

# Situational Analysis of Food, Nutrition and Income Security in Karamoja

“A normalising view of Karamoja”

Alexandra Barrantes & Matteo Caravani

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The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Food Programme or the Government of Uganda.

## Acronyms

ACF	Action Against Hunger ( <i>Action contre la Faim</i> )
AISE	Adverse Incorporation and Social Exclusion
ASM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
AU	African Union
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CPMCs	Community Project Management Committees
CRM	Community Resource Mapping
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DGSM	Department of Geological Surveys and Mining
DFID	Department for International Development
ECO	Ecological Christian Organisation
EFTAF	Empowering Farmers through Agribusiness and Financial Services
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSNA	Food Security and Nutrition Assessment
GoU	Government of Uganda
IDI	In-depth Interview
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
SP	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPA	Innovation for Poverty Action
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JSTOR	Journal Storage
KIDP	Karamoja Integrated Development Plan
KIDDP	Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme
KII	Key Informant Interview
KNRC	Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MEMD	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MLG	Ministry of Local Government
MOH	Ministry of Health
MP	Member of Parliament
NAES	National Agricultural Education Strategy
NCA	Nutrition Causal Analysis

## Acronyms

NDP	National Development Plan
NFA	National Forrest Authority
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
NUSAF II	Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Programme
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
SAGE	Uganda Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment
SCG	Senior Citizens Grant
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UDHS	Uganda Demographic Health Survey
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UGX	Ugandan Shilling
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPF	Uganda Police Forces
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loan Associations
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
YLP	Youth Livelihood Programme

## **Executive Summary**

After decades of failing development aid, the World Food Programme (WFP) in Uganda has committed itself to identifying innovative approaches to better address food, nutrition and income insecurity in the Karamoja sub-region (referred to as Karamoja) of north-eastern Uganda. For this purpose, Development Pathways was contracted to undertake a situation analysis to uncover the underlying causes of food, nutrition and income insecurity in Karamoja, and to generate ideas for innovative social policy solutions and provide recommendations.

The situation analysis demonstrates that development across Uganda is highly uneven. In several instances Karamoja scores worst when compared with other regions in terms of food security, poverty, education and healthcare indicators. The roots of Karamoja's economic impoverishment can be traced back to the colonial period, when it was treated as a region of "exception" within the overall rule of the Ugandan State. This treatment resulted from a longstanding perception of transhumant pastoralism (the primary livelihood strategy of the Karamojong people) as "primitive", "irrational" and "violent". Over years, such treatment has relegated the region to the margins of the state formation process. As such, the inhabitants of Karamoja lack proper legal frameworks as well as benefits in terms of public goods and infrastructure, and legitimate political representation.

Despite the long-term presence of development partners in Uganda, the development gap between Karamoja and the rest of the country has widened since independence. Interventions have thus far set out to "treat the symptoms" of chronic food, nutrition and income insecurity in the region, as opposed to addressing the structural causes. As such, they have not had a significant impact on communities in the region. Over the past three decades humanitarian aid, targeted poor relief and workfare schemes have proven to be the most popular interventions carried out by development partners and by the government. While such interventions may have somewhat positively contributed to the avoidance of famine episodes, they have never succeeded in advancing the population's overall well-being and inclusion in the country's development.

Furthermore, "development" in Karamoja has consistently been conceptualised as agricultural by the government and development partners. Yet, with semi-arid lands due to repeated drought, unpredictable rainfalls and consistent below-average crop yield per hectare, agriculture is proving to be untenable as a major livelihood strategy in the region. If agriculture is continually promoted in this way, the Karamojong will never be able to produce enough food for their own subsistence (unless there are significant investments in irrigation).

Based on relevant literature and research findings from this study, it is right to say that the underlying causes of “failed development” in Karamoja cannot be traced to the Karamojong’s own failings. Over decades, the Karamojong have largely been subjected to the stigmatising characterisation of themselves as “lazy”, “idle” and “aid dependent”. They cannot be understood using a narrow sectoral approach. Such an exogenous negative narrative has been internalised by many Karamojong, heavily impacting notions of their identity and self-worth.

To shed light upon how and why Karamoja continually performs worst in terms of national average indicators, extensive available data has been disaggregated by age and gender from a lifecycle approach. This information has further been enriched with a livelihood analysis, thus revealing specific obstacles each age and gender group faces across a wide range of economic activities. If the government and development partners do not acknowledge the livelihood transition that has occurred over the past fifty years – which is causing increasing impoverishment and “intersecting inequality” – this may become the cause of further destitution. In this regard, the “business-as-usual approach” of government and development partners within the project cycle should be re-thought from scratch. The current livelihoods diversification requires innovative policies and projects and new ways of collecting data. Unless new efforts are made to improve the reliability of quantitative data, the designing of effective development policies will remain highly limited.

