamics using a scientifically oriented approach in the gathering and analysis of information.

This report forms part the conflict prevention and management initiative of the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), which is a mechanism established by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The main objectives of CEWARN are:

- a) to development an information gathering and analysis methodology that informs early warning in the IGAD region.
- b) to establish information gathering systems based on information from the public domain
- c) to enable member states prevent cross-border pastoral conflicts from developing into armed violent conflicts on a greater scale
- d) to enable local communities, civil society and governments to collaborate in preventing and managing violent conflicts
- e) to develop regional initiatives through the national Conflict Early Warning and Response Units (CEWERUs) in conflict prevention.

CEWARN through this report seeks to provide insights to member states, development partners, civil society and other stakeholders on the nature, impact and dynamics of cross border pastoral conflicts and to inform and advocate the adoption of response strategies to conflicts in the Karamoja cluster.

The temporal scope of the report covers the period July 2003 – April 2004. The report relies on information gathered from the Areas of Reporting (AORs) in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda and the analysis provided in the Country Baseline reports. The Country reports are based on field data gathered from the areas of reporting on a weekly basis using specific data collection tools developed by CEWARN in collaboration with stakeholders in the region.

This report will contribute to early warning on potential conflicts to decision makers on a timely basis so as to initiate actionable responses that reduce the number and intensity of conflicts in the Karamoja cluster.

II. Background

The term “Karamoja cluster” is commonly used to describe the pastoral and agro-pastoral ethnic groups, some who share a common language and culture, occupying a landmass that encompasses Southwestern Ethiopia, Northwestern

Kenya, Southeastern Sudan and Northeastern Uganda. CEWARN's use of the term Karamoja cluster refers to the conflict system encompassing four IGAD member states. More specifically the Karamoja cluster covers:

- four districts in Uganda Kotido, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Kapchorwa.
- three districts in Kenya Turkana, West Pokot and Trans Nozia in Rift Valley Province.
- one Woreda in Ethiopia Kuraz woreda of the South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations & Nationalities Peoples Regional State.
- two counties in the Sudan Kapotea and Budi in the Eastern Equatoria Province in Southern Sudan (this area is not included in this report).

While the drylands of the Karamoja cluster have a diversity of ecosystems dependent on seasonal patterns of rainfall, the predominant mode of food production and livelihood is livestock keeping and subsistence agriculture mainly millet and sorghum. A characteristic feature of pastoral food production is the degree of movement associated with livestock in search of water and pasture. Until colonialism in the 19th century boundaries among the ethnic groups of the Karamoja cluster were not rigid and limiting but rather were fluid and dependent on the relationships of the pastoral groups inhabiting certain areas. An intricate web of relations developed among pastoral communities to provide for the sharing of resources, these relationships were shaped by conflict and cooperation as adaptive strategies for survival by pastoral groups in an otherwise harsh environment.

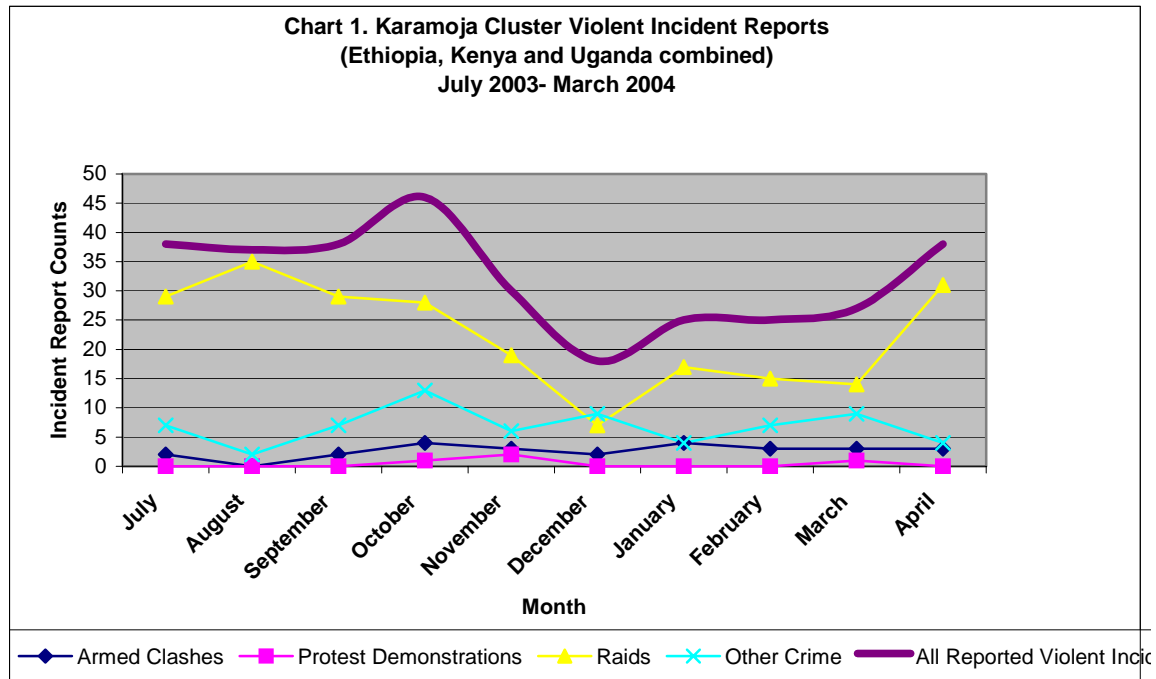
From the three Country Baselines Reports the major cross-border issues that emerge are: the imposition of state boundaries; marginalization of pastoralists and the pastoralism in national policies; the nature of traditional pastoralist communities; the proliferation of small arms among pastoral groups; ineffective and inappropriate responses to pastoral conflicts; the breakdown of law and order leading to a “culture of impunity” among pastoralists; and the provision of relief assistance at the expense of development.

