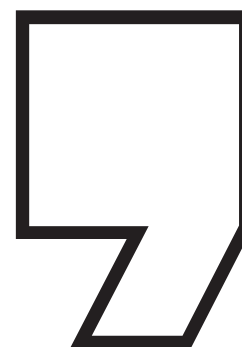




Researching livelihoods and  
services affected by conflict



# Livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Northern Uganda and Karamoja

Working Paper 4

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August 2012



# About us

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) aims to generate a stronger evidence base on how people make a living, educate their children, deal with illness and access other basic services in conflict-affected situations (CAS). Providing better access to basic services, social protection and support to livelihoods matters for the human welfare of people affected by conflict, the achievement of development targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and international efforts at peace- and state-building.

At the centre of SLRC's research are three core themes, developed over the course of an intensive one-year inception phase:

- State legitimacy: experiences, perceptions and expectations of the state and local governance in conflict-affected situations
- State capacity: building effective states that deliver services and social protection in conflict-affected situations
- Livelihood trajectories and economic activity under conflict

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is the lead organisation. SLRC partners include the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) in Sri Lanka, Feinstein International Center (FIC, Tufts University), the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Pakistan, Disaster Studies of Wageningen University (WUR) in the Netherlands, the Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

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# Abbreviations

ABC	Abstinence, Being Faithful and Using a Condom
ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
ACF	Action against Hunger
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALREP	Agriculture Livelihoods Rehabilitation Programme
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
AVSI	Association of Volunteers in International Service
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEPA	Centre for Poverty Analysis
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSA	Durable Solutions Assessment
DWD	Directorate of Water Development
EC	European Commission
ECAPAPA	Eastern and Central Africa Programme for Agricultural Policy Analysis
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GPS	Geographic Positioning System
HEA	Household Economy Analysis
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income-generating Activity
ILO	International Labour Office
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KALIP	Karamoja Livelihoods Improvement Programme
KAPFS	Karamoja Action Plan for Food Security
KDA	Karamoja Development Agency
KIDDP	Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme
LDPG	Local Development Partner Group
LDU	Local Defence Unit
LEARN	Livelihoods and Economic Recovery in Northern Uganda
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MISR	Makerere Institute of Social Research
MTEF	Medium-term Expenditure Framework
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation

NLPIP	National Livestock Productivity Improvement Project
NRG	Nepal Research Group
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NURP	Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Project
NUREP	Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PICO	Ugandan Institute for People's Innovation and Change in Organisation
PMA	Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
SAGE	Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment
SDPI	Sustainable Development Policy Institute
SLRC	Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
SPRING	Stability, Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda
SWAp	Sector-wide Approach
SWAY	Survey on War-affected Youth
TRP	Transition to Recovery Programme
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNRCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Forces
UPE	Universal Primary Education
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development
UTA	Uganda Tourism Association
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission
WUR	Wageningen University

# Preface

This paper is one of a series of evidence papers produced by the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) as part of its inception phase (January 2011 – March 2012). Seven country evidence papers have been produced (Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Uganda and DRC) and are supported by two global evidence papers focusing on social protection and basic services, and growth and livelihoods respectively. Each paper systematically explores and assesses the available evidence about livelihoods, social protection and basic services in the country. The papers do not attempt to generate new data, nor produce new analyses. Rather they assess what is already known and review the quality of the current evidence base. The papers, along with a series of global and country-based stakeholder consultations, have been used to formulate the future research agenda of the SLRC.

This paper was written by Kirsten Gelsdorf, Dan Maxwell and Dyan Mazurana. The authors are grateful to John Parker, Gogi Grewal, Melita Sawyer, Carrie Stefansky, Elizabeth Stites, Teddy Atim and Michael Kalilu for research assistance provided during the development of the paper, and to Peter Walker and DFID staff for their comments on earlier versions of the paper. Responsibility for the arguments and views presented in the paper lie with the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of SLRC partner organisations or the UK Department for International Development (DFID) which funds the SLRC.

# Executive summary

The effects of three decades of violence on the populations of Uganda's Greater North have been immense.<sup>1</sup> One challenge lies in identifying what policies and programmes can help these populations recover and adapt their livelihoods in a post-conflict environment.

Based on a robust review of evidence in the existing literature on Karamoja and Northern Uganda, this evidence paper summarises outstanding challenges to livelihood recovery as well as interventions led by government, people, aid agencies and the private sector to support livelihoods and increase the provision of basic services and social protection. The overall objective is to help pinpoint strategic opportunities for future research on how best to promote livelihood security and access to services for conflict-affected populations in Uganda's Greater North.

Over the past three decades, Uganda has experienced some of the world's worst and most protracted conflict. Insecurity, in the form of civil war in Northern Uganda and cattle raiding and armed banditry in Karamoja, has been a major part of millions of people's lives. Although active conflict and abduction have ended in Northern Uganda and security has improved in Karamoja, these areas remain very much affected by conflict, and the situation in both areas is fluid. In Northern Uganda, the withdrawal of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has improved security significantly, enabled the return of over a million people to their homes and helped spur the rebuilding of lives and livelihoods. The continued disarmament programme in Karamoja has helped curb road ambushes and large-scale raids, and government and international efforts to support livelihood recovery and adaptation have increased in number.

However, major challenges still exist. At the forefront are poverty and development challenges. In both areas, people have lost their assets and are trapped in multidimensional intergenerational poverty. Karamoja exhibits the country's lowest human development indicators, and people in Northern Uganda face the lowest probability of living to the age of 40, the highest illiteracy rate and the highest rate of children underweight for their age (UNDP, 2007b). In Northern Uganda, between 30 percent and 90 percent of the population was displaced, in some sub-regions for decades. Combined with this reality is continued violence—mostly interpersonal violence and land conflict in Northern Uganda and cattle raiding and proliferation of weapons and crime in Karamoja. The result of all of these factors is that the majority of the population in Northern Uganda is now young, with little memory of living outside of camps. Many live in households headed by females and the majority have almost no assets. In Karamoja, livelihoods are transitioning more and more away from pastoralism, and some people are migrating further and often permanently, seeking work with strangers or in urban areas where they often face persecution as well as discrimination.

The government, aid agencies and the people themselves are making efforts to address these issues and build their livelihoods. The current National Development Plan (NDP) (2010/11–2010/45) explicitly recognises the need to integrate both Northern Uganda and Karamoja into the mainstream development of the country. A series of agricultural and food security programmes are being run, including such innovations as farmer field schools and livestock extension. Aid agencies are shifting from food aid programmes towards the construction of productive assets through food for work and increased local purchase of relief food. There are also a number of conflict prevention programmes and alternative income generation projects.

However, for many of these programmes, the targeting emphasis is moving from vulnerable populations towards 'viable' groups—those who have the assets and can even take advantage of opportunities to produce a surplus for the market. This approach leaves behind many people who, for one reason or another, are unable to take advantage of these opportunities. In addition, these livelihood programmes are run and targeted with a lack of understanding of the effects of serious crimes and violations

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<sup>1</sup> There is inconsistent use of the terms Karamoja and Northern Uganda in the literature. In line with the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PDRP), in this paper we use the Greater North to refer to both Karamoja and Northern Uganda. Northern Uganda refers to the sub-regions of Acholi, Lango, Teso and, to some degree, West Nile (not Karamoja).



suffered and conflict-induced trauma. Some observers feel the inability of populations, and especially young men, to engage in livelihood recovery is a result of ‘relief dependency’ or alcohol usage leading to ‘male idleness’. However, there is also evidence that the destitution borne out of repeated exposure to serious violations, asset loss, land grabbing, landlessness and even loss of family labour as a result of the war is contributing significantly to an inability to adapt and recover fully.

The government acknowledges the need for better access to basic health care, education and water and sanitation, as well as social protection. A National Social Protection Committee has been established as well as a new five-year Expanding Social Protection Programme. However, policies have yet to be translated into practice. For example, social protection programmes are being piloted in only two districts in the Greater North, and are mostly funded by donors. Officials still also fear that social protection efforts will lead to dependency. The government has been creating more districts in the name of basic service delivery, but many suggest that this strategy is linked more to political patronage.

Similarly, while the government’s Health Sector Strategic Investment Plan ‘ensures equitable access to health services’, especially in hard-to-reach areas like Karamoja, in reality inadequate funding is provided at the local level and staffing of health care workers is still below 50 percent in most districts, with many clinics lacking key medicines (EPRC, 2010; Fissaha, 2010). Finally, in Karamoja, government policies such as the impounding of cattle, the nationalisation of key resources and the promotion of sedentarisation, while intended to support development, are in fact undermining household coping capacities for those living in an already harsh semi-arid environment with natural resource scarcity and limited livelihood opportunities.

In terms of data and research, three glaring gaps include: 1) a lack of impact assessment; 2) limited research uptake; 3) and scarce documentation of people’s own initiatives to recover from conflict. While there are many livelihoods interventions, few have been the subjects of rigorous impact assessment. A good deal of data exists on the problems facing the Greater North, but little on what works to build resilient households and communities. Similarly problematic is the fact that, even when there is evidence on what works, this is not always relevant to policymakers or is not used in making policy. For example, while there is ample knowledge on the need for pastoralist mobility in Karamoja, or the advantages of social protection programming, government officials have not yet championed this knowledge. There is also surprising little evidence on people’s own initiatives—in terms of either economic recovery or dealing with other impacts of the conflict. The issue of people’s own initiatives is often reduced to one of ‘coping strategies’.

The post-conflict environment in Uganda’s Greater North provides a rich and conducive environment for further research and assessment of livelihood promotion and basic services and social protection provision. This paper provides some of the background and direction that will be necessary for such research to take place.

# 1 Introduction

For decades, the populations in northern Uganda and Karamoja suffered terrible loss of life and livelihoods through armed conflict and widespread insecurity. This paper synthesises current evidence on how people are recovering their livelihoods and accessing basic services and social protection interventions in the conflict-affected regions of Uganda's Greater North.<sup>2</sup> Its objective is to help pinpoint strategic opportunities for future research on how best to promote improvements in quality of life for conflict-affected populations. It does this by presenting evidence on three fronts.

First, the paper reviews livelihoods in Northern Uganda and Karamoja and the various factors supporting and challenging livelihood recovery. This includes a review of existing responses to support livelihoods on the part of government institutions, aid agencies, local populations and the private sector. Second, it summarises access to basic services and social protection interventions. As with the livelihoods section, this includes a review of existing responses, in this case in support of access to basic services and social protection. Finally, it presents an analysis of the data, evidence and methodologies utilised in the literature reviewed. (See Annex 1 for the original Terms of Reference and Annex 2 for more specific information on the methodology for this review).

The paper is based on a rigorous review of the existing literature on livelihoods and the delivery of basic services and social protection interventions in Uganda. Literature reviewed includes published academic literature such as journal articles, books and periodicals, as well as 'grey' literature, including policy papers, evaluations and other unpublished documents gathered in-country during a stakeholder consultation in May–June 2011. In all, about 184 documents were read, summarised and incorporated into this synthesis.

The Feinstein International Center produced this paper as a member of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), a unique collaboration between a number of leading institutions seeking to improve the response to the world's foremost humanitarian and development challenges. This paper will be complemented by similar papers on other conflict-affected states. Together, this composite body of work will provide critical insights into how best to promote improvements in quality of life for people affected by conflict and related challenges.

It is important to note that, while the conflict-affected areas of Uganda have important contextual variations, given the broad scope and extensive topics the paper covers, in certain instances it presents broad conclusions (which may not be relevant to all areas). In addition, certain sections highlight only specific examples from one sub-region or region, even if there are also examples from other areas.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> There is inconsistent use of the terms for Karamoja and Northern Uganda in the literature. In line with the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PDRP), in this paper we use the Greater North to refer to both Karamoja and Northern Uganda. Northern Uganda refers to the sub-regions of Acholi, Lango, Teso and, to some degree, West Nile (not Karamoja).

<sup>3</sup> Another reason this approach has been taken is in the interests of reducing the paper's length. Additional examples are available from the Feinstein International Center.

## 2 Uganda country context

### 2.1 Social, economic and political context

Uganda is a landlocked country located in eastern Africa which borders Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Tanzania. The country has a population of approximately 33,796,000 and encompasses more than 40 different ethnic groups (UBOS, 2010). The population of Uganda has been doubling approximately every 20 years since 1950, and is currently growing at 3.2 percent per annum, one of the highest growth rates in the world. More than half of the population is under the age of 15 (ibid.) and life expectancy is 50.4 years.

Uganda has seen impressive economic performance over the past two decades, achieving macroeconomic stability and lowering the national poverty rate. Economic growth has been robust, averaging 7 percent per annum over the period (World Bank, 2011). However, Uganda's population growth means that real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is a more modest 3.4 percent (OCHA, 2011).<sup>4</sup> Economic growth and poverty reduction have also been uneven throughout the country, with especially poor progress in areas affected by protracted conflict and insecurity, notably the Greater North of Uganda (Levine, 2009; UBOS, 2010). Rural poverty levels in the north remain at 68 percent (2005/06), and the level has not declined significantly since 1992 (UNDP, 2007a).

Uganda's 2010 composite human development index (0.422) is above the regional African average (0.389). However, according to the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report for Uganda, the country's progress has been particularly slow on several health targets, including those related to child and maternal mortality,<sup>5</sup> access to reproductive health and incidence of malaria and other diseases (MoFPED, 2010). These generally poor health indicators also undermine or at least indicate mixed progress on poverty reduction.

The country is highly dependent on foreign aid, with net official direct assistance (ODA) of \$54.6 (2009) per capita (World Bank, 2011), although there has been a significant drop in donor funding of humanitarian aid. The 2010 mid-term review of the UN-led humanitarian Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) shows only 31 percent of the required \$184,398,188 has been received, with the 'highest priorities (basic services)' receiving less donor attention in dollar and percentage terms despite targeting the biggest number of beneficiaries (OCHA, 2010). This is also a reflection of the changing landscape of donorship in the country, with several donors explicitly or implicitly now preferring to provide project support rather than direct budget support (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

### 2.2 The nature of the conflict

Over the past three decades, Uganda has experienced some of the world's worst and most protracted conflict. Insecurity, in the form of civil war, cattle raiding and armed banditry, has been a major part of millions of people's lives in the Greater North.<sup>6</sup> The following sections focus on the history and consequences of insecurity specifically in Northern Uganda and Karamoja.

#### 2.2.1 Northern Uganda

In Northern Uganda, conflict has led to up to nearly 2 million people being displaced, massive casualties and the loss of access to assets and productive activities for millions. The current war is generally regarded as having starting in 1986, although in some ways it has been a continuation of previous conflicts. Much of the current war has been characterised by a campaign of terror against the

<sup>4</sup> While the expansion in output enabled a decline in the poverty headcount (i.e. the share of people living in households below the poverty line) from 56 percent in 1992/93 to 31 percent in 2005/06, income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient increased from 0.365 in 1992/93 to 0.428 in 2002/03 and dropped only slightly to 0.408 in 2005/06 (MoFPED, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Nationally, maternal and under-five mortality remain high, at 435 per 100,000 live births and 137 per 1,000 live births, respectively, as of 2005/06 (MoFPED, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> It is also important to note, in the early 1980s, the epicentre of conflict had been in the 'Luweero triangle' to the north of Kampala and in West Nile. The conflict shifted to the north after the forces of Yoweri Museveni defeated the military government of Tito Okello in 1986, whose political and military support base was in the north.

civilian population by a rebel group in the North called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), purporting to represent the North's interests and to be fighting for redress of local grievances. However, the LRA has never held widespread support in the North.

Both the LRA and the army of the government of Uganda have been accused by victims of committing serious crimes and resulting violations, which include killing, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, abduction, enforced disappearance, slavery, forced marriage, forced recruitment, mutilation, sexual violence, serious psychological harm, forced displacement and pillaging, looting and destruction of property. Attacks that resulted in these crimes were generally indiscriminate, showing no respect for traditional or international legal norms which, in times of armed conflict, should protect certain groups not directly involved in the fighting (i.e. innocents), such as the elderly, women and children (UHRC/OHCHR, 2011). Researchers estimate that, in the heavily affected sub-region of Acholi, the LRA abducted one-third of male adolescents and one-sixth of female adolescents (Annan et al., 2007).

The war also led to massive displacement. This began in the late 1980s and spiked in the 1990s and particularly in 2002–3 when, as part of its strategy against the LRA, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) forcibly relocated the population to 'protected villages' or internally displaced person (IDP) camps (Lehrer, 2010). By the height of displacement in 2005, nearly 2 million people—approximately 90–95 percent of the population of Acholi, 33 percent of the population of Lango, 200,000 people in Teso and 41,000 in West Nile—had become internally displaced as a result of the conflict. There were over 240 IDP camps during the height of the conflict in the Greater North. IDP households were largely unable to access land for cultivation owing to the threat of attack outside the camps and dense populations within the camps. The residents of IDP camps suffered from 'malnutrition, high mortality rates, low life expectancies, high primary school dropout rates, and early pregnancies and marriages' (ibid.: 5).

Meanwhile, in 2005, mortality rates in Northern Uganda were the highest of any emergency situation in the world, at 1.54 per 10,000 people per day and 3.18 per 10,000 children under the age of five (WHO, 2005).