While the issues affecting the region are somehow unique compared to other rural areas in Uganda, this report illustrates that the “exceptionalism” prism – usually cast by the government and development partners onto the region – has been responsible for the reproduction of such negative development indicators. Paradoxically, a “normalising view” is a progressive approach to positively include Karamoja as a contributor to overall socio-economic development of the country. For this reason, the report looks at what are generally neglected topics in the region, such as unemployment and labour market dynamics and issues related to land tenure and power relations.

Finally, the situation analysis proposes a different interpretation, whereby the Karamojong’s problems are cast as being more similar to those of other rural areas of northern Uganda and related to issues such as deficient universal goods (healthcare, education and social security), land rights, low wages and high unemployment rates. The result is a report that will be useful for policy makers – both government and development partners – since specific problems are identified and appropriate policy interventions are provided.

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# 1 Introduction

**The Karamoja sub-region of Uganda has a long history of failed development.** For decades the region and its people have been perceived as “lagging behind” the rest of Uganda and as an “exception” to the national development process. As such, questions such as “what is wrong with Karamoja?” and “what can be done to help Karamoja?” abound. For decades disparaging myths and discourses about the region and its people have circulated among outsiders. What’s more, such narratives have been internalised by the Karamojong and have come to inform their own perception of themselves.

**An in-depth examination of the region offers a different picture of structural exogenous constraints and of potential wealth given its natural resource base and the resilience of its people.** Despite the myths and prevalent negative narrative surrounding Karamoja, the region is rich in natural resources that the local populations maintained through ecologically sustainable livelihoods over centuries. If the region and its inhabitants were better incorporated into existing national social and economic policies, the chances of enhancing its development could be considerably improved.

**In this report we propose a different interpretation, whereby the Karamojong’s problems are viewed as similar to those of other rural areas of northern Uganda (and other parts of the world).** They are related to issues such as lack of land rights, limited employment opportunities and marginalisation by the central State (Caravani, 2017). Its marginalisation should be understood as suffering from poor physical and social infrastructure, and from the generally negative attitudes of other Ugandans towards the “people of the North” (ibid.). Furthermore, the “exceptionalism” prism that has been cast upon Karamoja is a typical example of marginalisation and could be understood as an “adverse incorporation” into overall development in Uganda.

**This study seeks to interpret Karamoja’s story differently, by uncovering some of the challenges faced by the Karamojong across the lifecycle.** A lifecycle analysis is helpful for revealing some of the main vulnerabilities and stresses faced by people during different stages of their lives. In addition, the Karamojong’s own perceptions of themselves are included as a way of constructing a more comprehensive story of what transpires in the region (instead of focusing on “what is wrong” with the Karamojong). There is usually only a single narrative used by other Ugandans and external parties to describe Karamoja, which focuses on how poor, insecure and vulnerable the region and its people are.

**A detailed analysis of the region should also focus on the challenges faced by the Karamojong from a multisectoral perspective.** To understand issues around vulnerabilities and food, nutrition and income insecurity, it is imperative to examine linkages to other

sectoral factors such as income sources and livelihoods, access to services, migration, and land tenure, among others. These factors will be considered in this report.

**This report can be split into a descriptive section (Chapters 2 and 3) and an explanatory section (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) which focus on the findings of the study.** The structure of the report is as follows: Chapter 2 covers a brief historical background of Karamoja and the particular pastoralist and traditional setting. Chapter 3 focuses on the current and biggest imbalances surrounding poverty, inequality, population and demographic structures, and some equity aspects such as disability and gender. This chapter also introduces the lifecycle approach, describing the key stresses and vulnerabilities faced by the Karamojong across different age groups, as well as highlighting views on vulnerability. Chapter 4 outlines key income sources and provides an incipient account of the labour market in Karamoja. Key explanations for “failed development” are provided in Chapter 5, focusing on: the imagined and constructed negative perceptions of Karamoja; the weakening of traditional social norms and the economy; governance, power structures and adverse incorporation; the environment and climate change; economic constraints and corruption; inadequate and poor quality public services (including social security); issues surrounding migration; land tenure; lack of data and proper planning tools for development; and concerns about dissonance of development interventions. Finally, Chapter 6 outlines the report’s conclusions.