III. Current Situation

During the period June 2003 – April 2004 in the Karamoja cluster there was tension along the borders and sporadic violent incidents. All three Country Baselines indicate the escalation of raids and crime. The poor harvests, the looming drought and famine, increased competition for resources, the acceptance of raiding as a survival strategy, the lack of government response to violent incidents; and seasonal rainfall patterns help explain the rise and fall of tensions and violence in the cluster.

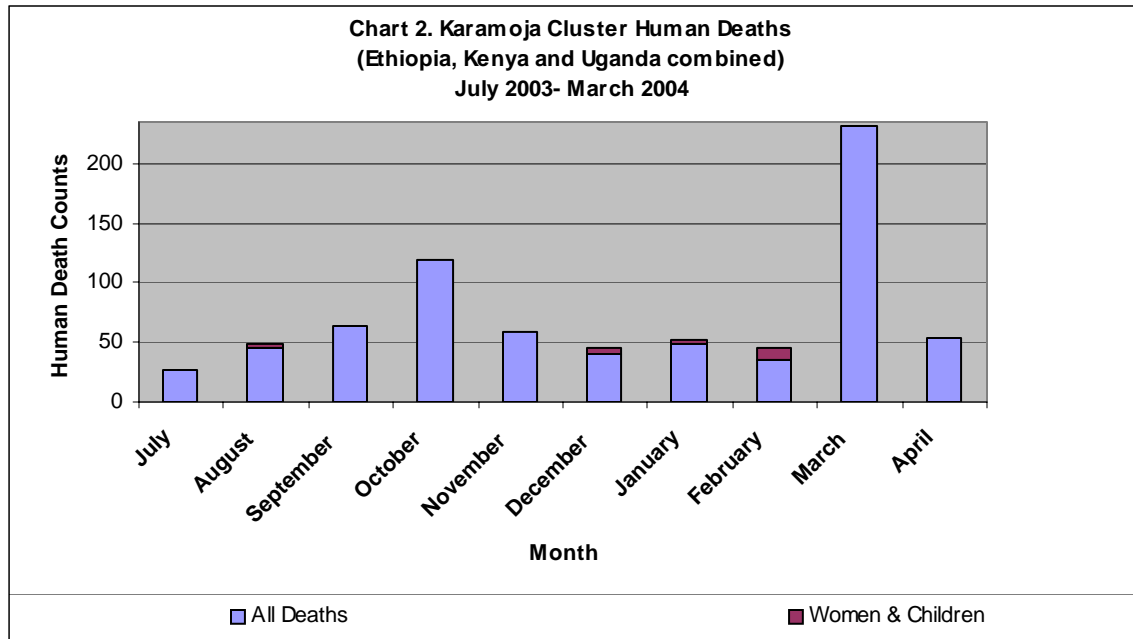
In the reporting period there were 224 raids, 26 armed clashes, 4 protest demonstrations and 68 crimes reported. These led to an estimated total of 725 deaths of which 21 were women and children. The number of cattle lost was 18,875. From a total of 322 reported violent incidents 30 were from Ethiopia, 25 from Kenya and 267 from Uganda. The high number of incidents in Uganda is as a result of better reporting by the Field Monitors from the Ugandan side of the Karamoja cluster and does not indicate that Uganda is more violent than the other two Countries included in this period of reporting.

Chart 1



It appears from the combined violent incident reports on the cluster that the “other crime” category, which refers to, acts of violence like road banditry account for a higher proportion off all violent incidents. One explanation for this is the proximity of “warriors” to roads, the level of involvement in raids and the culture of impunity. The significant increase in violent incidents in October in all three countries was because of increased raiding activities among communities in the three countries. An interesting feature in the violent incidents is the similar pattern of raids and other crimes an increase in raids seems to correspond with and increase in other crimes. Seasonal patterns of rainfall seem to be a de-escalator in violent incidents as the pressure for water and pasture reduces and pastoralists return to within national borders, thus reducing contact with other groups along borders where dry season grazing intensifies competition for water and pasture. The steady increase from March 2004 stems from the onset of the dry season and the return to the dry season grazing areas.