Following the collapse of the Juba Peace Talks (2006–8) between the government of Uganda and the rebel LRA in Juba, Southern Sudan, the LRA withdrew from Northern Uganda, but it continues committing atrocities in the neighbouring Central African Republic, DRC and Sudan. Although hundreds of thousands of people have returned home, as recently as December 2011 an estimated 30,000 IDPs remained in one of four active camps or in transit centers (UNHCR, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Karamoja**

Insecurity in Karamoja is relatively endemic, characterised mainly by cattle raiding, which has existed in the region for centuries (Knighton, 2003). Raiding is a sociocultural as well as an economic institution, with a variety of underlying motivations.<sup>7</sup> Cattle are key to survival in Karamoja, so there is a constant need to reconstitute herds that are depleted as a result of drought, famine, disease and raiding. This practice serves to redistribute wealth and food within the region and across its porous borders, and to hedge against future ecological uncertainty (Stites and Akabwai, 2009). In addition to serving as a mechanism for maintaining livelihoods, raiding is also a traditional way to acquire the assets needed to pay bridewealth and gain social status (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007; Saferworld, 2010). Today, raiding appears to be increasingly being undertaken for individual economic benefit (Gray, 2000; FEWS NET, 2005). Other forms of violence are also more prevalent, including banditry, petty theft, rape and alcohol abuse (Knighton, 2003; Nangiro, 2005; Odhiambo, 2000).

Traditionally, men and boys were the most common targets of attack, as they are responsible for the community's livestock (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007). However, these new sorts of attacks are increasingly targeted at households and non-livestock assets. The most vulnerable populations are typically women, children and the elderly, given their limited protection capacities. Women are particularly susceptible to attack when they travel outside of the village to forage for food, collect water and gather natural resources to sell (Stites and Akabwai, 2009; UNFPA, 2009). The distribution and full impact of pastoral

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<sup>7</sup> In addition to those listed here, researchers from Saferworld found the following motivations for cattle raiding: pride, revenge, paying off debts, social pressure (particularly from women) and hunger (Saferworld, 2010).

violence is difficult to measure empirically, owing to the mobility of local populations, a dearth of media coverage of remote areas and a lack of monitoring by security forces (Bevan, 2007).

Violent conflict appears to have expanded in recent decades in terms of both scope and intensity. As a result, civilian populations are experiencing limitations on mobility, threats to livelihoods and loss of assets. This is attributable in part to the rapid increase in the number of small arms and light weapons available in the region as a result of illicit cross-border trade, particularly since 1979 (Stites et al., 2007a). Small arms are prolific, as a consequence of porous borders, limited regulation and extensive conflict elsewhere in the region. While it is difficult to make accurate estimates, one projection in 2008 was that there were between 30,000 and 160,000 illegal arms in Karamoja (Mkutu, 2008).<sup>8</sup>

According to some researchers, the possession of weapons is now the main determinant of authority, rather than age or social status (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007; Mirzeler and Young, 2000). Guns are considered both offensive and defensive instruments. Some argue that they are a rational feature of pastoral life in that they help secure both cattle and the limited resources necessary to maintain them, particularly given the lack of alternative support for pastoralist livelihoods (HRW, 2007).

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<sup>8</sup> Estimates vary dramatically based on their source. On the lower side, 30,000 guns were estimated to be present in the region in 2006 (Development Research and Training, 2008). On the higher side, over 100,000 illegal arms were estimated to present in Karamoja in 2000 (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007). Knighton (2003) quotes reports from IGAD that there are as many as 5 million unregulated guns across the wider Horn of Africa. All these figures come from before the most recent disarmament programme, but trends of insecurity remain.

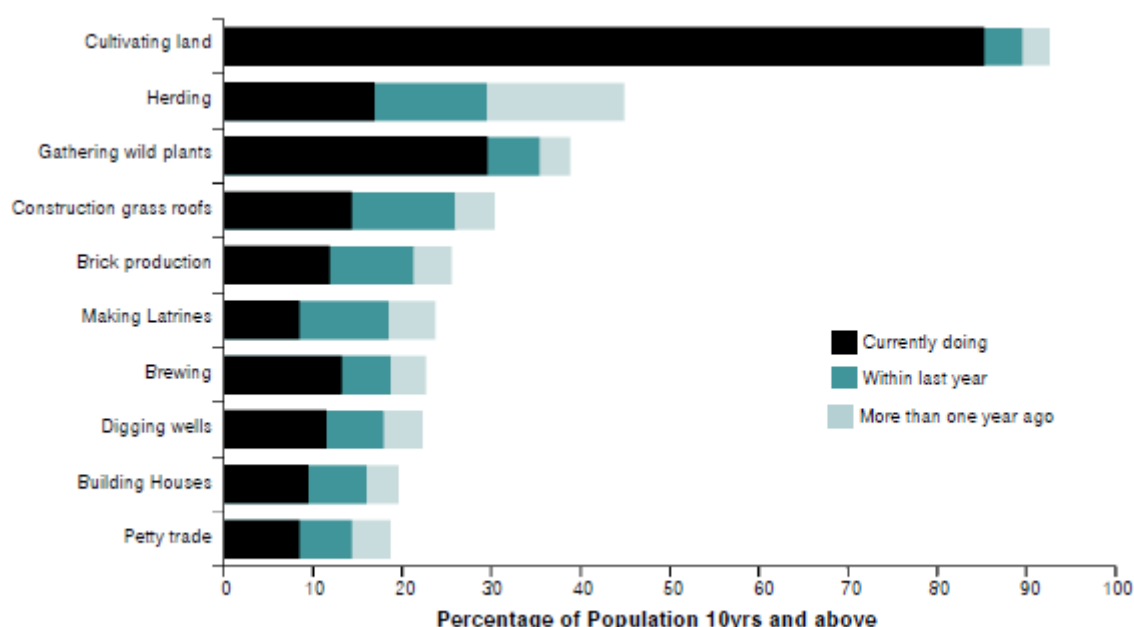
# 3 Livelihoods and growth

## 3.1 Livelihoods overview

### 3.1.1 Northern Uganda

For decades, the primary livelihood activity in Northern Uganda was agriculture over two planting seasons.<sup>9</sup> According to the 2002/03 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS), dependence on agriculture as a main source of livelihood in the Northern Region was 80 percent, compared with a national figure of 70.3 percent (Abuka et al., 2007). This included the livelihoods of displaced households, and those surveyed included IDPs in camps. Employment revenue, which is the second most important source of income at the national level, is only 7.2 percent in the Northern Region compared with 22.8 percent in the Central Region of Uganda (Abuka et al. 2007). However, most people tend to rely for sustenance and income on land cultivation and herding; additional livelihood strategies are also undertaken, as shown in Figure 1 (which includes livelihoods among both returnees and IDPs).

**Figure 1: Activities in Northern Uganda (percent of population 10 years and older)**



Source: UNDP (2007b)

In addition to farming and herding, more households (and especially women within households) are now working outside of the home and participating in the labour market. For example, prior to the conflict, Acholi and Langi societies gave men control over land, livestock, income generation and household spending decisions. Women's work included cooking, fetching water and firewood, child care, gardening, caring for small livestock and other domestic chores. The main assets of a household were its cattle, other livestock and land. By the early 1990s, to illustrate, these assets had disappeared, as 98 percent of the cattle and large amounts of other livestock in Acholi had been stolen or killed. Given the tenuousness of livelihoods, many more women began to work outside the home for the first time (Carlson and Mazurana, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Staple crops for the region are primarily millet and sorghum, although prior to the conflict farmers also grew a variety of crops for consumption, including maize, sweet potatoes, cassava, peas, beans, sesame, groundnuts, squash and various vegetables (UNDPb, 2007). Fruits such as mangoes and pineapples were grown to be sold, and cash crops such as tobacco, cotton, sugarcane and rice were also cultivated.

One recent study found that 71 percent of women and 72 percent of men now participate in some form of labour market (Lehrer, 2010). Farming is still the primary livelihood activity for both men and women, but casual employment is highly gendered (ibid.). Women engage in casual employment activities such as brewing, selling food and collecting and selling firewood, whereas men work in brick making, security services, handicrafts, burning charcoal and collecting firewood. In addition, even women working outside the home are also still responsible for most domestic tasks (ibid.).

Another recent study (Bozzoli et al., 2011) determined that households remaining in IDP camps were more likely to engage in cultivation and trading activities than returnee households, while they are less likely to diversify livelihood activities. The findings of this study demonstrate that displaced households strive to increase self-reliance which, as the authors suggest, refutes a common assumption that IDPs seek exclusively to ensure physical survival and are dependent on relief assistance to access basic necessities. Instead, Bozzoli et al. contend that households living in IDP camps seek to enhance their livelihoods, which demonstrates the importance of and need for livelihood support and recovery interventions for households still in displacement. Such programmes would help supplement relief assistance and facilitate the process of livelihood recovery (ibid.).

### 3.1.2 Karamoja

Policymakers classify Karamoja into three distinct livelihood zones: pastoral, agro-pastoral, and agricultural.<sup>10</sup> The majority of Karamojong pursue a blended, dual subsistence strategy, meaning they combine livestock management and opportunistic cultivation (Gray et al., 2002), along with a diversity of activities including foraging, casual labour and seasonal migration.

**Table 1: Karamojong livelihood activities**

Livelihood activity	% of households	National average (%)
Agriculture	60.9	78.1
Unskilled wage labour	40.2	33.8
Livestock management	25.6	16.4
Brewing	18.9	6.1
Commercial activity	3.9	5.6
Petty trading	3.3	11.6
Wage labour	3.2	7.2
Skilled labour	0.3	4.7

Source: McKinney (2009)

Traditionally, Karamojong social and economic life is structured around the maintenance of livestock. Cattle are households' most important assets, followed by sheep, goats and poultry.<sup>11</sup> These animals are a critical source of food, but are also maintained as a safety net, a means of social exchange and a form of investment (Stites, 2010). For many traditional pastoral communities, raising livestock allows pastoral communities to take advantage of the land's low primary productivity in an efficient manner.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> More specifically, Karamoja's agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihood zones include the Karamoja Livestock, Sorghum and Bulrush Millet zone; the Central and Southern Karamoja Pastoral zone and the Northeast Karamoja Pastoral zone. Agriculture-based livelihood zones include the Eastern Lowland Maize, Beans and Rice zone; the South Kitgum-Pader-West Karamoja Simsim, Groundnut, Sorghum and Livestock zone; and the Northeast Sorghum, Simsim, Maize and Livestock zone. For more information, see Browne and Glaeser (2010).

<sup>11</sup> In Abim sub-county, some communities also raise camels, although these are uncommon elsewhere in the region.

<sup>12</sup> Milk is the most utilised animal protein by all age groups. The consumption of meat is relatively uncommon, except for ceremonial purposes or after an animal has died from natural causes. When necessary to supplement human diets, the livestock are bled.

Today, compared with other pastoralist groups in East Africa, the Karamojong engage in greater levels of cultivation and have taken on a more agro-pastoral livelihood (Gray et al., 2002). The degree to which households depend on own production of agricultural goods varies based on environmental conditions, the quantity and quality of livestock possessed and proximity to markets, among other factors.

Some Karamojong today also engage in different forms of casual labour in urban and peri-urban areas. Young people seek these opportunities more than other age groups, and types of work normally differ by gender. Young men tend to serve as casual labourers, for instance transporting water or making bricks. Women usually take on more domestic tasks, such as washing clothes, cleaning houses, cooking or fetching water (Nalule, 2010; Stites et al., 2007a). The revenue generated from the sorts of activities listed above allows individuals and households to acquire—through barter or purchase—supplemental foodstuffs, such as maize, sugar and oil, in an otherwise limited diet (Dyson-Hudson, 1989).

### **3.2 Factors supporting livelihood adaptation and recovery**

Following the years of conflict and insecurity that populations in Northern Uganda and Karamoja have endured, livelihood adaptation and recovery continues to be a challenging and ongoing endeavour. The literature pinpoints several factors that are facilitating more resilient livelihoods. While many of these also have negative consequences, which are listed in Section 3.3, their positive aspects highlight conditions for livelihood recovery worth exploring.

It is important to note that the factors and the corresponding examples listed below are intended as indicative, and not as comprehensive or universally applicable throughout the Greater North. Conversely, in some instances, only an example from Northern Uganda or Karamoja is highlighted, despite the factor being present in both regions.

Return has been slow, and accomplished in stages. Given the challenges faced in restarting livelihoods in areas of origin, one strategy that has helped with livelihood recovery in Northern Uganda is the dividing of household members. During the initial period of return of IDPs to their area of origin, families often staggered when members left the camps, with men and older children tending to leave first. This meant they could begin preparing the homestead and cultivating. Women, the elderly and younger children remained in the camps and returned when more livelihood opportunities were available (UNDP, 2007b).

Women's participation in economic activities is increasing in Northern Uganda. The combined effects of urbanisation and the presence of international organisations have led to an increase in women's participation in business. Following the conflict, for example, many displaced Acholi populations moved to Gulu town, where they can join women's groups which have supported them with greater economic and social freedom; some educated women have had the opportunity to work with international organisations. Many women have gained access to loans and become owners of buildings, land and their own businesses (Branch, 2008). According to a female interviewee and local leader, it would never have been possible for her to be in her current position before war and displacement; attending trainings on human rights from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) helped her gain her leadership role in a local organisation (ibid.). In general, many women have now become the main income earners in their families.

However, despite positive progress in terms of women's empowerment in post-war Northern Uganda, many challenges remain, including lack of access to assets and capital combined with tedious/bureaucratic processes involved in setting up the contracts necessary to allow women to capitalise on these positive developments (International Alert, 2008). However, one interesting finding in Annan et al. (2008) is the importance of agricultural recovery interventions as opposed to the more standard approach of vocational training and small enterprise development: the authors show that the latter interventions provide limited benefits and are unable to substitute for traditional livelihoods support.

Market access is improving in Karamoja, and empirical studies have found that improved market access and market conditions can play an important role in reducing vulnerability and helping livelihoods recover. Currently, in Karamoja region, there is a great deal of opportunity for the expansion



of marketing schemes for locally produced livestock and agricultural goods, as well as minerals and other natural resources both within Uganda and across the wider region (FAO, 2010).

Cross-border trade between Northern Uganda and South Sudan is increasing. After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in Sudan in 2005, ending the country's civil war, cross-border trade between Uganda and Sudan increased from a value of \$7.9 million in 2006 to \$8.6 million in 2007 (Carrington, 2009). As trade has increased, so too has the number of banks and businesses expanding into Northern Uganda. Victoria Seeds Ltd, for example, has started a processing and packaging plant for both in-country and cross-border trade (ibid.).<sup>13</sup>

Private sector investment is increasing in the entire Greater North. There is considerable interest and opportunity in increasing such investment in resource exploitation, particularly in products such as aloe vera, tamarind, gum, gold, limestone and marble (de Koning, 2003; Ondoga, 2010; Vaughan and Stewart, 2011). For example, gum arabic and aloe exports from Uganda have both been certified as meeting international standards in Europe and the US (Ondoga, 2010). Also, marble and limestone mined in Moroto district in Karamoja are readily sold to the Tororo cement factory (de Koning, 2003; Ondoga, 2010). The extent to which cash cropping has increased is not as well documented.

### 3.3 Factors challenging livelihood adaptation and recovery

Unfortunately, the challenges to livelihood recovery in both Karamoja and Northern Uganda still outweigh the advances. Below is a review of some of these challenging factors. As above, most factors list only an example from Northern Uganda or one from Karamoja, even if they are often being present in both regions.

Conflict has resulted in widespread asset depletion across the entire Greater North. While the majority of IDP camp inhabitants in Northern Uganda have returned to their area of origin, restarting livelihoods has been difficult. In Northern Uganda, 30–90 percent of the population was displaced, in most cases for decades. The length of displacement means households now have a dearth of assets. Martin et al. (2009) found that the principal determinant of recovery was availability of household labour, skills and assets. Food production was inhibited by a lack of inputs and labour and food aid was identified as essential to resettlement, as it enabled households to survive while restarting their lives and livelihoods (ibid.).

Similarly, in Karamoja, the displacement and loss of livestock as a result of drought, distress sales, widespread disease, the military's protected kraal system, insecurity, etc., has reduced livestock numbers and access (Stites, 2010). It may take households and their herds' years to recover from asset loss on this scale. One of the primary changes reflected in Karamojong livelihoods is that many households are moving away from livestock-based production systems, and now engaging in higher rates of destocking, primarily through distress sales and slaughter.<sup>14</sup> Traditionally, households would decrease livestock holdings on a temporary basis in order to obtain needed income or commodities, reduce the pressure on pasture during times of drought or reduce expenses around livestock management (Levine, 2010). Livestock sold today are generally in poor condition (as a result of famine, drought and disease), which means they bring lower prices at market and represent a loss of household assets (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson, 1999). Also, the majority of animals sold are transferred to outside merchants and lost to the local pastoral system entirely, rather than distributed within the region (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007; Matthysen et al., 2010).<sup>15</sup>

While the prevalence and severity of poverty has decreased in Northern Uganda, much of the poverty that remains is chronic, defined as 'poverty where individuals, households or regions are trapped in severe and multi-dimensional poverty for an extended period of time (several years or a lifetime), and

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<sup>13</sup> There are also many negative impacts of this, including the proliferation of commercial sex, high demand from the Sudanese market that contributes to drastic increases in food prices in the region and the ready flow of weapons across the border from Kenya and South Sudan (Carrington, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Note that this practice should be considered distinct from humanitarian and development interventions aimed at commercial destocking, wherein external agencies or national governments purchase livestock from local producers so as to reduce the burden on land and infuse an economy with cash (see Watson and Catley, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Raided animals are also often sold quickly out of the region.

where poverty is linked with intergenerational transmission' (Lwanga-Ntale, 2006a). Similarly, Karamoja's low levels of human development and high incidence of food insecurity also lead to large-scale poverty. Karamoja is acutely underdeveloped, and the region lacks physical infrastructure, education and health facilities and employment opportunities (Development Research and Training, 2008). Today, 82 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (in comparison with 31 percent nationally), the maternal mortality rate is 750 deaths per 100,000 live births (compared with 435 nationally) and the literacy rate is only 11 percent (compared with 73 percent nationally) (Saferworld, 2010; UBOS, 2010; World Bank, 2011). Karamoja is also by far the most food-insecure region in Uganda.