**Research shows that Karamoja receives a significant level of investment by development partners.** A Karamoja Donors Mapping Report (2016) showed that approximately 89 million euros was invested in the region in 2017 by the 10 major bilateral donors<sup>1</sup> (USAID, 2016a). Yet, the situation has barely changed: there has been little improvement in the economy nor in terms of human development indicators. One issue to be considered further is what this total investment would look like if it were translated into a monthly payment for each inhabitant in Karamoja.

**The findings highlight that before now, the paradigm on food, nutrition and income insecurity in Karamoja has been understood rather narrowly.** Rather than addressing the structural issues behind the existing vulnerabilities and insecurities (and coming up with overall strategies that examine issues such as land tenure, labour market opportunities, access to health and education, access to markets, and investment in social protection across the lifecycle), the focus of programmes, research, interventions and investments in Karamoja has, to date, been mostly projectised, thus somewhat narrow in scope.

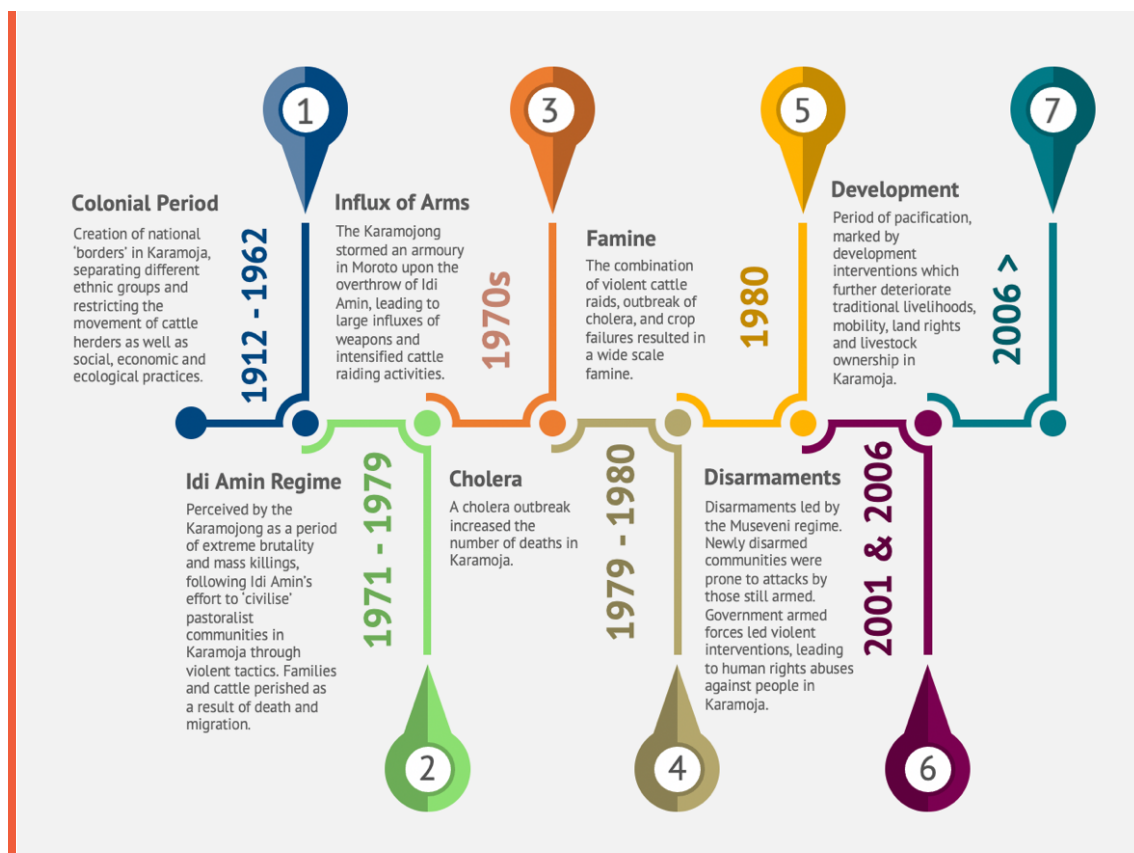
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<sup>1</sup> The ten donors are: Department for International Development (UK), USAID, World Bank, Irish Aid, SIDA (Sweden), EU, Germany, Japan, KOICA (Korea) and Italy. Together they comprise a significant majority of the external funds that are provided to Karamoja.

## 2 The historical context of Karamoja

In order to understand the causes of the current situation of chronic food, nutrition and income insecurity in Karamoja, a historical perspective is crucial (Caravani, 2017). Figure 2-1 sets out a simple, historical timeline of the region.