Chart 2

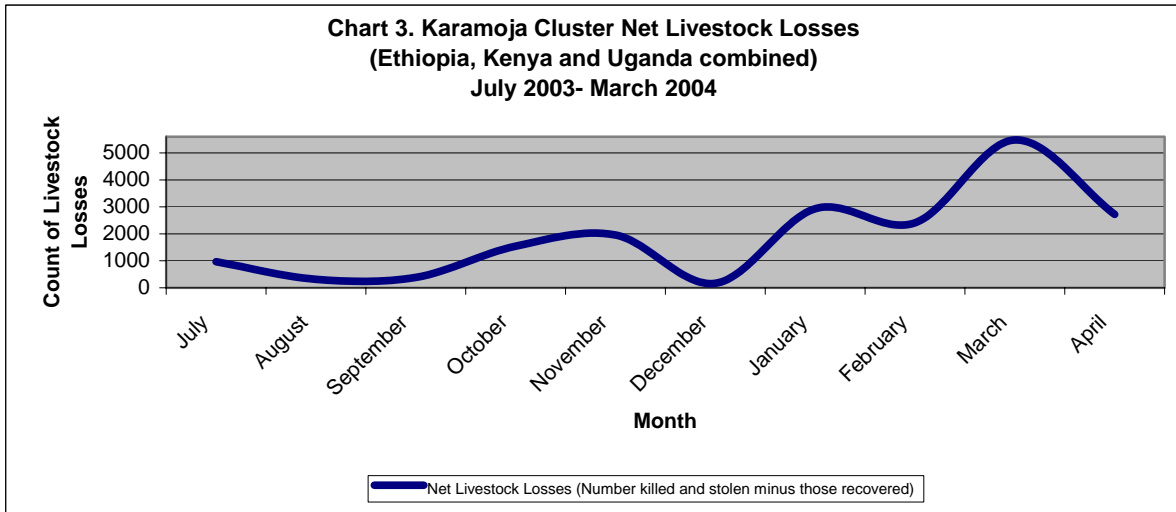


The availability and use of small arms has increased the casualty rate in the Karamoja cluster, nearly all violent incidents involve the use of firearms and yet guns are the only protection that pastoral communities have to secure their livestock and livelihood against plunder by hostile neighbors. The two months of concern are October 2003 and March 2004. In October the high deaths are a result of a violent incident in Uganda, while the high figures in March 2004 result from two incidents in Kenya and Uganda.

- In Kenya the dry season has led to the Turkana moving to dry season grazing in Uganda this resulted in the *Kaabong incident* between the Turkana and Dodoth of Uganda. The *Kang'ole incident* also explains the increase in the number of deaths. (See p.19 of the Kenya Baseline).
- In Uganda an incident in Kathile parish near the Uganda/Sudan border where Jie warriors attempted to raid 400 head of cattle from the Toposa led to an armed clash in which the estimated number of deaths was 200-400!

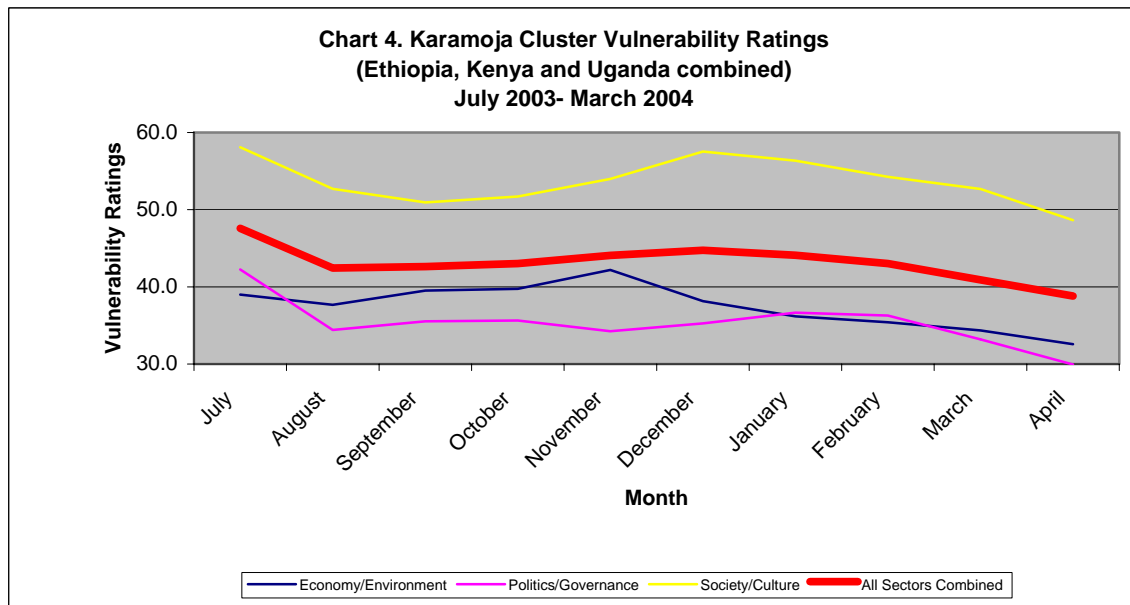
These three incidents (two in Kenya and one in Uganda) account for the rising death toll in October 2003 and March 2004 in Chart 2.