Panel data from some household surveys show that a driver of chronic poverty in Uganda is large household size and, specifically (and surprisingly), that an increase in the number of adult male earners in a household is actually associated with a household moving towards poverty. One claim is that 'adult male earners are more likely to spend a greater proportion of their consumption of expenditure on "demerit" goods such as alcoholic beverages and tobacco' (Ssewanyana, 2009: 20). Abuka et al. (2007) used logistic regression based on data from the 2002/03 Uganda National Household Budget Survey to show that an increase of one person in the household increased the likelihood of being poor by up to 17 percent. Overall, average household size in Uganda is 6 people, but there is a great deal of variety within the country (McKinney, 2009). This finding is at odds with similar studies from other countries, but has been influential in Uganda (see below on the targeting of social protection programmes).

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS also continues to be a challenge. Although Uganda has made monumental strides in decreasing the prevalence of the disease, since 2006 there has been a slight increase again. Some experts attribute this to the introduction of HIV drugs leading to complacency; in addition, many have speculated that Uganda's shift in prevention policy away from 'abstinence, being faithful and using a condom' (ABC) towards US-backed abstinence-only programmes may also be responsible for an increase in risky behaviour, as comprehensive sex education and condom promotion are no longer mainstream. Current HIV prevalence in Uganda is estimated at 6.5 percent among adults and 0.7 percent among children. Women are disproportionately affected, accounting for 57 percent of all adults living with HIV. Overall, AIDS has reduced the country's labour force, reduced agricultural output and food security and weakened educational and health services. The large number of AIDS-related deaths among young adults has left behind over a million orphaned children.<sup>16</sup>

While the security situation in Northern Uganda has improved, other sources of insecurity remain and hinder the development of livelihoods, markets and basic services. In addition, as noted above, Karamoja continues to suffer from insecurity, especially because of cattle raiding and the proliferation of weapons. It is also the only region where military escorts are required for UN convoys (OCHA, 2011). Raiding undermines local livelihoods (through the loss of assets and limitations on mobility) and discourages development and investment in the region. With regard to the two most common causes of insecurity in Lango and Acholi, land conflict is identified as a source of insecurity in 62 percent of sub-counties and cattle raiding in only 17 percent, whereas in Karamoja, cattle rustling is noted in 63 percent of sub-counties and land conflicts in only 13 percent (OPM, 2007).

Across the Greater North, alcoholism seems to be one significant outcome of the protracted conflict. Uganda holds the unenviable distinction of having the highest per capita consumption of alcohol in the world (out of the 185 countries included in the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004). Some 40 percent of men and 20 percent of women are considered heavy drinkers—consuming 40 g per day of pure alcohol for men and 20 g per day for women (ibid.). The primary effects of alcohol abuse include lower productivity, risky sexual behaviour, domestic violence, injuries and accidents, petty crime and violence. Alcohol abuse can also impair households' ability to maintain their livelihood and health and to educate their children. Similarly, in Karamoja, a number of researchers agree that widespread alcohol abuse is a factor contributing to intra-tribal violence (Gray, 2000; Knighton, 2003; Odhiambo, 2000), and that it is becoming increasingly common among Karamojong urban migrants (Development Research and Training, 2008; Stites et al., 2007b). As Adoko and Levine

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<sup>16</sup> [www.avert.org/aids-uganda.htm](http://www.avert.org/aids-uganda.htm).

(2004) write, prior to being displaced, men would generally only drink after completing a day's work. However, once living in an IDP camp, they fell into the habit of drinking rather than working. Meanwhile, although alcohol is clearly a destructive force for livelihood recovery, it must also be acknowledged that brewing is a core livelihood for many women, with almost 19 percent of households in Karamoja relying on brewing as a main livelihood activity (McKinney, 2009).

Some of the greatest challenges to livelihood recovery relate to land, and in particular lack of land ownership, inheritance issues, land disputes and poor land policies. For example:

- **Land ownership:** In Northern Uganda, access to land and security of such access are critical to livelihood security, as most households earn their income from cultivation. In 2007, it was estimated that, for all households, including returned households and those still living in camps, about 15 percent of female-headed households and 13 percent of male-headed households had no rights to any land, whether inherited, rented or otherwise accessed (UNDP, 2007b). In Karamoja, the government has established policies that do not give communities rights over the land and its resources (Mirzeler and Young, 2000). These policies cover the creation of game and forest reserves, the establishment of national and district borders, the expansion of private land ownership and restrictions on the movement of herds across district borders and on land sales to outsiders. Traditionally, land and other resources are managed communally in Karamoja, under the protection and guidance of elders (Stites et al., 2010). Since independence, however, the government has set aside 36 percent of Karamoja's total land area for land and wildlife reserves (Gackle et al., 2006), and nationalised mineral-rich areas in order to grant extraction rights to private companies (de Koning, 2003).
- **Inheritance:** In Northern Uganda, the rights of women and children to inherit land have become an urgent issue given the increase in the number of women-headed households as a result of the conflict. Under the law, women are able to inherit land, but customary law practices make this difficult.<sup>17</sup> It has also been noted that women who were abducted by the LRA and who are now returning have an especially difficult time in securing land (Dennis and Fentiman, 2007), as do women whose husbands were killed during the war, and children who became orphans due to the war.
- **Land conflicts:** Land conflicts especially related to boundary issues<sup>18</sup> are affecting livelihood recovery in Northern Uganda. According to a recent survey, land disputes are the most common (63 percent of all disputes) and the most intractable, with less than half of the disputes over land (48 percent) resolved at the time of study (Pham and Vinck, 2010). There is agreement in the literature that the confluence of massive IDP return rates, especially in Acholi, weak conflict resolution mechanisms and growing commercial interests (discussed elsewhere in this paper) are the main drivers of the recent increase in land-related conflict.<sup>19</sup>

There is limited access to markets across the Greater North. Proximity to markets has proven to be a major factor in maintaining livelihood security: one study in Uganda shows that the proximity of two or more markets within 5 km of a village reduces the likelihood of poverty by 31 percent (Abuka et al., 2007). However, in both Karamoja and Northern Uganda, there remains limited market access, particularly because of poor transportation infrastructure and high transaction costs, as well as insecurity. According to a 2009 survey, there are no more than 2.5 km of paved roads across the whole of the Karamoja region (the size of Belgium) (Matthysen et al., 2010). In Northern Uganda, paved road density is 3 m per km<sup>2</sup>, compared with an average of 15 m per km<sup>2</sup> in other regions (LeBlanc et al., 2009).

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<sup>17</sup> Traditionally, under customary law, men owned the land but women had usage rights. A woman could use her parents' land before marriage and then her husband's after marriage. In the event of the husband's death, the wife was allowed to continue to use the land and give it to her children, but if she remarried all rights to the land were abdicated (Cooper, 2011). Some NGOs are pushing for reform of statutory inheritance laws, but this process is arduous in Uganda, particularly when proposed reforms run contrary to customary practices—and some 80 percent of land in Uganda falls under customary law systems (ibid.). Most Ugandans experience legal dualism—they operate under both statutory and customary law, which can be in tension with each other. While statutory law reform is seen as critical to establishing inheritance rights for all, most areas in Northern Uganda continue customary practices.

<sup>18</sup> There has been great concern among returnees regarding boundary pushing and land grabbing (Cooper, 2011), with boundaries often demarcated using natural landmarks that may no longer be in place.

<sup>19</sup> In Acholi, disputes have been found to be higher (28 percent) before displacement, to have decreased (17 percent) during displacement and to have risen steadily (25 percent) at the start of IDP return (World Bank, 2009).

Post-conflict Northern Uganda now has a much younger population. The median age for females is 14 years and for males 13. Currently, women and girls head 23 percent of households in the region, and 18 percent of women aged 30–49 are widows—two times the rate of the rest of the country (UNDP, 2007b). This is linked to the fact that a significant proportion of men aged 20–34 are missing as a result of conflict, displacement, urban migration, etc. Many young people have little memory of living outside of camps or following a traditional rural lifestyle. There is a perception that many youth may not have a realistic understanding of the difficulties associated with farming, and there will be difficult adjustments to the lack of various forms of entertainment that are prevalent in camps but non-existent in areas of origin (ibid.).

A major detriment to livelihood recovery in Northern Uganda includes the social dynamic that many women have simultaneously experienced both war-related and domestic violence. Many abducted women have a difficult time reintegrating into communities. Although many girls are welcomed back by their family and community, girls often experience rejection, insults or intimidation, in particular those who fought in the conflict or those who had children while abducted (Annan et al., 2006; Dennis and Fentiman, 2007).<sup>20</sup>

An important consequence of displacement is that men's participation in labour activities decreased the longer they were in camps: over time, a culture of 'male idleness' developed. Even after controlling for other factors, such as conflict intensity, work opportunities and individual and household characteristics, Lehrer (2010) finds that 'a one percent increase in length of time in a camp leads to a 3 percent decrease in the probability that a man worked in the previous 7 days and to a 2 percent decrease in the probability that he worked in the previous 30 days'. Male idleness in IDP camps has also been correlated with a lack of opportunities for men to fulfil their traditional responsibilities, high levels of alcohol consumption and domestic violence (Adoko and Levine, 2004).

A key factor hindering livelihood recovery relates to the psychosocial effects of mass violent conflict. Bozzoli et al. (2010) found that recent exposure to conflict was correlated with individual pessimism about future well-being. Youth were found to be less optimistic because of having spent most of their lives in camps, which has limited their exposure to opportunities that help foster a sense of meaningfulness. In addition, among individuals older than 50, pessimism is related to the trauma caused by the loss of assets and livelihoods and the feeling that they have limited time left for recovery. The authors found that rehabilitation programmes could help individuals adapt to the legacy of conflict, by assisting households to accumulate assets while enhancing their future orientation. Similarly, Blattman and Annan (2008) suggest that a shift is required in post-conflict reintegration programming in Northern Uganda. Most NGOs' reintegration programming has focused on reuniting families and minimising psychological trauma through the provision of psychosocial care. Blattman and Annan argue that, based on current evidence, psychosocial programmes should target individuals with the highest levels of psychological distress, whereas disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) should focus principally on providing large-scale support to education and broad-based economic programmes.

As in Northern Uganda, continued insecurity and the prevalence of arms is a major factor inhibiting livelihood recovery in Karamoja. The government has sought to control the trade in illicit weapons in the areas since the colonial era. The current disarmament effort was initiated in 2001–2, re-established in 2004 and expanded in 2006 and continues today, and the military has pursued both voluntary and forcible measures to encourage the Karamojong to give up their weapons. However, the policy remains highly controversial. In particular, despite reducing the number of weapons in the region by 70 percent in recent years (Vaughan and Stewart, 2011), the unequal nature of the current disarmament campaign has actually increased the vulnerability of some communities in Karamoja (Stites and Akabwai, 2009). This is because communities are left without means of self-protection against neighbouring groups that still have their weapons. Further, even with troops on the ground, security institutions across Karamoja

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<sup>20</sup> While some Acholi leaders state that returned forced wives often want to continue their 'marriages', Carlson and Mazurana (2008) find no evidence to support this claim, rather that 'no forced wives reported that they currently live with their captor husbands and nearly all former forced wives reported that it is best that they remain separated' (8).

remain weak or non-existent.<sup>21</sup> While the government argues troops are on the ground to enhance security, reports by human rights organisations and academic researchers show there is still widespread insecurity at the community level, and in some instances the military has been implicated in human rights abuses (HRW, 2007; Saferworld, 2010).

Various other government-sponsored efforts have also been put in place to mitigate insecurity. These include livestock branding campaigns, amnesty deals for raiders, community sensitisation programmes, construction projects, sponsorship of local militias, punishment of local officials for failing to limit raiding and, most importantly, impounding cattle in so-called 'protected kraals,'; all have been similarly ineffective (Mkutu, 2008). This latter initiative seeks to temporarily protect livestock through housing them near military barracks. While the practice officially ceased in 2009, many cattle remain under the management of military personnel rather than with their proper owners (Stites, 2010). As of June 2009, an estimated 38 such protected kraals were in existence across Karamoja (OCHA, 2009).<sup>22</sup> This practice is particularly controversial: critiques are that soldiers lack the knowledge and skills required for livestock management; and the high concentration of animals and their limited mobility stress the surrounding land, decrease water and fodder resources and render the animals vulnerable to disease and hunger. The system also limits the mobility of local populations, facilitating sedentarisation during times of year and in places where it is not feasible; it limits the time and resources soldiers can devote to other responsibilities; and, finally, some soldiers have reportedly engaged in the illicit sale of pastoralists' cattle to outside merchants for their own benefit (Matthysen et al., 2010; Saferworld, 2010; Stites, 2010; Vaughan and Stewart, 2011). Indeed, as Stites (2010) argues, the practice of impounding cattle is not an ideal situation: essentially, the government was choosing to protect livelihood assets instead of humans.

The national government and traditional authority structures exist distinct from one another, and show mutual distrust (Matthysen et al., 2010). At the community level, formal government structures are limited to the mobilisation of vaccination campaigns, food distributions and elections (FEWS NET, 2005). Local and traditional authorities, particularly male elders, are responsible for decision making around resource management, mobility and migration, administration of justice and dispute resolution (Stites et al., 2007a; 2010). It is rare that these parallel governance structures interact cooperatively. In addition, local governments rarely have the financial means to address service delivery gaps in their areas.<sup>23</sup>

Increasingly, the effects of climate, population displacement, population growth, restrictions on mobility owing to government pressure and environmental degradation are exacerbating competition over resources such as land, water, food and fodder across Uganda's more arid regions, especially Karamoja. Local natural resource management systems have long existed, but these institutions have eroded in recent years as a result of increased conflict and environmental change (FEWS NET, 2005). Threats to the environment are visible, including the overgrazing of pasture, a reduction in soil quality, the overburdening of water resources, a loss of biodiversity and the depletion of wild foods, animal forage, firewood and construction materials (Kagan et al., 2009).

The indigenous livestock breeds that make up the majority of stock in Karamoja provide low yields of meat and milk, particularly when compared with exotic breeds (Bunoti, 1996). In addition, the scarcity of water and fodder resources, as well as the lack of available veterinary services, constrains livestock production. The weakness of the national extension system for both livestock health and agriculture means that techniques and technologies to improve productivity are underutilised (Vaughan and Stewart, 2011).

In Karamoja, there has been a marked shift from own production to market purchase. The Karamojong are acquiring more of their basic food needs through market purchase. The shift is fundamentally

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<sup>21</sup> According to Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2007), in 2006 there were only 137 policemen in all of Karamoja; Saferworld (2010) reports no policewomen. Based on population estimates from the time, the ratio of police to civilians was 1:7,300. This is well below the national average of 1:1,800 and the UN standard of 1:450 (HRW, 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Eight in Kaabong, seven in Kotido, nine in Moroto and fourteen in Nakapiripirit districts (OCHA, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> According to Matthysen et al. (2010), 'a Ugandan governmental report admits the allocation of financial means to local governments currently happens mostly in disregard of expenditure needs to address underdevelopment and poverty' (6).

changing Karamoja's economy, and may be increasing vulnerability (Stites, 2010); in particular, the Karamojong are more susceptible to market fluctuations. In recent years, the prices of basic staple commodities throughout East Africa has risen significantly as a result of higher fuel prices and poor harvests region-wide (Development Research and Training, 2008; WFP, 2009).

### 3.4 Overview of livelihood interventions

While the factors and trends listed above help highlight some of the advances and obstacles faced in livelihood recovery, it is crucial to review the formal livelihood interventions (and if possible their impact) that exist in order to be able to assess what is needed to improve the lives of conflict-affected populations.

The literature shows that, while there are numerous formal livelihood programmes in Uganda, run by the government and aid agencies in particular, there is presently more of a livelihoods focus in Karamoja than in Northern Uganda. This could be linked to the perceived return to 'normalcy' in Northern Uganda following the end of active conflict (even though it is acknowledged that livelihoods are still far from secure) within the region, whereas Karamoja is still thought to be very fragile in food security. In addition, there is increased donor support and government focus in Karamoja at present, especially as there is a government move away from food aid towards livelihood-style interventions (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

#### 3.4.1 Government-led interventions

On a structural level, a number of government bodies and institutions have been established to support livelihood recovery in Karamoja and Northern Uganda by encouraging greater development, peace building and poverty reduction. The most prominent include the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP) and the National Development Plan (NDP). The NDP is the overall national planning framework and specifically highlights the livelihood recovery needs of both Northern Uganda and Karamoja. In addition, there are the Karamoja Development Agency (KDA), the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), the Karamoja Action Plan for Food Security (KAPFS) and the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA). A dedicated Ministry for Karamoja Affairs was established in 1998 (Development Research and Training, 2008; Silkin and Kasirye, 2002).

In terms of promoting food security in Northern Uganda and Karamoja, the government also runs numerous interventions. Most prominent are the European Union (EU)-funded Karamoja Livelihoods Improvement Programme (KALIP), which mainly supports livelihoods production in Karamoja for agro-pastoralists, and the Agricultural Livelihoods Rehabilitation Programme (ALREP), which is supporting livelihoods production in the other conflict-affected areas of Northern Uganda and North-eastern Uganda.<sup>24</sup> These interventions include initiatives such as the development of farmer and agro-pastoral field schools; the provision of improved tools and equipment for opening land to increase yields and promote efficiency; and the training and transfer of agricultural practices to increase production. Few of these government programmes have been assessed rigorously, so information about impact is scarce.

The most comprehensive and important government intervention in the Karamoja region is the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP), which aims to promote peace and stability by disarming the local population, supporting alternative livelihoods, providing basic social services and establishing law and order. However, it is important to note that the main focus is disarmament, not development, and also that numerous challenges and negative consequences are associated with the programme, as noted in Section 3.3.