Figure 2-1: Historical timeline for the Karamoja region



Source: Development Pathways, based on historical timeline exercises during field research.

In the pre-colonial period, “[...] pastoral mobility was an essential aspect of sustainable production in the Karamoja region” (Ocan, 1992: 123). The initial contours of the “problem” of Karamoja were set by a combination of prohibiting herders using surrounding resources, forced destocking of herds, and the attempted resettlement of the Karamojong. The colonial period was marked by an influential and detrimental impact on the traditional Karamojong livelihood systems. The British were the first to create national “borders” in Karamoja that separated different ethnic groups and restricted their social, economic and ecological practices. The process was initiated as early as the 1920s by setting regional boundaries. In the 1940s, significant areas of land were demarcated as “forest reserves” and, in the 1950s, as “game reserves,” further restricting the movement

of Karamojong cattle herders and excluding them from key grazing areas (Mamdani et al., 1992).

**While in the pre-colonial period herders were able to move easily within communal grazing land, the new border demarcations inadvertently and inaccurately re-defined these traditional movements as “cross-border movements”.** As the formation of the Ugandan State progressed, the gradual restrictions on movement – a fundamental livelihood strategy – essentially crippled the Karamojong’s livestock economy. Respondents today, in retrospect, associate their memories before the arrival of the *muzungu* (white people) as their last vestiges of life as large herders. They view subsistence farming as only a marginal/supplementary activity and believe (even if a romanticised view) that nothing was “lacking” back then. Nonetheless, the *muzungu* are also viewed favourably due to the activities undertaken by missionaries to reduce malaria, to introduce yellow fever vaccinations and to provide seasonal food relief and formal education.

**When asked to recall the past, some of the most pain-filled responses are associated with**

*“We called his school the ‘slaughter school’.” (Elderly male, FGD).*

*“They [Amin’s soldiers] tampered with our beauty – they forced us to chew our beads. If we did not, they would kill us. They would force the men to eat their hides – they would say ‘Who asked you to wear this?’” (Elderly females, FGD).*

**Idi Amin, who’s regime (1971-1979) has been described as a period of extreme brutality and mass killings.** According to the respondents, Idi Amin was determined to “civilise” the “naked” Karamojong, largely portrayed as wild people who travelled in the bush with their cattle. A series of inhumane, brutal tactics were

employed to punish the people of Karamoja for adhering to a “primitive” way of life in an attempt to “modernise” and intimidate them into assimilation. Women were victimised and sexually assaulted (often in front of their husbands) while men were rounded up and shot dead. Those who agreed to “wear clothes” – synonymous with becoming “appropriately civilised” – were rewarded, and those who did not were killed. There are accounts of mass graves of people in various parts of Karamoja such as *Nawaikorot*.

**The Amin period consequently had a significant impact on household composition and**

*“A lot of women became widows, and we lost our main bread winners – the men.” (Older woman, FGD).*

**families.** Families and cattle perished as men were killed by soldiers while many migrated to other parts – a sign of

increasing violence in the region. Upon the overthrow of Idi Amin in 1979, the Karamojong stormed an armoury in Moroto and stole guns, resulting in intensified cattle raiding activities in the Karamoja region.

**The theft of guns in Moroto contributed to three decades of violent cattle-raiding and conflict among different sections of the Karamojong, who fought over the “unequal” sophistication of guns and access to livestock in the region** (Gray,

*“The Matheniko [in Moroto] used these guns to attack us [Dodoth] and other people. Around this time, the Jie from Kotido constantly raided us [Dodoth].”* (Elderly males, FGD).

2003; Knighton, 1990 and 2006; Mirzeler and Young, 2000; Olowo-Onyango, 2010; Stites et al., 2007 cited in African Union, 2010).

In addition, raids were an easy way to obtain the cattle needed for part of the system of exchange in marriage arrangements. Raids were, ultimately, an attempt at redistributing the cattle across the different sections of the Karamojong. For example, the Bokora and Dodoth lost most of their herds to raids by the Matheniko and Jie (Caravani, 2017). To further compound the situation, consecutive years of crop failures and a cholera outbreak brought about a devastating famine in 1980 (ibid.).

**Respondents across the board share a common belief that “the blood of our people cursed the land”.** Harvests were still good when Idi Amin was in power, however the locals believe that he cursed their land and, as a result, they have experienced droughts ever since the end of his regime. During

*“Cholera was killing us on one hand and cattle raids on the other.”* (Elderly female).