Chart 3



The livestock losses for the ten months of the reporting period is high amounting to a total of 18,875 (estimate of livestock lost), this figure represents net loss which accounts for livestock recovered by security forces and communities after raids. The highest losses were in October/November, 2003 and in January/February 2004; the highest losses are in Uganda and Kenya these losses are as a result of raiding activities within the two countries although there were also cross-border raids. From the Chart 2 and 3 on Human deaths and livestock losses it appears there are variations in violent incident in relation to deaths and the loss of livestock. High livestock losses may also be the result of the commercialization of raiding.

Chart 4



The data indicates a decrease in the vulnerability ratings this can be attributed to natural resource use inter –community relations in the prevailing political and

economic environment in the Karamoja cluster. Further review and analysis of the data on vulnerability is required to tease out an explanation on the decrease in vulnerability ratings despite an increase of violent incidents.

IV. Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment.

The proximate influences on conflict vulnerability in the Karamoja cluster include: economic and political developments in the three countries; the seasonal patterns which impact on drought and famine leading to increased competition for natural resources; and the lack of provision of basic services (health, education etc).

The Karamoja cluster as a whole is characterized by underdevelopment, lack of any significant investment by both public/private sectors, and a poor infrastructure that makes it difficult to provide services and deliver goods (mainly livestock) to markets outside the cluster. The insecurity that has become a distinctive feature of the Karamoja cluster is compounded by the instability in some parts of the region which has increased the availability of illegal arms and the cross-border flow of arms contributes to the intensity and high casualty rates of resource based conflicts in the cluster.

There are changes occurring in the three countries which may have a positive impact on the current conflict situation in the cluster. For example Ethiopia's policy of decentralization to the woreda level will help ensure adequate local input on governance creating more locally based administration familiar with pastoral issues. In Kenya and Uganda the participation of communities and institutions of civil society is leading to productive initiatives as trust and collaboration take root in the transformation of pastoral conflict.

The existence of the Joint cross-border Commissions: The Ethiopia-Kenya Border Commission and the Kenya-Uganda border Commission have contained the Karamoja cluster conflict from escalating into armed violent conflict on a greater scale. The levels of poverty existing in the Karamoja cluster which are compounded by insecurity, cattle raiding and lack of access to markets are to some extent being addressed in the country Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper(s) and the various interventions by civil society which seek to improve the livelihoods of pastoralists. Pastoral issues have recently begun to impact on the policy dialogue between governments and pastoral communities.

V. Diagnoses and Response Options.

To recommend policy response options in these first would be unrealistic further and deeper examination of data to identify trends and patterns of conflict will lead to more actionable policies. A review of previous and future policy interventions by national governments, use of multiple sources of data for comparative purposes

with CEWARN's field data would lead to actionable response strategies for conflict prevention in the Karamoja cluster.

With this in mind there certain initiatives that need be taken:

- the need to address the current drought situation which would reduce resource driven conflict stress in the cluster. In policy terms there is need to review relief provision and it's impact on sustainable development policies
- the need for continued encouragement and development of institutional linkages between local, national and regional conflict early warning and response networks to prevent conflict at an early stage
- the need to develop forums that engage pastoral communities in regular consultation and sensitization to diminish and de-legitimize the culture of cattle raiding. This should include government efforts in dealing with stock theft to further de-legitimize traditional raiding.
- the need to develop and reinforce the rule of law with frameworks of crime and punishment relating to cattle raiding, other crime and to remove the culture of impunity that currently exists.
- the need to institutionalize and develop regular frameworks of consultation that incorporate traditional methods of conflict resolution in dealing with pastoral conflicts in the cluster.
- the need to recognize and continue communal and cross-border peace initiatives that involve civil society, communities and national governments through the local administration
- the to develop and improve livestock marketing and access to markets for pastoral communities, and finally
- the need to continue communication and exchange of information on cross-border situations in addressing relief assistance and peace building activities within and among cross communities.