Of great importance are government policies that promote the perception that pastoralist livelihoods are not economically viable or a valuable contribution to the Ugandan economy. Some state-led development efforts have undermined traditional livelihoods through the promotion of ranching, the nationalisation of key resources, forced destocking and privatisation of rangelands (FEWS NET, 2005;

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<sup>24</sup> Both programmes are a continuation of the Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme (NUREP), which was supporting livelihoods rehabilitation in the LRA-affected regions under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) with support from the EU.

Nangiro, 2005). The Minister of State for Karamoja Affairs, Janet Museveni, wrote the following in a policy response note:

We know that the dangers of pastoralism outweigh its benefits, and Karamoja is a perfect testimony of that. The people suffer endlessly, generation after generation, because they are depending on old methods of work and their knowledge is never informed by any input from elsewhere [...] For this reason, we in Government cannot romanticize about nomadism as a way of life, because it is a danger we have to fight like we fight all other social ills (Museveni, 2010: 3).

While being a worthwhile objective, many observers believe the intensification of agriculture in Karamoja will in fact reduce the likelihood of achieving sustainable livelihoods and a reduction in poverty. Many bilateral donors have major concerns over the minister's statements and note that these policies lack balance. Many experts believe the greater sedentarisation of populations as a result of these interventions is incompatible with traditional rangeland management and will only increase vulnerability (de Koning, 2003; Gray, 2000; Gray et al., 2002; Levine, 2010; Stites and Akabwai, 2009; Walker, 2002). As Levine (2010) points out, it is the balance between animals and cultivation that allows for a reduction in vulnerability in these areas, and you cannot adjust one part of this system without ruining the other. This issue of settling people on dry season grazing areas (as much of the so-called 'greenbelt' is) has serious long-term implications for not only the livelihoods of pastoral and agro-pastoral populations but also inter- and intra-group conflict.

Government interventions that do support pastoralism are livestock extension services, provided through the development of community animal health workers. Yet these personnel are poorly supported at the national and regional levels (Vaughan and Stewart, 2011). Karamoja is the only region to have these services, which were put in place as an emergency response in the 1990s. Additionally, while a National Livestock Productivity Improvement Project (NLPPI) was in place from 2005 to 2010, few projects to improve livestock health, nutrition and reproduction were undertaken (Development Research and Training, 2008).

### **3.4.2 People-led interventions**

While there is a growing evidence base on how people maintain their own livelihoods in conflict areas, there are few documented examples of formally organised 'people-led' interventions (community cooperatives, etc.). Rather, the focus is on common response strategies to deal with disruptions to livelihoods and less on how they recover livelihoods (EC et al., 2009; FAO, 2010; FAO and ECHO, 2010; Levine, 2010).

The recent UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-guided Durable Solutions Assessment (DSA) in Acholi is in the process of outlining household coping strategies, although a final product has not yet been released. In Karamoja, people have also adopted a number of strategies. The following table attempts to summarise the majority of these.

**Table 2: Livelihood zones in Karamoja**

Livelihood	Hazards	Common household responses and coping strategies
<b>Pastoral Livelihood zone</b>	Insecurity/cattle raids/asset stripping, livestock diseases, climatic variability, human diseases (especially malaria), crop pests/diseases, restrictions on mobility and wild animals	Switching/reduced expenditure, increased sale of natural resources, human/animal mobility, <sup>25</sup> labour migration, mixed stocking, increased livestock sales, increased reliance on agriculture as medium- to long-term strategy, increased consumption of wild foods, increased destocking, collective or group herding, group movement to markets, vaccinations
<b>Agro-pastoral Livelihood zone</b>	Insecurity/cattle raids/asset stripping, livestock diseases and crop pests/diseases	Switching expenditure, sale of natural resources, human/animal mobility, labour migration, settlement, mixed stocking, collective or group herding, increased livestock sales, treatment of livestock diseases, greater reliance on crop production, consumption of wild foods, group movement to markets, vaccinations
<b>Agricultural Livelihood zone</b>	Insecurity/asset stripping, livestock diseases, crop pests/diseases, prolonged drought, flooding and weeds	Cultivation, collective or group herding, group movement to markets, vaccinations, receiving farming inputs from government and development partners, pig raising as an alternative, apiculture and aquaculture, casual labour, increased sale of natural resources, labour migration, livestock sales, increased consumption of wild foods

Sources: FAO and ECHO (2010); FEWS NET (2010a/b); Levine (2010).

### 3.4.3 Agency-led interventions

Aid-agency led interventions are the most documented in the literature. They include both large-scale programmes (including food aid) and specific interventions to address a focused aspect of livelihood recovery.

One of the largest interventions to support post-conflict development in Northern Uganda was the UN Development Programme (UNDP)-initiated Transition to Recovery Programme (TRP). This aimed to strengthen crisis prevention and recovery through four main areas of intervention: using training and support of alternative income generation projects to promote livelihoods and decrease dependency of IDPs on food aid; building government capacity to handle internal displacement both at the central level and in the seven selected conflict-affected districts; reintegration of adult ex-combatants; and gathering lessons from pilot projects to be applied to a larger and more comprehensive project. The livelihoods component of these interventions consisted of support to training in enterprise development, such as baking, tree nursery operations, beekeeping, mushroom growing and cassava processing, as well as provision of basic equipment to start these businesses (Bugnion, 2009). Evidence on the effectiveness of the programme is lacking, and the interventions were only in effect for a total of one year, leading to questionable retention and use of skills. Furthermore, in some cases, there may have been limited market demand for the business (ibid.).

<sup>25</sup> Note we are distinguishing 'migration', meaning people moving in search of economic opportunities, from 'mobility', which is people with animals as part of a transhumant livelihood strategy.



In both Northern Uganda and Karamoja, one of the largest livelihood interventions over the years has been the distribution of relief aid, particularly food aid. While focused more on meeting the short-term needs of populations in crisis versus long-term livelihood support, the fact that the region received food aid from the World Food Programme (WFP) and other sources for decades.<sup>26</sup> makes it important to the livelihoods discussion (Hawksley, 2011; Kagan et al., 2009). Various UN agencies and NGOs are engaged in supporting the farmer field school initiative, and have added input distributions to these programmes to enhance impact (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

In terms of impact, a case study of WFP's programming in Uganda was carried out in 2008 to assess its impact on livelihood recovery (WFP, 2008). This found that, in Acholi region, food aid was an important factor enabling people to return home and begin rebuilding their livelihoods. Similarly, in Karamoja, general food distributions were found to have helped reduce negative coping strategies and protect livelihoods. However, food distributions in Karamoja were generally spread too thin, which resulted in cases in which rations were shared between several households. In general, food for assets programmes had limited impact on livelihood recovery processes, mainly because they were too small in scale, with the number of days people working too small, largely because of limited funding.<sup>27</sup> The case study also identified a need to create stronger linkages between food assistance and recovery strategies and to establish evidence-based exit strategies for interventions. In Acholi, the study identified a gap between relief and recovery interventions, with few development actors scaling up recovery efforts to support the peace process. The authors also noted a need for more research to better understand pastoral livelihoods and protection issues in Karamoja.

As of 2010, WFP and its implementing partners are attempting to move away from interventions aimed to alleviate 'temporary' situations of scarcity and hunger, and are instead attempting to contribute to longer-term sustainability through the construction of 'productive assets' in Karamoja (WFP, 2009).<sup>28</sup> The short-term implication of this new strategy is that large swathes of the region's population who previously depended on general food distribution have stopped receiving rations nearly overnight. Instead, certain households deemed 'extremely vulnerable' remain on the relief rosters, and others are able to participate in short-term food for work projects. In addition, WFP is engaging in fuel and soil conservation, energy-saving technologies and tree-planting interventions (Nalule, 2010). The desire on the part of government and external agencies to pursue greater development rather than emergency assistance may also have a negative impact on the Karamojong in the short term. The 2010 change in strategy by WFP luckily corresponded with a rainy season that raised hopes for successful harvests for the first time in five to six years (FEWS NET, 2010c). However, it is unclear whether the strategy will fulfil the needs of the local population during a period of drought, and it is by no means clear that general food distribution is a thing of the past.<sup>29</sup>

WFP is currently prioritising local or regional purchase for much of its relief food (WFP, 2009), which protects livelihoods, promotes growth in the broader economy and is more likely to ensure the food distributed is appropriate to local preferences and dietary needs. WFP's Purchase for Progress programme in Northern Uganda provides long-term support aimed at improving productivity and market support for farmers. In this programme, WFP builds stores within communities in return areas of Northern Uganda and then buys from the community, helping increase production through the availability of market and handling facilities for the produce (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

There have been attempts to promote livelihood recovery by focusing on conflict prevention and the reintegration of former combatants. The UK provided £2.7 million specifically to support conflict reduction and peace building before the conflict ended, through improving coordination, promoting human rights and information sharing and supporting locally driven activities in conjunction with the government of Uganda (Ginifer, 2006). The UK Department for International Development (DFID) also

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<sup>26</sup> Karamoja has received emergency assistance primarily since the drought and famine of 1979–81. At its height in 2008–9, WFP was feeding approximately 90 percent of the region's population (OCHA, 2011).

<sup>27</sup> The case study found that, especially among government officials, there was a strong belief that food aid was causing dependency. However, the authors note that this narrative warrants more research, as there is little evidence available to support it.

<sup>28</sup> At the current stage of the new WFP strategy, 'productive assets' include group farms, dams and energy-saving stoves. WFP also hopes that participation in construction will build community skills in project planning.

<sup>29</sup> This is especially relevant given the current drought in the Horn of Africa (2011).

supported the following initiatives in Northern Uganda: MEGA FM, a state-owned radio station that aired in 2002 to promote opportunities to engage in peace and development issues among the population of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader; Save the Children Uganda's efforts to reintegrate child combatants and provide safe accommodation for night commuters in Gulu town; the Children and Young People for Peace Project's engagement of young people in peace building in 2004; the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)'s child protection programmes; and locally driven interventions such as the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, Kacoke Madit, the Amnesty Commission and the Betty Bigombe mediation process (ibid.).

Evaluation of DFID's conflict reduction and peace-building programme in Northern Uganda found that DFID was instrumental in forming the Donor Technical Group Northern Uganda. Areas for improvement identified by the evaluation included the need to give more attention to gender and IDP protection, fostering independence in civil society organisations (CSOs) and addressing human rights abuses by the UPDF (Ginifer, 2006). Furthermore, it was found that UK government Conflict Prevention Pools of funding have yearly cycles and high administrative needs that are not conducive to the types of multiyear projects occurring in Northern Uganda.

There are a number of CSOs working in Northern Uganda and Karamoja to reduce the likelihood and implications of conflict.<sup>30</sup> The primary interventions of these organisations include facilitating peace meetings, mediating dialogues, recovering and returning stolen animals, engaging in peace education for elders and the general public and facilitating the creating of peace associations.<sup>31</sup> Locally based interventions that use traditional and current forms of governance seem to exhibit more success in building trust than state-sponsored disarmament campaigns. The donor community pays little attention to these CSOs, as they are operating on very limited budgets and at small scales (Leff, 2009).

An independent evaluation of all UNDP activities since 2001 in Uganda, carried out in 2009, found that livelihood and early recovery components of the interventions were weak and had made a limited contribution to the recovery process; there had been little policy engagement in the promotion of reconstruction within the national development strategy; and support to disarmament and demobilisation was limited in its effectiveness on human security (Bugnion, 2009). Lessons learnt from the Quick Impact Project (a livelihood intervention) include that the time was insufficient to engage the target population and 'orient' them to 'sustainable livelihood options'; the neediest were not selected for the intervention; and the livelihood tools offered were not aligned with the needs voiced by the community (ibid.).<sup>32</sup> Overall, it seems there was a large humanitarian effort, then limited programming for post-conflict transition, and there is currently a trailing-off of support to Northern Uganda.

In recent years, many organisations have scaled up their operations in order to deal with inadequacies in long-term development investments on the part of the government (Onyango, 2010). However, poor coordination may limit their impact, according to recent research: 'there is no partnership among the local and international organizations operating in the region' (Ondoga, 2010: 6). One interesting element of aid agency interventions is there are said to be tensions between humanitarian agencies' focus on vulnerable groups and development agencies' market-based approaches: confusion and competition between humanitarian and development agencies have emerged as they are operating at the same time, sometimes with the same caseloads. Typically, development agencies are taking a market-driven approach and humanitarian agencies are targeting the vulnerable and weakest members of a community and tend to favour free inputs. Very often, the same donor agencies are funding both types of intervention, sometimes in the same communities, demonstrating a lack of coherence (International Alert, 2008).

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<sup>30</sup> A couple of examples include the Kotido Peace Initiative, Action for Development of Local Communities, the Dodoth Agro-pastoral Development Organisation, Karamoja Association for Peace and Environmental Protection Service, the Matheniko Development Forum and the Karamoja Agro-pastoral Development Programme.

<sup>31</sup> Peace-building workshops and mediation tactics in Karamoja that involve elders in an attempt to strengthen traditional forms of decision making are proving to be fruitful (Leff, 2009). Another example from Karamoja is the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Co-operation Organization, which is attempting to address cattle raiding in a holistic way that includes border operations, awareness generation about respecting livelihoods and improving

<sup>32</sup> The evaluation states that a 'reasonable length of time' should be spent on such a programme, although it fails to be more specific about how one would decide on what this is. Further criticisms include a failure to address gender and land ownership issues, lack of systematic monitoring of intervention results and compartmentalisation of various livelihood interventions such that appropriate linkages to the private sector and the overall UNDP country programme's poverty reduction strategy were not developed (Bugnion, 2009).

### 3.4.4 Private sector-led interventions

The available literature is limited and ambiguous on the private sector's role and impact in terms of creating employment and driving growth, etc. Emerging findings indicate that there are bottlenecks or incentive challenges related to private sector investment, although the nature and scale of these is unknown.

However, there is some evidence of an increased commercial interest in land, although in some cases this has led to more land conflicts in parts of Northern Uganda. A 2008 survey by International Alert found that various agri-business firms were operating in Northern Uganda and contributing to economic revitalisation, and that the Uganda Investment Authority and, to a lesser extent, the Uganda Manufacturers' Association and the Ugandan National Chamber of Commerce Secretariat, have launched interventions to promote and facilitate investment in the region, by Ugandan and foreign enterprises. However, the same survey also reports a 'politicised wrangle over land' proliferating in Northern Uganda, notably the controversial Madhvani Amuru Sugar proposal. The World Bank also finds high dispute prevalence and tensions related to business interests in land: 'Commercial/business interest in land and so-called land 'grabbers' were sources of tension, especially, in Acholi' (World Bank, 2009: ii, 13).

On a national level, one country-wide initiative to stimulate the private sector is the Private Sector Foundation, consisting of 75 business associations, corporate bodies and public sector agencies that support nationwide private growth. This initiative is managing a \$70 million project funded by the World Bank to promote competition in the private sector, among other projects (Carrington, 2009). As of 2011, the initiative has grown to include 157 businesses. Also on a national level, given relative stability over the past few years, there is increasing interest in expanding the tourism sector in Northern Uganda. Currently, tourists are limited to those working in the region and their relatives, plus business tourists. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in partnership with the Uganda Tourism Association (UTA) and with funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has conducted market research into tourism investment opportunities, including wildlife tourism, historical sites and cultural attractions, and has found high levels of satisfaction among tourists who have visited. However, in the tourist market there still remains the perception that the region is insecure and dangerous. The WCS and UTA are pursuing advocacy to generate private sector investment in tourism (WCS, 2011).

One interesting example is a three-year programme run by Cardno in Gulu called Stability, Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda (SPRING). SPRING is being implemented through the \$3.6 million Stability Fund, a small grants fund to support activities that will facilitate the stabilisation of households and communities by negotiating the removal of constraints in key value chains, promoting intra-community cultural and sporting exchanges and carrying out multimedia information activities on peace and justice.<sup>33</sup>

In Karamoja, private sector actors could play a much larger role. Some studies state that insecurity has hindered private sector growth (Vaughan and Stewart, 2011). However, given that it has not deterred private sector investment in Northern Uganda, it is more likely that the lack of infrastructure is a major problem (roads, electricity, banking, water, housing for employees, structures in which to set up business, etc.). Private sector activity that is emerging in Karamoja includes the establishment of a number of small savings and credit cooperatives (SACCOs) and village saving and loan associations (VSLAs) that provide small-scale microfinance loans (ibid.). It is generally agreed that it is vital to increase the number of private sector actors in Karamoja.

### 3.4.5 Participation

There is some evidence that some aid agencies take into account people's own responses in assessment, but no clear evidence on whether (and to what extent) aid projects and/or policies build on them or whether is desirable to do so.

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<sup>33</sup> [www.cardno.com/emergingmarkets](http://www.cardno.com/emergingmarkets).

In terms of government-led interventions, existing analysis of community participation is weak. In Karamoja, the limited analysis available suggests that the government's openly negative predisposition to nomadic pastoralism does not take people's opinions into consideration, and also has a lack of understanding of the requirement for mobility in an environment like Karamoja. In fact, policies are often not supported by empirical evidence and seem to ignore or undermine populations' coping strategies (Levine, 2010).

With other government programmes, there seems to be a normative elevation of 'participatory' process in design, but no robust evidence on how this happens in practice and its impact. For instance, the Government Policy for Older Persons places a great deal of emphasis on participation and inclusion of older persons and their families in reducing/managing risks and vulnerabilities, but it fails to explicitly identify the responsibilities of older persons (as stakeholders). It identifies responsibilities only on the supply side (for government, aid agencies, etc.), although it mentions 'decentralised service delivery' with participation of older persons to ensure ownership and sustainability (MoGLSD, 2009).

Part of the problem is the very limited number of broader impact assessments. However, a recent impact evaluation of NUSAF, which has wider spatial coverage, finds some level of active community involvement. However, it did not explicitly preclude the possibility of elite capture in terms of who is on community-level management committees, why and the distribution of benefits.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> 'In most communities visited, members expressed knowledge of the processes that were involved in securing NUSAF funding for subprojects. The awareness of the processes was due to community participation in inception and planning meetings for the identification of their priority projects. They also acknowledged having participated in the election of community project management committees who run their sub-projects [...] They also added that undergoing such processes had guaranteed sustainability of the subprojects once NUSAF funding phased out [...] NUSAF sub-projects are about as likely to have "addressed community needs" than projects from other funding sources' (OPM, 2009: 17).

# 4 Basic services and social protection

## 4.1 Basic services overview

To review basic service provision in the Greater North, it is important to begin with a review at the national level and also of how services are developing in the various sectors.

### 4.1.1 National commitment to basic services

On a national level, one of the most interesting developments is that the government has been creating more districts in the name of basic service delivery, but there is little research on the impact of this policy, especially in areas affected by conflict/insecurity.

There is also a high degree of doubt that ‘supporting service delivery’ is actually the main objective of this move, with many suggesting it is linked more to political patronage. By 1 July 2010, Uganda had 111 districts, according to the Ministry of Local Government figures, more than three times as many as when the current National Resistance Movement (NRM) government came to power in 1986. The number of PRDP districts has also increased, from 40 in 2007 when the framework was adopted to 55 in 2010 after one year of implementation (Kalilu, 2010a). Some observers suggest the government is using district creation as a political strategy to smooth the costs associated with economic reform (Green, 2008; Kalilu, 2010a).<sup>35</sup>

There is broad agreement that the emergence of many new districts has exacerbated the challenges of limited resources and lack of accountability in the short term, and also delayed or derailed public service delivery in locations where new district administrations are struggling to become operational (Feinstein International Center, 2011). An overall systematic analysis of the impact of the creation of so many new districts is needed.

In general, there are concerns about the actual or effective commitment of government spending on basic services as seen in financial allocations to the PRDP. In fiscal year 2009/10 (the first year of full-scale implementation), the central government released UGX79.466 billion (equivalent to 99.4 percent of total allocations) to 40 PRDP districts and sectors. However, one study found significant variation between the central government’s initial de jure commitments and actual allocations, with a markedly reduced overall allocation (less than 30 percent of the initially promised first year budget of UGX337.5 billion) to certain sectors, notably on peace-building and reconciliation activities, as well as the community development and livelihoods components of the PRDP’s second strategic objective, on rebuilding and empowering communities (Beyond Juba, 2008). The study also reveals that the Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) was the major constraining factor, or was used as an alibi for this reluctance to allocate (ibid.). This raises questions related to affordability and trade-offs in policy choices at the national level. Another study shows a decreasing trend in the total share of the national budget allocated to the districts (i.e. nominal growth in central government transfers to districts were falling behind overall nominal growth in the national budget) (Claussen et al., 2008).

### 4.1.2 Health

A specific example of ambiguous government commitment to basic services can be seen in the health sector. The government’s Health Sector Strategic and Investment Plan has a specific section on ensuring ‘equitable access by people in PRDP districts [in conflict and post-conflict situations] to Health Services’ and outlines targets and strategies for improving health and nutrition outcomes in the north, including more ‘health facilities and human resources for health for hard to reach areas such as Karamoja’ (MoH, 2010: 103). However, at the national level, a 2010 tracking study found that government health funding was generally inadequate and funding relied on external donors. Public health sector spending was \$8.2 per capita in 2007/08, which is equivalent to 9.6 percent of government total expenditure (EPRC, 2010).

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<sup>35</sup> On the motivation behind district creation, available research cites five main factors, with varying levels of plausibility: improving service delivery, ethno-linguistic conflict management, gerrymandering, inability of the central government to resist local demands, patronage, job creation and electoral politics (Green 2008).

A major constraint in the health sector is poor service delivery as a result of low levels of staffing. In November 2008, only 51 percent of approved positions in the public health service were filled (MoH, 2009b). Recent analysis shows that 'staffing was below 50 percent in most districts' (Fisseha, 2010).

The government of Uganda has tried to improve access to health services in three main ways in the past: exempting poor and vulnerable groups from user fees for health services in the 1990s; running community-based health insurance schemes from 1995 to 2002; and abolishing fees for health services altogether in conjunction with an attempt to improve provision of basic services as of 2001 (Yates, 2006). The third of these interventions has proven the most successful, with Ministry of Health (MoH) data showing an immediate improvement in attendance at government, private and not-for-profit health units by the poorest after fees were abolished (ibid.).

Despite these improvements, only 57 percent of Ugandans live within 5 km of a health centre, and social reasons such as lack of control over time and resources hinder women's access to services even where they are available (Yates, 2006). The northern and eastern regions of the country have the poorest access to health services (Kiwanuka et al., 2008). In an effort to address the important problem of insufficient numbers of health care workers, there was talk of MoH creating incentives for staff to work in Northern Uganda as well as to improve training (WRC and UNFPA, 2007). As of 2009, however, this incentive package had yet to come into use and human resources remained a problem (WRC, 2009).

In terms of reproductive health, an assessment in Kitgum, Pader and Gulu carried out by the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2007 revealed a 'fair to poor' state of services owing to a shortage of both health facilities and qualified health workers. Challenges to the provision of obstetric care include lack of necessary supplies, gaps in training and lack of access to telephones or transportation in cases where referrals to facilities and hospitals are needed. Considerable gaps in family planning services, youth services, sexually transmitted infection treatment protocols and supply of drugs such as anti-retroviral treatment drugs in government centres exist (ibid.).<sup>36</sup>

In terms of mental health, in a recent study investigating the demographic, socioeconomic and trauma factors associated with mental and physical health of IDPs in Northern Uganda, investigators found that overall physical health was poor and 54 percent of respondents met criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (Roberts et al., 2009). An astonishing 75 percent of the sample of 1,210 adult IDPs had witnessed the murder of a family member or friend and 14 percent reported being raped or sexually abused (ibid.).<sup>37</sup> Roberts et al. (2008) found that 90 percent of the sample had suffered a lack of food or water, 65 percent had been ill with no medical care, 77 percent had been without housing or shelter and 93 percent did not feel safe in the camp.

In Karamoja, health indicators are among the lowest in the country, and the need for basic health services is great (WRC and UNFPA, 2007). There is unequal distribution of resources, and most health and reproductive health funding is funnelled to urban hospitals that are inaccessible for a large portion of the population.

#### **4.1.3 Education**

The government of Uganda was the first in Africa to establish Universal Primary Education (UPE), thus eliminating school fees for all primary children in 1996. This had a positive effect on enrolment, particularly for females (Higgins, 2007). By 1999, school enrolments in Uganda had increased by nearly 51 percent (Development Education Consultancy, 2006), but UPE did not cover teacher fees, textbook fees or uniforms.

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<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, the fact that abortion is banned in the country except in the case of saving a woman's life, means that women may suffer from unsafe abortions without adequate care (WRC and UNFPA 2007).

<sup>37</sup> Although this was a cross-sectional study and therefore causation cannot be inferred, the following variables increased the likelihood of having poor health: being female, being of an older age, being separated from one's partner, greater distance of camp from home, lack of soap and exposure to traumatic events (Roberts et al., 2009). Being deprived of basic services and goods likely increases anxiety and affects mental health.

Despite the advances of UPE, education remains problematic in Northern Uganda. The effects of the conflict on children continue to be a major obstacle. For example, displacement and abduction by the LRA disrupted the education of tens of thousands of children and young people. The LRA intentionally targeted schools, destroying them and abducting children and teachers. The youth who have returned generally received absolutely no education during their captivity and, while they are over the age for primary school, they do not have a primary school education. The creation of 'learning centres' to serve populations displaced to IDP camps allowed for some education to continue, but these operated under very crowded conditions (WRC, 2005). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2011), it was not uncommon for fees to be charged at the overcrowded centres, despite the mandate for UPE, thus shutting out any families unable to pay.

In addition, although UPE policies may have increased girls' enrolment, they still fail to address unique challenges that are present in the conflict-affected areas of Northern Uganda. A big issue with UPE was that it resulted in a massive increase in the number of children in schools, but this coincided with conflict-related destruction of infrastructure leading to overcrowding and a lack of sufficient qualified teachers, either because there was no incentive to work in the region or because teachers found more lucrative jobs with humanitarian agencies. Meanwhile, uniforms and other materials may be out of reach for many displaced families struggling from day to day.

In Karamoja, the extremely low level of achievement in education is in part because the formal education system is geared towards sedentary, rather than semi-nomadic, communities.<sup>38</sup> Less than 30 percent of Karamoja's population has access to education facilities, reflecting communities' mobility, the region's development challenges, early marriage for girls, high poverty rates, family expectations regarding domestic chores and low social value placed on childhood education (Development Education Consultancy, 2006). This explains why Karamoja has the lowest enrolment rates in the country, and literacy rates for both males and females are well below the national average (ibid.).

In response, the government, Redd Barna and Save the Children in Uganda established the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) in 1998, funded by the Ministry of Education, Save the Children, local districts and other development partners. ABEK sought to enable access to basic primary education for children in pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities. The curriculum is delivered in the local Ngakaramojong language, and includes themes related to the pastoral lifestyle, among them livestock education, environmental management, peace and security and crop production. Classes are held in public spaces or makeshift shelters, and take place early in the morning and late in the evening, so as not to interfere with children's herding and domestic duties.<sup>39</sup> The primary challenges are the lack of physical infrastructure, absenteeism (by both students and educators), inadequate teaching aids and limited support to extra-curricular activities. A strengthening of ABEK could have a positive impact on how communities value education, incidence of early marriage and pregnancy and poverty rates (Development Education Consultancy, 2006).

#### **4.1.4 Water and sanitation**

While access to clean and reliable water continues to be a challenge in Uganda, especially in urban areas, sanitation is of even greater concern. Nationally, only about 50 percent of Uganda's towns and cities have access to improved drinking water, and, shockingly, only 8 percent are connected to a sewage system. Ageing infrastructure, the inability of poorer citizens to pay for services, population growth in the cities and urban peripheral areas, inadequate institutional and regulatory capacities and a lack of business and management skills are all obstacles to ensuring access to reliable and clean water and sanitation for the poorer residents of the rapidly expanding urban peripheries (WWAP, 2005).

Specific to Northern Uganda, MOH reports that the majority of the districts with the lowest sanitation coverage are in this region: Kitgum (32 percent), Pader (35 percent), Gulu (36 percent) and Amuru (28.7 percent) (MoH, 2009a). Karamoja has the lowest sanitation coverage overall (7 percent), with the exception of Abim district, which has improved coverage of 35 percent (ibid.).

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<sup>38</sup> This links to the government's disapproval of nomadism—it is said to be too difficult to provide services.

<sup>39</sup> As of 2006, there were 268 learning centres and 32,770 students enrolled, over 2,500 of whom had transitioned into formal schools (Development Education Consultancy, 2006).

Uganda's National Water Policy, adopted in 1999, calls for sustainable access to safe water and sanitation/hygiene, and improved water supply and sanitation are among the key issues emphasised under the current Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP II), now under revision to HSSP III. Uganda has embarked on water sector reform and has introduced private sector participation in service provision in both large and small towns—mainly for water and to a lesser extent for sanitation. The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) has overall responsibility for initiating national policies and setting national standards and priorities for the water sector. The Directorate of Water Development (DWD) under MWE is the lead agency responsible for managing water resources, and coordinates and regulates all water and sanitation activities. Furthermore, the DWD provides support services to local governments and other service providers. In 2001, the three key ministries of health, water and education signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to agree on shared responsibilities for sanitation and hygiene. However, this did not result in effective cooperation.<sup>40</sup>

A sector-wide approach (SWAp) was adopted in 2002 to enable the government and development partners to follow a single policy and expenditure programme, and joint sector reviews are held annually. The Water and Sanitation Sector Working Group, which comprises relevant ministries, donors and NGOs, meets regularly. As a sub-group, the National Sanitation Working Group was set up in 2003 to ensure the operationalisation of the MoU on sanitation and hygiene. This coordinates sector activities, lobbies for funding and supports policy development. Furthermore, there is a donor coordination group and the Ugandan Water and Sanitation Network for NGOs.<sup>41</sup>

Some advances have been made, and it is estimated that, between 1990 and 2008, 8.3 million people gained access to improved sanitation facilities. The number of people using improved drinking water sources increased by 13.6 million. However, Uganda is not on target to meet the MDG targets for sanitation.<sup>42</sup>

## 4.2 Social protection overview

Social protection is becoming more formalised in Uganda, and is believed by many to be a needed and worthy intervention for the country. However, more research is necessary to determine its applicability within the various contexts of the country. In theory, social protection programmes should fill the gap between those who can take advantage of new opportunities in a post-conflict environment and those who cannot, enabling particularly vulnerable populations to 'catch up' and be able to take advantage of economic opportunities. It is yet to be seen whether this is possible in Uganda.

To bolster social protection interventions in the country, a National Social Protection Committee was established in 2007 and became formalised in 2011. This committee acts as the advisory body to the Social Protection Secretariat in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD). Members of CSOs and national and international organisations sit on the committee, which plays both an advisory and an advocacy role in enhancing social protection work. Alongside it is a civil society national platform that seeks to improve civil society's contribution to social protection programming by providing technical support, including training and information sharing on best practices from around the world on social protection (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

While formal social protection programmes are new, traditional activities have served similar functions in Uganda. The societal structure of ethnic nationalities in pre-colonial Uganda was based on mutual aid assistance motivated by altruism, social cohesion and reciprocity which ensured the collective well-being of communities (Ouma, 1995). Ouma cites three key disruptive factors to the traditional informal social protection mechanisms: the transfer of power to manage affairs; the transition from bartering to a cash economy; and the development of towns as administrative and commercial centres. In addition, prolonged conflict and the HIV/AIDS epidemic have placed further pressures on and extended family structures, further eroding what informal social protection structures existed (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004; Ouma, 1995).

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<sup>40</sup> [www.wsscc.org/countries/africa/uganda/wash-coalition-overview](http://www.wsscc.org/countries/africa/uganda/wash-coalition-overview).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.



Today, a variety of formal and informal social protection activities are emerging, but there also continues to be a lack of understanding by key political and government figures of social protection, as well as some concerns and misperceptions by officials that social protection will lead to dependence by communities (Feinstein International Centre, 2011).

### 4.3 Basic services and social protection interventions

#### 4.3.1 Government-led interventions

Currently under MoGLSD, there is a new five-year initiative called the Expanding the Social Protection Programme, approved in June 2010 and funded by DFID and Irish Aid, with technical support from UNICEF. The programme has a strong focus on developing social protection systems in government policies. It includes policy development and financing; building the social protection skills of government and the public sector; advocacy to build demand for social protection activities among the public, politicians and CSOs; and testing the systems, process and procedures of cash transfer activities under the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) project.

SAGE is currently being supported in eight selected districts and is expected to benefit about 600,000 people with regular cash grants by 2014 (MoGLSD, 2010). The target population includes children, the elderly, orphans, disabled persons and all categories of people and households unable to get themselves out of poverty. Actual targeting criteria include the elderly and households with a high number of dependants (i.e. labour-deficit households) (Feinstein International Center, 2011; Onapa, 2010). Recipient households are provided with a cash grant of UGX22,000 (\$9) per month. The SAGE pilot area includes two districts in LRA-affected areas and three in Karamoja. In Karamoja, however, only the old age pension programme will be implemented in the pilot phase, as the targeting criterion for vulnerable households (high dependency ratio) has been deemed inappropriate to the context.<sup>43</sup>

In terms of formal social protection, social security, pensions and medical insurance are all present in Uganda, but available only to a very limited percentage of the population. An estimated 5 percent of the working population is covered by formal social security, and recipients are among the least vulnerable (Barya, 2009). This is no surprise, given that the majority of the labour force works in agriculture and is not characterised as belonging to the formal sector. Under the expanding social protection programme mentioned above is the universal pension for those over 65 years. Finally, medical insurance is only privately provided for, and mainly only for those in the formal and NGO sector, where employers have the capacity to offer it to their staff. However, it is important to note that medical insurance is not mandatory or enforceable (Feinstein International Center, 2011).

Overall, it is believed that social action interventions in Uganda have had mixed success. The only programme with relatively broad coverage and which has been implemented at large scale is the World Bank-supported NUSAF-1. NUSAF-1 was created after the limited successes of the Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Project (NURP I), which involved large investments to enable the north to 'catch up' with the rest of the country in terms of poverty reduction, but was hindered by the massive population displacement and consequent relief needs (Lenneiyi, 2005). Initiated in 2000 in 18 districts, NUSAF-1 was a five-year programme implemented through the OPM; by 2004, it was operational in 29 districts.<sup>44</sup> The programme's overall development objective was to reduce poverty by improving the livelihoods of the people in Northern Uganda. The decentralisation of the initiative was particularly important, given the region's distrust of central government. Its three main parts were promotion of community reconciliation and conflict management; support to vulnerable groups; and a community development initiative to finance community investments in public infrastructure such as clinics, bridges, roads, etc. (ibid.).

A 2009 impact evaluation of NUSAF had two key messages. First, although there were 'significant impacts on the variables that NUSAF was meant to influence directly – access to water and sanitation, the quality of school buildings, and the number of teachers and students' (OPM, 2009: 30–1), there

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<sup>43</sup> SAGE has an impact assessment component built into the implementation plan, with a quasi-randomised control trial design, comparing districts in SAGE with demographically similar districts not included in the project. The baseline survey for this impact assessment will take place in late 2011.

<sup>44</sup> The phenomenon of district creation increased the number of districts from 18 to 29.

was no evidence that 'NUSAF increased consumption (or lowered poverty) beyond what was occurring for other reasons during this period in NUSAF region' (ibid.: 25). Second, nearly a quarter of the population moved out of poverty and 12 percent slipped into it between 2004 and 2008. A total of 40 percent of individuals were living in poor households in both survey periods and thus were deemed chronically poor. Less than a quarter of the population was classified as not living in poverty in one or the other survey (Levine, 2009).<sup>45</sup>

The government has been promoting gender equality in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the PRDP and the KIDDP, and the Constitution lends legal support to equality (Bugnion, 2009). Furthermore, Uganda is a signatory to international gender conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In practice, however, rates of domestic abuse and sexual assault remain high in conflict-affected areas (Annan and Brier, 2010).

An increasing volume of grey literature suggests governance capacities and institutions are weak in conflict-affected areas of Uganda. The first formal (mid-term) review of the government's PRDP is currently underway. Although quite general, preliminary findings point to 'weak local government and the need to focus on the functionality and sustainability of basic services land conflicts, the need to remove barriers to more effective private sector and community participation, particularly for women' (LDPG, 2011: 2).

Prior to this ongoing review, a joint capacity needs assessment of 11 districts in Uganda found that conflict-affected districts were at a comparable level of capacity challenges with all other conflict-affected districts (with minor differences) in the areas of staffing, training and equipment, etc. (OPM, 2010). This assessment also demonstrates how aid and government work together to strengthen capacities for the delivery of basic services in conflict-affected areas of the country. However, it is very descriptive, with generally weak data/analysis on the scale of the problems and the role of incentives in improving performance and accountability in service delivery. The capacity approach is also too state centric, focusing only on technical supply-side capacities.

Security can also be viewed as a basic service. Since 2001, the government has increased the presence of security personnel, particularly the UPDF, across Karamoja. The UPDF<sup>46</sup> has also trained and outfitted a series of local defence units (LDUs) to improve community-based protection mechanisms. Some progress has been made: currently over 85 percent of sub-counties have a police presence, and crimes are being reported to the police. However, 40 percent of sub-counties reported that they did not have the capacity to 'deal with' lawbreakers, and 30 percent that there had been no improvement in their security situation since 2009. LDU forces are generally poorly equipped in terms of the ammunition, transportation and communication resources needed to function effectively (FEWS NET, 2005). In addition, the PRDP mid-term review found that 'conflict drivers such as land, youth unemployment and inadequate reintegration of ex-combatants have not been adequately assessed or addressed' (OPM, 2011: ii).

#### **4.3.2 People-led interventions**

One example of informal community and household-level social protection is elderly and female-headed households caring for orphans who have lost parents to HIV/AIDS. Traditional kinship structures dictate that extended family care for sick relatives, which has stretched the resources of many households who are caring for orphaned children along with their own or, in many cases, grandchildren. In the case of females returning home after abduction by the LRA, Annan and Brier (2010) found examples of young women who had returned to find their biological parents had died in their absence, and subsequently were taken in by extended family members such as uncles and aunts, even if begrudgingly.

There is no convincing evidence in the available grey literature that populations in conflict-affected communities in Uganda are holding their community leaders and constituency representatives in parliament accountable and/or that they have the capacities and courage to demand accountability for service delivery. Oosterom (2010) found that protracted conflict, the associated long duration of

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<sup>45</sup> This is perhaps more a case of unrealistic objectives than of project failure.

<sup>46</sup> The UPDF should not be in the business of civilian protection and the establishment of law and order. The only constitutionally mandated role for the UPDF in Karamoja (or elsewhere) is international border security.

displacement in camps with centralised and ‘illegitimate’ or quasi-legitimate camp management structures and prolonged dependency on aid had weakened the accountability relations.

Consequently, demand-side accountability is weaker in places such as Acholi than in other parts of the country amid enthusiasm and assistance for building supply-side capacities for service delivery. While many aid agencies claim to build demand-side accountability, there is little evidence on how this has been done in practice and with what impact. For instance, UNDP and the central government promised to build the capacities of ‘selected’ local governments and oversight entities to deliver accountable, inclusive and demand-driven social and economic services, but there is no information on results (Republic of Uganda and UNDP, 2010).

### 4.3.3 Aid agency-led interventions

The literature on aid agency interventions to support health, education, water and sanitation and social protection is limited. This section covers several examples of evaluations of particular projects. Broader overviews of what aid actors are doing across the sectors and evidence on coverage, effectiveness and impact is missing.

Cash transfers to help reduce vulnerability and risk and promote social protection seem to be high on the humanitarian and development aid agency agenda in Uganda, but there is little robust evidence of impact.

A Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)-led seasonal assessment in Karamoja recommended targeted food aid and cash transfers (conditional or unconditional) to fill in the food and income deficits. The report argues that cash was more effective in the prevailing context than ‘other options such as direct transfers of non-food items (e.g. seeds), or a market intervention (e.g. to reduce the price of staple food or to increase the price of livestock) because the grains and livestock markets were functioning well’ (FAO, 2010: 20).

One of the few impact evaluations on a cash transfer project was on the Livelihoods and Economic Recovery in Northern Uganda (LEARN) initiative. This was designed to empower returning IDPs to rebuild their livelihoods through cash transfers. The evaluation has several ambiguous findings.<sup>47</sup> The only major finding with clear evidence is that average food produced per household increased for the project beneficiaries, compared with both the baseline and the control group. ‘The average production per LEARN household doubled compared to the baseline and was 33 percent higher than the comparison group’ (Acacia/MISR Consortium, 2010: 52). However, this should be expected, given the scale of the cash transfer: over \$420,000 was transferred to 120 income-generating activity groups (2,500 individuals representing households) in Kitgum district alone (ibid.: 23). Other outcome measures did not change significantly, or no data were available for them.<sup>48</sup>

However, there is a related question as to whether cash or food should be the medium of the transfer. While cash is now more ‘popular’, sometimes recipients prefer food—particularly when the cash transfer value drops as a result of exchange rate fluctuations and when the price of food skyrockets.

At the micro level, an evaluation of an NGO-led initiative to improve the quality of primary education (basic service) in two districts in Northern Uganda through ‘holistic’ support to ‘education plus’ generally found that the initiative worked (AVSI Foundation, 2011). Overall, pupils in project-supported schools reported a stronger perception of improvements in their schools, including a better environment (e.g. good sanitation facilities), more accessible equipment and increased availability and quality of teaching (ibid.). However, these results do not yet appear sufficiently robust to make it possible to draw casual and generalised conclusions. The specific conditions/determinants of success need to be investigated rigorously, and questions about scalability remain unanswered. Moreover, the report seems to suggest reduced parental responsibility/involvement where NGOs support education; there still needs to be more empirical investigation on whether such a dilemma is real and what the broader interface is

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<sup>47</sup> The observed impact was not recorded properly.

<sup>48</sup> This was probably because the evaluation tools did not provide a systematic analysis of the relative importance or comparative advantages of the different cash transfer mechanisms/instruments and their respective contributions to these measures. Evidence on which modality was most effective under what circumstances is generally missing.

among people, NGO support (aid) and local governance, including school administrations and parent teachers associations.<sup>49</sup>

There is some evidence of NGOs working to improve the provision of health services in Northern Uganda. For example, one NGO has mobile outreach with health professionals in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader which offer a range of contraceptive services, which are reported to be highly desired by females (WRC and UNFPA, 2007). Another NGO provides scholarships to health workers from Northern Uganda in an effort to enhance the cadre of health professionals in the region (ibid.).

#### **4.3.4 Private sector-led interventions**

In terms of private sector-led interventions to support basic services and social protection activities, there is very little information. As a result, a strong future emphasis of research could be on what the role of the private sector can and cannot be in conflict-afflicted areas and in programmes that have an overarching objective of reducing poverty.

According to a report by WaterAid and Tearfund (Barungi, 2003), private sector participation in the water and sanitation sector has increased considerably all over the country since 1999, in the form of village-level projects by private contractors. In other words, private sector contributions have enabled the expansion of coverage of water and sanitation services.<sup>50</sup>

There are a great many basic services provided by the private sector in terms of veterinary services and medicines. Likewise, most people who go to government hospitals have to go to private clinics/pharmacies to buy their medicines and supplies.

#### **4.3.5 Participation**

The available literature shows that attempts have been made to gather the views of conflict-affected populations on peace, justice and social reconstruction. This has been done mostly through surveys, but spatial coverage is still limited, mainly because of resource constraints.

Building on similar surveys in 2005 and 2007, a 2010 population-based survey evaluating the needs, views and priorities of people in Acholi found that people were concerned about meeting basic needs, including food, agriculture, education and health care, but were sceptical or had mixed opinions as to their leaders' commitment to delivering these basic services. Whether these views of 2,498 individuals (the final sample size of the survey) in Acholi are representative of views across the rest of Northern Uganda and Karamoja and across time is unknown. The survey noted that:

Basic services in return areas are lacking and the majority of respondents had negative perceptions of access to health care services, water, food or education [...] a majority of the population judged positively (well or very well) the government's performance in improving security [...] however, few judged positively the government's record on social issues...less than half of respondents said the government performed well on providing social services (45 percent), or ensuring free elections (47 percent). Another 47 percent felt the central government delivers services inappropriately, and 39 percent that it was unlikely the government would respond if they reported their needs, inversely 33 percent said the government was likely to respond to their needs' (Pham and Vinck, 2010:2-3).

Many reports have found active community participation to be a major challenge, especially in the health and allied sectors (Fisseha, 2010). Lessons learnt from the UNICEF Hepatitis E Response in Northern Uganda circa 2007 acknowledged that local leadership was important and that 'returning people's priorities are with restoring livelihoods (housing, cultivation) rather than WASH [water, sanitation and hygiene]' (Republic of Uganda, 2010a: 32).

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<sup>49</sup> 'A significant difference was detected between Project and Control school, with the former showing much lower rates of parent/guardian support to schooling which needed further investigation' (AVSI Foundation, 2011: 10).

<sup>50</sup> There is, however, no mention of Northern Uganda in particular.

# 5 Data, evidence and methods

## 5.1 Data quality and availability

Ample data exist on Uganda, in both the grey and the published literature. Specifically, there is a great deal of primary research (although some studies are less robust than others). Most primary research is in support of needs assessments or situation analyses for project design.

There was a huge gap in data collection in Karamoja owing to insecurity from the 1970s to about 2005/06. Most data came from areas around the towns. Even the few organisations that were present (Save the Children, the Lutheran World Federation, etc.) were not able to gather representative data, meaning baselines from earlier periods are limited.

The main available data sources on poverty levels and access to basic services that the Research Programme Consortium could draw on include the following:

- UNHS data (UBOS) for 2005/06 and 2009/10;
- The FAO Household Economy Analysis (HEA) baseline 2010;
- NUSAF panel data;
- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Basic Services Accessibility Atlases 2010;
- Study data from the Karamoja Livelihoods Programme of KALIP 2009;
- The UNHCR DSA 2011;
- The National Service Delivery Survey 2004 and 2008;
- The World Bank Inclusive Growth Study 2011;
- Data from HelpAge International's ongoing social protection study in Northern Uganda (and planned for Karamoja);
- The Northern Uganda Livelihood Survey 2007;
- The Survey on War-affected Youth (SWAY).

Despite the abundance of sources, the quality of the data is varied. There are concerns as to some of the major data sources mentioned above. For example:

- **UBOS data:** These surveys from 2005/06 and 2009/10 are nationally representative (with sufficient sample size), and the survey reports can be disaggregated by district. However, there are questions as to whether they are statistically representative at the district level. It is hoped that this is corrected, as UBOS has recently adopted a 'small area' estimate technique combining survey with census data to analyse poverty at the district and sub-county level, and there will also be annual repeat measures of this survey for the coming five years. The relevance of the data may be affected by long time lags between study periods in the past, but this is about to change. UNHS rounds are expected on a yearly basis for the coming five years.
- **OCHA Basic Services Accessibility Atlases for Karamoja and Acholi:** The primary methodology used in these atlases was service locations (geographic positioning system (GPS) coordinates), but coordinates were not available in most cases. In addition, distance is not the only (and may not be the most important) access limitation. Coverage and accessibility also change over time and so information presented may not have been up to date. In addition, further disaggregating (e.g. by gender) the data would have been useful to obtain an insight into distribution of access, etc. Information collected in the two sub-regions was carried out at varying times (in Acholi in May/June 2010, in Karamoja in August 2010; water source information for Karamoja was collected in November 2008–December 2009). Finally, population figures were based on projections (not actual figures) by UBOS.

## 5.2 Evidence quality

Rigorous academic studies, collecting information through random sampling using validated survey tools, and with a large enough sample to enable statistical analysis, have been relatively limited in the

specific area of social protection. The most rigorously conducted studies are those related to physical and mental health and experiences of people living in IDP camps. It is also difficult to assess the quality of secondary data used in some studies, particularly when they come from an unpublished source, such as the health information used for the analysis by Yates (2006).

Programme evaluations are often vague in terms of the effectiveness of programmes and funding. The UNDP programme evaluation (Bugnion, 2009), for example, reported limited capacity to fully assess all interventions, resulting from logistical problems and lack of budget for this: reports on specific programme impacts are thus often based on anecdotal generalisations rather than empirical observations. Otherwise, evaluations simply report interventions that are ongoing and note that it is too early to determine results. Further to this point, the 2009 internal evaluation of the European Commission (EC)'s Uganda country programme states that the 'EC contribution to agriculture has, to some extent, improved livelihood conditions and food security. Lack of data makes it difficult to assess the full impact' (LeBlanc et al., 2009).

Information on key human development indicators in Karamoja is abundant. However, evidence on social protection and basic services is superficial at best; often, services are said to be lacking but little is offered in terms of details or possible solutions. Where more detailed statistical information is provided, this is limited, and thus cannot be triangulated for accuracy.

Finally, a key constraint in the quality of evidence on key dynamics in Karamoja is that many reports treat the region as if it is homogeneous, rather than a diverse and complex set of peoples, landscapes and production systems. Greater effort should be paid to disaggregating data based on location, livelihood systems, gender and other relevant characteristics.

### **5.3 Gender analysis: extent and quality**

Gender has been analysed by several researchers working in Northern Uganda. First, the SWAY gathered data on the experience of young men and women in Northern Uganda and delved deeply into the experiences of both abductees and those who had not been abducted. In addition, Carlson and Mazurana (2008) conducted qualitative research from 2001 to 2007 on the experiences of girls and women as forced wives in the LRA. The study held in-depth interviews with 103 formerly abducted women and girls who had been forced into marriage, as well as with family members, key stakeholders and leaders. This research fills an important gap by shedding light on the experience of girls and women during their abduction by the LRA, in particular highlighting the experiences of many girls in captivity and the challenges they faced on their return. The study found that it was critically important to design and target gender-related programming to meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls, as opposed to generating predefined interventions based on assumptions of need. It also gives insights into the loss of assets and changing livelihoods.<sup>51</sup>

More recently, in 2010, Annan et al. carried out an in-depth study of the LRA in Northern Uganda to identify the impacts and consequences of violence arising through combat and war, the factors that influence ex-combatant reintegration and the risks of renewed violence. This is the first study to provide quantitative data on women and girls in the LRA. It found that violence was associated with social and psychological problems, particularly among females. However, most women who had returned from armed groups demonstrated psychosocial resilience and were able to reintegrate socially, which is an important factor in low post-conflict hostility. The study found little evidence of aggression and violence among ex-fighters. Its findings support the human capital approach to reintegration, which suggests that the capital accumulated by individuals in armed groups is not relevant to labour markets, which results in earnings gaps between ex-combatants and non-combatants.

Bird et al. (2010) demonstrate that decreased levels of consumption and investment in assets, disruption of social networks, psychological trauma and other shocks during and post-conflict have the potential to create an intergenerational cycle of chronic poverty.

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<sup>51</sup> There is, however, no mention of Northern Uganda in particular.

Some work examining labour participation by men and women in IDP camps has been conducted, shedding some light on the ways social interactions differ by gender (Lehrer, 2010). This highlights that the amount of time males have spent in camps is linked directly to a lack of engagement in the labour market. Lehrer's work also reviewed conditions in the camps.<sup>52</sup>

In addition, there is some evidence of attempts to incorporate gender analysis into international agency programming, although there is much progress to be made on this front. According to Lenneiy (2005), the post-completion evaluation assessing the impact of assets provided through the World Bank-supported Social Action Fund includes a gender relations component. An evaluation of UNDP programming, on the other hand, found that the UNDP country programme monitoring and reporting systems were not conducive to collecting gender-disaggregated data (Bugnion, 2009). The DFID evaluation (Ginifer, 2006) emphasises the need for higher representation of women in programmes, greater inclusion of women in peace building and protection of women in camps.

Use of the UNICEF IDP Camp Gender-based Violence Safety Audit questionnaire proved unsuccessful in providing a nuanced understanding of gender-based violence in camps, thus motivating researchers to add in-depth conversations to supplement this research tool (Okello and Hovil, 2007). A limitation of this particular study was the reluctance of men to be involved in the research because they felt gender issues were synonymous with 'women's issues' (ibid.), which is an example of the tendency not to include the viewpoint of men in many studies revolving around women.

More research on value chains, livelihood recovery and conflict need to pay more and better attention to gender implications—not just whether men vs. women are involved, but what this means for daily lives, how communities are structured and the future of livelihoods. In addition, issues of age and power relations incorporating gender need to be addressed.

## 5.4 Research methods

The most common methods used by researchers are household surveys (e.g. UBOS) and qualitative interviews. For example, extensive panel data were collected as part of the nationally representative UNHS in 1992/93 and 1999/00. These data were obtained from nearly 1,300 households, first interviewed in 1992/93 as part of the Integrated Household Survey and then again in 1999/00 as part of UNHS I (Ssewanyana, 2009). The UNHS was conducted again in 2005/06 and 2009/10. While these large-scale quantitative surveys paint a general picture and provide estimates of indicators of poverty, they are often not particularly able in terms of providing more specific data at a local level or programmatically useful information on why levels of poverty are not decreasing in conflict-affected areas.

Some of the evaluative studies reviewed essentially used a quasi-experimental design for the household survey (e.g. Acacia/MISR, 2010). The major strength of such a design is high external validity, that is, high ability to generalise findings. However, quasi-experimental design is generally low on internal validity, that is, the ability to establish causal relationships. The implication is that many claims of impact (e.g. cash transfer helped beneficiaries overcome transient shock and motivated people to return home, etc.) may be spurious or only partly correct.

## 5.5 Data, evidence and research method gaps

Some of the gaps in evidence and data are listed below. Annex 2 reviews research questions that highlight additional research gaps.

- **Impact evaluations:** Few rigorous impact evaluations of interventions have taken place. Overall, while a good deal of information exists on the landscape and extent of problems facing Northern Uganda, there is little on the effect of various interventions. No impact evaluations of livelihoods, vocational training or agricultural, agro-enterprise or infrastructure projects were found. The stakeholder consultation had references to some impact evaluations, but these were often of

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<sup>52</sup> Further outcomes of Lehrer's research are cited in Sections 2.2 and 3.3.

questionable rigor. SAGE is scheduled to include a rigorous impact assessment, but this will only begin later this year (Ginifer, 2006).

- **Experience of returnees:** The situation on displacement has changed dramatically in the past few years as people have left IDP camps and returned to their area of origin. Currently, there is little information on the experience of returnees in reclaiming their land, rebuilding their livelihoods and accessing social services in their area of origin (Annan and Brier, 2010).
- **Social protection programmes:** Social protection programmes in Uganda have generally been introduced too recently to have been analysed in peer-reviewed literature, and there is even less evidence to be found regarding social protection for conflict-affected populations specifically. This is evident in the fact that much of the evidence in this paper is based on reports and programme documentation, rather than on peer-reviewed studies or even project evaluations. Currently, social protection programmes are being piloted in only two districts in the LRA-affected areas and three in Karamoja (and in Karamoja social protection programmes are targeting only the elderly). Moreover, more information is needed on social protection in Karamoja—particularly the capacity of local and district officials and the propensity of aid agencies to address needs.
- **Application of traditional knowledge:** There is little evidence on the application of local traditional knowledge in informing programme and policy design. There is a need to understand what social protection safety nets, customary laws, coping mechanisms and local conflict mitigation mechanisms exist locally and how they can help shape work within post-conflict areas. This is perhaps most evident in the policy towards pastoral livelihoods in Karamoja, but also emerges as a concern in other areas, including conflict resolution and land disputes.
- **Mapping of vulnerability:** Beyond standard poverty indicators, there are few data on vulnerability that could inform social protection and basic service delivery by the government and its partners. Some stakeholders, especially those in academia, note that, while good national poverty data exist, there is a gap in understandings of vulnerability in post-conflict situations. Mapping vulnerability would help policymakers understand the situation and how to address the gaps that exist in current programmes.
- **Karamoja data:** Total livestock numbers in Karamoja are unclear and often contradictory. More data are needed on contemporary migration patterns, particularly in the north of the region (regarding destinations, time spent away, reasons for moving, remittances, etc., disaggregated by gender, age and ethnic group).
- **Links to policy:** There is very little evidence on impact, or on how findings are fed into policy discourses, programming and implementation.



## 6 Conclusion

The literature reviewed indicates that government officials, academia and aid organisations in Uganda broadly agree on the need to reduce chronic poverty, inequality and vulnerability through livelihood support.

Following years of disparity in development outcomes across different administrative regions, the current National Development Plan (2010/11–2014/15) explicitly recognises the need to integrate the Greater North—including Northern Uganda and Karamoja—into the mainstream development of the country. Policymakers seem to share the belief that better access to basic health care, education and water and sanitation; social protection (e.g. the government's social assistance grant, or SAGE); and support to livelihoods will have a positive impact on conflict-affected groups and will enhance the likelihood of achieving development goals (MoFPED, 2010). Government policymakers now seem to acknowledge that social protection interventions that include cash transfers and enhance access to basic social services can be mutually reinforcing (MoGLSD, 2010). Nevertheless, some overarching dilemmas are emerging.

During the armed conflict in Northern Uganda, and the protracted humanitarian crisis in Karamoja, the emphasis was on vulnerable populations. With the end of the outright violent conflict in Northern Uganda and the continued disarmament programme in Karamoja, there has been a switch in focus towards 'viable' groups—those that can take advantage of opportunities, have assets and can benefit from access to credit and produce a surplus for the market. There is also a greater emphasis on 'cost recovery' as an element in running service delivery projects and on using the private sector to deliver inputs, buy outputs, etc. However, many people cannot take advantage of opportunities, and many places are not served well by the private sector. The shift in focus from vulnerability to viability runs the risk of leaving many in conflict-affected populations behind.

Many observers label the inability of some groups to take advantage of post-conflict livelihood opportunities 'relief dependency', or a sense of entitlement borne out of many years of receiving life-protecting support from humanitarian agencies. However, there is also evidence that it may be the result of conflict-induced trauma, or destitution resulting from asset loss, landlessness and even loss of family labour as a consequence of the war. While the evidence on, for example, excessive alcohol consumption and 'male idleness' among conflict-affected populations is clear enough, the reasons behind these issues are less well known or agreed on.

In theory, social protection programmes should fill the gap between those who can take advantage of new opportunities in a post-conflict environment and those who cannot, enabling particularly vulnerable populations to 'catch up' and take advantage of economic opportunities. But such programmes are being piloted in only four districts in the Greater North, and it is not clear whether or not the programmes on offer can address the issues highlighted in this paper. Cash transfers can help fill the gap if the constraint is one of simple lack of access to capital or an inability to make ends meet. However, even if the evidence is that such cash is not spent on alcohol, it is unclear whether it can help address the problem of alcoholism, for example. Aside from noting higher levels of poverty in the north, no particular consideration is being given to the effects of the conflict; indeed, previously there was reluctance to implement social protection programmes in the north at all because of lingering fears of insecurity.

Therefore, while progress is being made in the Greater North of Uganda, more targeted livelihood support and basic service and social protection provision is likely to be necessary to overcome the effects of nearly 20 years of war, displacement, abduction and social fabric destruction. While comparing indicators of poverty at the district or regional level can certainly highlight levels of need in conflict-affected areas, it does little to highlight the specific reasons for differences in the nature of poverty in these areas.

There is little evidence on people's own initiatives—in terms of either economic recovery or dealing with other impacts of the conflict. In study after study, the issue of people's own initiatives boils down to the

issue of ‘coping strategies’ or the mechanisms on which people rely when ‘normal’ livelihood strategies fail. While this information is important, it hardly tells the full story of people’s own initiatives in the face of hardship—it merely describes what people do in extremis. As such, one clear area for further research relates to specifically grounded studies in different areas affected by the conflict using comparable specific questions and uniform definitions, so as to address some of the unanswered questions about livelihood recovery, access to services and social protection in conflict-affected areas.

Although active conflict and abduction have ended in Northern Uganda and security has improved in Karamoja, these areas remain very much affected by the conflict, and the situation in both areas is fluid. Additional longitudinal studies, such as the 2009 Overseas Development Institute (ODI) study in Pader (Martin et al., 2009), are needed to track the trajectory and pace of change in the immediate post-conflict area. Martin et al. indicate that, in order to enable livelihood recovery, a combined approach is needed that couples long-term social protection assistance with livelihood support investments focused on improving access to basic services and security. It may be interesting to carry out a follow-up study to examine how the trajectories of recovery have continued since 2009. Such studies would further highlight which groups have the most difficulty in taking advantage of opportunities as infrastructure is rehabilitated and new markets open up, as well as potential avenues of support for these more vulnerable groups.

Many livelihoods interventions are being either planned or implemented in Northern Uganda and Karamoja. Yet the evidence on livelihood recovery remains vague with regard to the question of what works and what builds resilient households and communities. As highlighted throughout this report, few of the ongoing interventions have been the subject of rigorous impact assessment, and even those impact assessments that have taken place yield limited information of practical importance for policymakers and programme designers. Other areas of programmes, such as assessment, targeting, tracking intermediate outcomes and scalability, are not particularly well tracked either. Much of the evidence base on poverty reduction and social protection in conflict-affected areas of Uganda comes from non-conflict-affected areas. While it is fortunate that conflict-affected areas are not denied programmes, there is a clear need for improved analysis to support more nuanced programme design in such regions.

An entirely different set of questions arises around the ultimate purpose of government-led interventions in conflict-affected areas. The literature on state building indicates some relationship between service provision (broadly speaking—including livelihood support and social protection in this case) and enhanced legitimacy/acceptance of the authorities, particularly in areas where the government was either a party to the conflict or was seen as deliberately deciding not to provide civilians caught in the conflict with adequate security and protection. Both these conditions apply in both Northern Uganda and Karamoja.

But little evidence is currently available to support the hypothesis that the government of Uganda is setting out to enhance its legitimacy in these areas through a solid commitment to improving living conditions in conflict-affected areas, much less to enable growth to make up for all the years lost to the conflict. Many of the programmes being implemented by the government are funded almost entirely by donors (particularly those, such as the SAGE project, that deliberately target vulnerability). The emphasis on developing new districts, rather than bolstering the capacity of existing local authorities, suggests to many observers a greater preoccupation with political patronage than with genuinely engaging the active citizenship of conflict-affected populations.

Meanwhile, controversial government policies towards Karamoja demonstrate a belief that the state can change centuries-old livelihood systems simply by edict. There is little doubt that livelihoods in Karamoja are vulnerable, and that change is needed, but current policy seems to suggest that the mobility requirement of both livestock and people in such a harsh environment is not well understood.

This raises questions about research uptake. For example, while there is research and knowledge about the environmental constraints and requirements involved in pastoralist mobility in Karamoja, policies are still being designed which do not take this research into consideration. The issue is that this knowledge has not found a champion within government policymaking. Experience from elsewhere regarding pastoral policy suggests that changing both official policy and unofficial attitudes requires

painstaking work to engage policymakers in the process of research and analysis. While improved policies or interventions may or may not enhance the legitimacy of the state (or the particularly party in power), they are clearly important to the well-being of the affected population, and hence are an end in themselves.

A salient question from many post-conflict situations where there has been a prolonged humanitarian presence is whether or not long-term humanitarian assistance makes people dependent and undermines their own initiative long after the conflict (and the assistance) comes to an end. While dependency is easy to conceptualise, it is difficult to measure, and, despite all the discussion about dependency in the literature on Uganda, there is little convincing evidence one way or the other on this question. This makes it very difficult to measure whether or how the impact of long-term aid is changing in the post-conflict period.

Nevertheless, there are themes that can and should be investigated here. One involves simply tracking the extent to which aid comprises a component of consumption, and presumably such questions could be asked retrospectively. Sources of information such as the HEA, despite whatever qualms analysts might have about the methodology, do give an estimate of the extent to which consumption depends (or depended, in the case of past studies) on aid. One could argue that unconditional social protection transfers run the same risks as long-term humanitarian assistance, and raise the same questions about the impact of assistance on people's own initiatives in the current context. Asking this question would also help address the 'vulnerability vs. viability' issue raised earlier, and could help in targeting genuine vulnerability (which, after all, is the fundamental aim of social protection programmes).

Lastly, there is the question of the private sector. The private sector is presumed to be self-sustainable because it has the basic organising logic of the market and needs profitability to survive. There is relatively little evidence on the private sector in conflict-affected areas of Uganda—particularly in terms of livelihood support and the provision of basic services (and the private sector is generally not expected to deliver social protection services). There is a question regarding the extent to which government- or agency-led interventions engage with, build up or strengthen private sector actors. Likewise, a legitimate question remains as to whether strengthening private sector actors genuinely serves the interests of the rest of the population—and particularly whether it serves the interests of vulnerable groups.

Annex 2 presents more specific research questions.

# Annex

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

### Evidence Papers Protocol

In our general and technical tender for the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) we raised concerns about the current state of literature on fragile states and on service delivery, social protection and livelihoods. We argued that the literature tended to provide generic overviews of issues (sometimes even literature reviews of other literature reviews) rather than more rigorous empirical and context-specific analysis. We identified four core weaknesses:

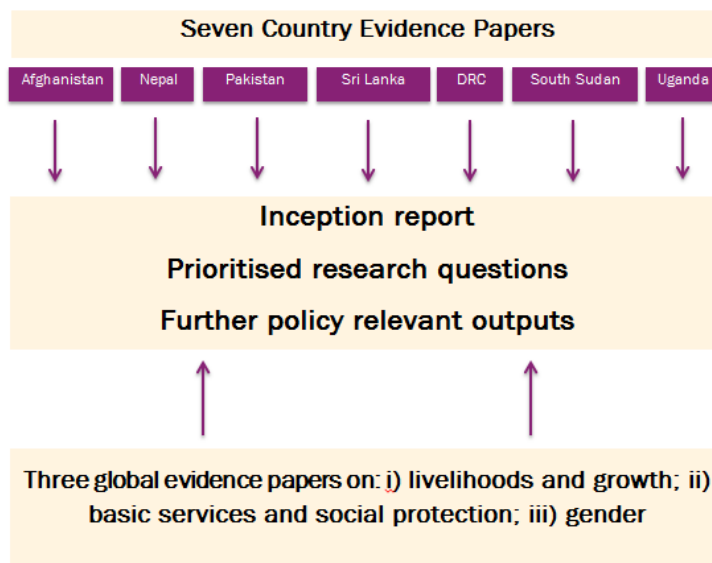
- A case study focus on small geographical pockets or individual sectors that led to a partial rather than comprehensive portrayal of people's own lives and livelihoods in fragile and conflict-affected situations;
- A lack of comparable studies due to the use of different methods, definitions and contexts;
- A focus on snapshots or stock-takes of livelihoods, social protection and service delivery and a lack of longitudinal analysis that enables our understanding, particularly at household and community level, to be dynamic instead of static; and
- Research that is isolated from rather than integrated into economic analyses of growth and development

The production of evidence papers during the inception phase of our RPC provides an opportunity to us to test the extent and depth of these weaknesses and to begin to tackle the weaknesses. In the inception phase of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) we will be producing 10 evidence papers (Figure 2):

- 1 Global synthesis of what we know about growth and livelihoods in fragile and conflict-affected situations
- 2 Global synthesis of what we know about basic services and social protection in fragile and conflict-affected situations
- 3 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Nepal
- 4 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Sri Lanka
- 5 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Afghanistan
- 6 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Pakistan
- 7 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in DRC
- 8 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in South Sudan
- 9 Synthesis of what we know about growth, livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Uganda
- 10 Gender paper

This paper describes our methodological protocol for the production of the evidence papers. It describes how we will capture elements of the systematic review methodology without carrying out a systematic review. A full systematic review would have limited usefulness given: the large number of questions that we have to answer; the lack of agreed terminology or complexity of many of the themes (and therefore search strings) that our research covers ('fragile', 'social cohesion', 'basic services', 'livelihoods', 'growth'); and that recent reviews have demonstrated that only very small numbers of high quality research outputs are identified by systematic reviews

**Figure 2 : Contribution of evidence papers to inception phase**



However, our evidence papers will certainly benefit from adapting some of elements of the systematic review, especially because we will have a large team working on the papers, spread across different geographical locations and institutional homes. Benefits include:

- More careful development of research questions (rather than research themes or areas), including deconstruction of research questions in terms of population, intervention, comparator and outcome. This is particularly important given the very broad parameters of our research;
- Ensuring a consistent sampling and interpretation of literature;
- Reducing bias in our analysis of policies and programmes;
- Systematically assessing research quality and using this to identify gaps in research outputs based on quality rather than quantity of outputs; and
- The opportunity to establish a baseline for assessing the current state of research and replicating our process in 5–6 years’ time to assess our impact

### Research Questions

Our research questions have been developed in consultation with RPC partners and affiliates and with DFID. They are significantly more complex than typical systematic review questions.

For evidence papers 1 –2 (Growth and Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection), authors will be required to answer the following questions:

- **People:** What is known about peoples’ own responses, disaggregated by gender, to conflict and their tactics for making a living and maintaining access to basic services and social protection?
- **Governance:** How do state and society interact in the institutional arrangements that mediate livelihoods, social protection and access to services? What are the gender dimensions of these interactions?
- **Aid:** What aid is being provided and its effectiveness in supporting access to basic services, livelihoods and social protection? What is known about the gendered impact of aid?
- **Private sector:** What is known about the role of the private sector in a) delivering services and social protection and b) stimulating multipliers and growth linkages?
- **Linkages:** What linkages between people-aid-governance determine outcomes in relation to livelihoods and access to social protection and basic services?
- **Data:** What current, gender-disaggregated data exists on poverty levels, livelihoods, growth, access to basic services, access to social protection and key health and nutrition indicators and what quality is it?

- **Quality:** What is the quality of the current evidence (including the extent to which gender is analysed)
- **Methods:** What methods are currently being used to research livelihoods, access to services and social protection
- **Gaps:** What gaps exist in the evidence, research methods and secondary data

For each of evidence papers 3– 5 (Afghanistan / Pakistan, Sri Lanka / Nepal, Uganda / South Sudan / DRC), authors will be required to answer the same questions:

- **People:** What are peoples' own responses, disaggregated by gender, to conflict and tactics for making a living and maintaining access to basic services?
- **Governance:** How do state and society interact in the institutional arrangements that mediate livelihoods, social protection and access to services? What are the gender dimensions of these interactions?
- **Aid:** What aid is being provided and its effectiveness in supporting access to basic services, livelihoods and social protection? What is known about the gendered impacts of aid?
- **Linkages:** What linkages between people-aid-governance determine outcomes in relation to livelihoods and access to social protection and basic services?
- **Private sector:** What is known about the role of the private sector in a) delivering services and social protection and b) stimulating multipliers and growth linkages?
- **Data:** What current, gender-disaggregated data exists on poverty levels, livelihoods, growth, access to basic services, access to social protection and key health and nutrition indicators and what quality is it?
- **Quality:** What is the quality of the current evidence (including the extent to which gender is analysed)
- **Methods:** The types of methods currently being used to research livelihoods, access to services and social protection
- **Gaps:** What gaps exist in the evidence, research methods and secondary data

For such a large research programme with multiple outputs, it is difficult to pin down the parameters of research questions as would be the case in a systematic review: there will be no single definition of *population, intervention, comparator and outcome*<sup>53</sup> that makes sense across all questions and countries. Guidelines and regular consultation will be used to ensure that across the team, there is some consistency in setting parameters.

### Searching and Recording Strategy

All of the evidence papers will be based on a thorough and systematic literature search. A broad range of relevant academic databases will be searched (see Appendix 1 for an initial list). The London-based team will coordinate the search so that there is no replication of effort across the different teams responsible for papers 1 – 5. For each evidence paper the team will list of databases/ sources to be used and the search terms that will be applied. Criteria will be developed for how to decide on the relevance of sources. The list of databases and sources, search terms and criteria will be shared between the different evidence paper teams to ensure a consistent and replicable approach. The London-based team (evidence papers 1 and 2) will lead on the identification of formal published literature, particularly that found in open and closed access journals. The country-based teams (evidence papers 3–5) will focus on grey literature specific to their respective countries. All teams will regularly share other literature that their searches uncover.

A database system (possibly EPPI Reviewer 4– to be confirmed) will be used to manage and code studies found during the review.

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<sup>53</sup> **Population** - who are you looking at? E.g. All beneficiaries of service delivery? Only poor people receiving services? All poor people? All people in fragile or conflict-affected countries? **Intervention**- what kind of programme/ change are you studying? E.g. receiving social protection, providing separate toilets for girls in schools, ensuring markets are regulated? **Comparator** - what are you comparing the intervention against? E.g. beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries; cash transfer programmes versus public works programmes, or comparing beneficiary situation before and after receiving services. **Outcome**- what impacts are you looking at? How income changes? How attitudes towards the state change? If girls' school attendance increases?

The following will therefore be developed jointly by the research assistants / evidence paper leaders and research directors over the next month:

- A list of databases and sources to be used
- Agreed search terms to be applied and definitions for terms
- Criteria for deciding on the relevance of articles and other literature to be included in the analysis
- An agreed matrix for analysing and classifying the results of these searches

All studies will record the search process and the criteria by which literature is included or excluded (what search terms are used, where results are found, why literature was excluded etc) in a way that will enable the studies to be replicated in 2015 and ensure that the analysis is transparent and objective.

Evidence papers 3–5 will also require a review of the grey literature including policy documents, evaluations and other unpublished documents. This should be gathered in-country and globally by consulting with key stakeholders (donors, aid agencies, government etc) in an iterative process with the stakeholder consultation.

The review will cover both content (what are the key issues raised in the literature) and make judgements about the quality of the evidence and methods used.

### Analysis

The results from these searches will be systematically analysed using an agreed matrix for classifying results. This will be developed by the London teams for the global syntheses and shared and adapted by the teams working evidence papers 3–5.

The analysis process for the global syntheses will be agreed in week commencing Monday 2nd May. It is anticipated that either

- 1 Specific sectors will be allocated to the four team members (RS, RM and 2 x research assistants) and each researcher will iteratively build an analysis of that sector with sectoral inputs from sector specialist; or
- 2 Research themes (especially people-aid-governance) will be divided between the researchers and they will iteratively build an analysis of that theme with inputs for sector leads; or
- 3 Based on this division of labour the teams will produce a shared analysis of quality and methods. The team for papers 1–2 will produce weekly reports on progress and findings and meet weekly to share results of analysis. These reports will be shared with those working on other evidence papers.

The process (for the global synthesis) will be shared with teams working on evidence papers 3–5 who will adapt it to fit the specific context for their work. It is anticipated that evidence Papers 3–5 will follow the shared outline to maximise comparative findings. A draft outline is proposed below which will be revised based on comments now and discussion with the research teams once the reviews are underway. A decision will need to be made about whether each evidence paper has two-three separate chapters for each countries, or whether each sections includes all (2 or 3) countries.

### Box 1: Draft outline for country evidence papers

Introduction – 1 page

Country Contexts – 3 pages

A section outlining the basic social, economic and political context of the two – three countries in question. It should include core indicators such as the percentage of people with access to clean water etc from sources such as the Human Development Index.

Livelihoods and growth – 15 pages

Basic services and social protection – 15 pages

Each of these sections should be broken down into sub-sections on:

**People:** What are peoples' own responses, disaggregated by gender, to conflict and tactics for making a living and maintaining access to basic services?

**Governance:** How do state and society interact in the institutional arrangements that mediate livelihoods, social protection and access to services? What are the gender dimensions of these interactions?

**Aid:** What aid is being provided and its effectiveness in supporting access to basic services, livelihoods and social protection? What is known about the gendered impacts of aid?

**Linkages:** What linkages between people-aid-governance determine outcomes in relation to livelihoods and access to social protection and basic services?

**Private sector:** What is known about the role of the private sector in a) delivering services and social protection and b) stimulating multipliers and growth linkages?

**Data:** What current, gender-disaggregated data exists on poverty levels, livelihoods, growth, access to basic services, access to social protection and key health and nutrition indicators and what quality is it?

**Quality:** What is the quality of the current evidence (including the extent to which gender is analysed)

**Methods:** The types of methods currently being used to research livelihoods, access to services and social protection

**Gaps:** What gaps exist in the evidence, research methods and secondary data

Conclusions – 6 pages



## Annex 2: Research questions and future partnerships

Considering the scope and content of the literature reviewed, the following research questions listed below emerged as those that could be considered by the Research Programme Consortium.

- 1 In Northern Uganda, the assumption is that the time between the end of the conflict and the present is 'enough' for people to recover and get on with 'development'. A fair amount of statistical and comparative data is available on livelihoods, but it doesn't really flesh out the story of what is happening on the ground.
  - What is actually understood as 'transition' by affected communities?
  - What is a reasonable time frame for transition?
  - What are the indicators that would inform policy?
  - How are people actually rebuilding their lives and livelihoods in the aftermath of conflict or forced disarmament?
  - How do people access basic services?
  - Do they have access to market information?
  - How are the livelihoods of different groups changing in terms of assets, especially livestock, opportunities, constraints and outcomes?
  - Who is vulnerable and to what?
  - What kind of customary social support still exists and how has it eroded?
- 2 What social protection programmes (broadly defined and both state and agency led) actually reach people?
  - What was the impact of the cessation of food aid?
  - What is the gap between the erosion of customary supports and state- or agency-led programmes?
  - Does any of this inform policies or programmes? Programmes seem to emphasise either provision of goods and services (often labelled 'relief') or economic growth (labelled 'development').
- 3 There are major gaps in understanding in terms of how people have been able to overcome the shock, stress and vulnerability of the conflict so as to inform policies and programmes that are reinforcing people's own abilities, resources and capacity to rebuild their lives and also to address issues related to perceived dependency. Numerous studies indicate a trend of 'male idleness' and youth unwilling or unable to recover livelihoods, especially in rural areas, linked to lack of skills, alcohol abuse or dependency on aid, but only Blattman et al. (2008) and Bozulli et al. (2010) examine the impact of mass violent conflict in Northern Uganda on individual expectations regarding the future.
  - Are these the reasons or are there psychosocial consequences of the conflict that have not yet been adequately explored?
  - Can social protection activities help people go out and engage in new and previous livelihood activities? What interventions are the most appropriate?
  - How is the depletion of physical assets linked to psychosocial well-being?
- 4 Are there changes in gender roles and relations in IDP camps?
  - Are these changes transferred back to areas of origin?
  - Have traditional roles reasserted themselves?
  - If so, to what extent?
  - Is the camp culture of male idleness disappearing?
  - Is alcohol consumption lessening?
  - On the other hand, is the increased role of women in income generation and livelihood decision making continuing, or are more traditional female roles re-emerging?

- 5 We know that migration has always been an important coping strategy for people in Karamoja, but how has the nature of migration changed in recent years? It seems people are going further, leaving permanently instead of seasonally, seeking work with strangers (as opposed to extended family or other connections) and moving to urban areas in much larger numbers. At the same time, these groups face persecution by the police and city councils in their destination (particularly cities in southern Uganda), as well as discrimination and prejudice from other Ugandans (in all locations).
  - What are the livelihood strategies adopted in urban areas?
  - What is the nature of access to social services in these areas?
  - How do the livelihoods and overall well-being of people who have migrated to urban areas compare with those who stayed behind?
  - How do remittances factor in?
  
- 6 As a result of recent government policies and of more pastoralists taking on agro-pastoral livelihoods, more households are resettling in agricultural areas in Karamoja.
  - How are livelihood strategies, gender relations and relations with systems of authority (including formal authority) evolving in these areas?
  - Is social service delivery more successful in these areas?
  - What is the longer-term sustainability of these settlements and the shift to agriculture, and what impact does this have on livelihood vulnerability?
  
- 7 The government continues to show reluctance on social protection programming.
  - What, exactly, distinguishes long-running humanitarian assistance programmes and social protection programmes—except that the former are funded on a one-year basis and the latter are planned on a three- to five-year basis, and may have more government involvement?
  - In both cases, the issue of the conditionality of transfers is up for debate, and the use of both food and cash as the medium of transfer is being considered.
  - Are social protection programmes ‘crowding out’ more traditional systems of social security, or have the latter eroded even more in the face of conflict than in chronic poverty contexts, and therefore social protection programmes are more needed?
  - Targeting vulnerability vs. targeting ‘viability’: does social protection fill the gap? If not, what are the consequences?
  - Is there anything to investigate on conflict sensitivity in social protection programmes? There seems to be little emphasis on this in Uganda.
  
- 8 There is a hypothesis in the Research Programme Consortium overview that post-conflict social protection and development programmes help to build state–civil society relations and support state-building objectives generally (which is very important to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) principles for engagement in fragile states). But there is also evidence to the contrary—because of poor services, corruption, understaffed district offices, etc. The proliferation of districts in Uganda plays into this—perceived as a form of building political patronage networks, even though it is shrouded in language about empowerment and decentralisation.
  - What is happening in terms of state–civil society relations?
  - Can social protection activities support these relations?
  - Do NGOs—particularly humanitarian agencies –have a state-avoiding or a state-engaging approach (or, for that matter, a private sector–avoiding or private sector–engaging approach)?
  - What gaps remain in existing legislation, and what legislation is missing, with respect to protection of the very poor? How can a supportive environment for social protection interventions be created? (Shepherd, 2011.)

9 Social protection programmes single out the elderly as vulnerable, but are there other vulnerable groups that need to be focused on?

- What about the youth? These are the ones who have known nothing but conflict for most of their lives.
- What can be put in place to support women who were abducted and to ensure their communities take them back? How is their livelihood recovery experience different from those of others? Is treatment different for those with children than for those without? How is re-entry complicated by the presence of the abductor or 'husband' living nearby?
- What evidence can be found to substantiate the fact that widows often do not feel comfortable asking relatives of their deceased husbands for help? (DSA preliminary findings.)
- In what ways can specially targeted poverty reduction programmes be implemented and monitored to the benefit of the chronically poor (particularly for orphans, people with disabilities and the elderly)? Which social protection interventions yield the maximum benefit for the largest number of people in chronic poverty? (Shepherd, 2011.)

10 There are continuing contradictions between customary and traditional justice systems.

- Are customary and traditional practices able to deal with the harms committed during the conflict? (Carlson and Mazurana, 2008.)
- Are they able to mediate disputes fairly and transparently?
- How is their post-conflict composition different given the war? Can they handle land disputes?
- Are there widespread abuses such as forced marriage?

### Partnership strategy

One overarching conclusion is that a potential major contribution of the Research Programme Consortium could be to partner with organisations (e.g. the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC)) that do large-scale quantitative data analysis. The consortium could complement these organisations' work by addressing the more qualitative questions that cannot be answered directly through quantitative data analysis—either because such kinds of data are not included in the survey or because many of the important qualitative questions cannot be asked in such a study. SLRC would also have a comparative advantage in local quantitative survey research.

## Annex 3: Search and prioritisation

### How did we search the existing literature?

'Acholi' 'Acholiland' 'conflict-affected Uganda' 'Karamoja' 'Karamojong' 'Karimojong' 'LRA-affected' 'north Uganda' 'northern Uganda' 'rebel-held'

In terms of published literature, using a few overview documents on social protection along with the guidance documents for the desired output of this project, the research team brainstormed a list of relevant terms and phrases, along with alternative spellings and names to include in the search. Search 'strings', or particular combinations of words and phrases, were used to search potential reservoirs of relevant information. The following combinations were used:

And

'Agriculture' 'aid' 'basic services' 'conflict' 'coping' 'coping strategies' 'education' 'fragile states' 'gender' 'Gilligan' 'governance' 'growth' 'health' 'humanitarian aid' 'infrastructure' 'internally displaced persons' OR 'IDP' 'intervention' 'land ownership' 'livelihoods' 'NGO' 'non-state actors' 'protection' 'peace building' 'private sector' 'reintegration' 'resilience' 'roads' 'sanitation' 'social cohesion' 'social protection' 'trade' 'urbanisation' 'water'

Although most of the documents reviewed were found using these terms, the research as a whole is not limited to this list. These terms were the starting point for the search, and more detailed searches were carried out as necessary depending on documents recovered. For example, if a paper on the topic of reintegration of IDPs yielded relevant references to further documents regarding disarmament or other pertinent information, a search for 'disarmament' AND 'northern uganda'/'north uganda' was performed in addition to retrieval of relevant documents based on references provided in the paper.

### Where did we search?

A wide net was cast in searching for relevant published literature related to livelihoods and social protection. The research team used a variety of academic databases, publisher sites and institutional websites to search for the various strings of relevant words and phrases decided on in advance.

Institutional websites were first searched for location-specific documents (ex. Karamoja) to see how many sources a given site had available. In some cases, the number of resources was limited, thus it was unnecessary to further narrow down the topic. In the case of larger institutions (such as World Bank) the search was narrowed to fit the thematic topics such as livelihoods, basic services and so on.

Institutional websites searched	Academic and publisher databases searched
<p>Chronic Poverty Research Centre (<a href="http://www.chronicpoverty.org/page/publications">http://www.chronicpoverty.org/page/publications</a>) Crisis State Research Centre, London School of Economics Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) (<a href="http://www.eprionline.com/what-we-do/research/">http://www.eprionline.com/what-we-do/research/</a>) Human Security Gateway (<a href="http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/">http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/</a>) International Labour Organization (<a href="http://www.ilo.org">www.ilo.org</a>) Poverty Action Lab (<a href="http://www.povertyactionlab.org/">http://www.povertyactionlab.org/</a>) SAS (<a href="http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/">http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/</a>) UNDP (<a href="http://www.undp.org">www.undp.org</a>) USAID ( <a href="http://www.usaid.gov/">http://www.usaid.gov/</a>) World Bank (<a href="http://siteresources.worldbank.org">http://siteresources.worldbank.org</a>) CAB Direct Google Scholar Ingenta JSTOR (African Studies; Population Studies; Public Policy and Administration; Economics) Project Muse PubMed Scopus Tufts Catalogue Wiley Interscience (All Economic; All Development Studies; All Political Science)</p>	<p>DFID Research for Development (<a href="http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/">http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/</a>) Feinstein International Center (<a href="http://www.fire-proxy.com/wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Feinstein+International+Center">http://www.fire-proxy.com/wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Feinstein+International+Center</a>) International Food Policy Research Institute (<a href="http://www.ifpri.org">www.ifpri.org</a>) OECD (<a href="http://www.oecd.org/home/0,2987,en_2649_201185_1_1_1_1_1,00.html">http://www.oecd.org/home/0,2987,en_2649_201185_1_1_1_1_1,00.html</a>) ReliefWeb (<a href="http://reliefweb.int/">http://reliefweb.int/</a>) Social Science Research Network (<a href="http://www.ssrn.com/">http://www.ssrn.com/</a>) UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (<a href="http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/overview.html">http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/overview.html</a>) Wahenga (<a href="http://www.wahenga.net">www.wahenga.net</a>) Academic OneFile EconLit Informaworld International Bibliography of the Social Sciences LexisNexis Academic Proquest Sage Journals (Public Administration; Economics and Development; Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution) SpringerLink Web of Science</p>

Many of the resources related to Karamoja came from earlier research, with a large number obtained from experts in the field (such as Liz Stites and colleagues at Save the Children in Uganda).

In terms of the ‘grey’ literature, given the breadth of issues and the sheer volume, a representative sample of the available and most commonly cited documents, including locally conducted primary research and studies not available on the internet, was used.

Furthermore, a large amount of grey literature was identified in-country from various government and agency sources. However, acquiring relevant grey literature was challenging. Some stakeholders were reluctant to share documents they claimed weren’t ready, were not immediately available (through poor record keeping or general reluctance) or were of dubious quality (e.g. social protection mapping). Some of the grey literature identified also lacked basic bibliographic information such as a date and proper referencing to other documents.

### How did we prioritise what to summarise and synthesise?

The initial searches above resulted in the identification of some 300 documents and peer-reviewed articles. These were then prioritised according to the relevance of the paper or document to the study, after a brief reading of the executive summary or abstract. In all, about 184 documents were read, summarised and incorporated into the synthesis this paper represents.

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