*“There was no cultivation of food; no animal fit to eat. This almost wiped out all people.”* (Elderly males, FGD).

the 1980 famine, cattle perished, and people migrated in large numbers out of the area to escape the hunger.

**With the widespread use of guns, “revenge killings” became prevalent, provoking high levels of physical insecurity.** Eventually, the conflict affected the migration patterns of cattle herders and many migrated from the kraals towards arid and bare areas of land. Essentially, most of the 1980s were characterised by raids, killings, looting and theft. These years also signalled the arrival of many development partners (both aid agencies and NGOs) that have remained in the region ever since (Caravani, 2017).

**A new period began with the establishment of the Museveni regime.** President Museveni’s rule can be marked by two different periods: the first – between 1986 and 2006 – showed almost indifference/disinterest towards the region. The second – from 2006 onwards – has been characterised by active involvement through the disarmament process and development interventions (ibid.). As the report will show, this period could be characterised as one of “adverse incorporation”.

**The voluntary disarmament process began in 2001 but was stalled as the government became enmeshed in fighting the rebels of Joseph Kony in northern Uganda.**

*“On reaching Sudan, they often continued attacking us to steal cows even after we were disarmed.” (Elderly female, FGD).*

*“At least now, thanks to disarmament, we may be dying of hunger but at least not due to gun shots.” (Elderly female, FGD).*

The “real disarmament” only began in 2006, bringing with it a great deal of suffering. People denounced others who owned guns, thus creating an atmosphere of mistrust. Some people hid with their

cattle and weapons in Sudan to escape the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF). The disarmament of 2006 is generally remembered by the people in Karamoja as a violent moment, with UPDF troops widely accused of human rights abuses against the local people. In addition, disarmament campaigns undermined security, as newly disarmed communities became vulnerable and prone to attacks by those who were still armed. Nevertheless, on reflection, many respondents still view the disarmament as necessary, as it eventually resulted in the emergence of sustained peace in the region and country as a whole. However, this period is also associated with severe food and nutrition insecurity and the loss of natural resources, and with a push by government towards sedentary agriculture.

**The timeline portrays a region that is not a “special case”, but a repetition of history from elsewhere in the world that has experienced the fallout of invasion and colonisation.** It is a story of an indigenous population that has been dispossessed and disempowered by greater, vested interests seeking to modernise and appropriate land for the development of a nation state. At first glance, the Karamojong of today represent a people that have undergone a process of pacification after a prolonged period of violent conflict. However, the political process of pacification and rendering transhumant livestock began during the colonial period with the creation of borders, state appropriation of communal grazing land and, finally, a concerted, intensive effort to convert transhumant agro-pastoralists into sedentary farmers (Caravani, 2017). The livelihood transformation ultimately led to the deterioration of three critical aspects of Karamojong traditional livelihood systems: 1) mobility; 2) communal grazing land rights ownership; and 3) livestock keeping (ibid.).

## 3 Current context<sup>2</sup>

**Despite recent national economic growth and political stability in Uganda, development in the country remains highly uneven** (Caravani, 2017). While the southern and central areas have experienced growing economic development for more than a generation following civil war, the northern region has endured on-going civil conflicts and political and economic instability (ibid.). The Karamoja<sup>3</sup> subregion in the North Eastern part of the country, inhabited by interrelating pastoral and agro-pastoral groups, is one of the country's poorest areas. It has had the lowest Human Development Indicator (HDI) at 0.292 and the worst socio-economic indicators in Uganda in recent decades (UNDP, 2008).<sup>4</sup> The region of Karamoja has also had the highest maternal and infant mortality, the lowest primary school enrolment and the lowest life expectancy in the country (UDHS, 2011). While the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) officially classified Karamoja as a region of 'protracted crisis' as recently as 2010, in reality relief operations and food aid distributions in the region date as far back as 1964 (Caravani, 2017). Since then, the Karamojong<sup>5</sup> have continued to experience chronic poverty and conflict, as well as high levels of malnutrition and the loss of livelihoods for many (Gray, 2000).

**This Chapter covers some of the main challenges faced by the Karamojong.** The subsections will cover poverty, inequality and consumption dynamics in Karamoja, a brief overview on the demographics of the region and information on persons with disabilities and gender. Subsequently, the report moves on to use a lifecycle perspective to analyse vulnerabilities across age groups as well as outlining the Karamojong's own perceptions around vulnerabilities and stresses they face.

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<sup>2</sup> The current context pertains to when the research was undertaken and when this report was finalised by Development Pathways in 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The area referred to as "Karamoja" in this report comprises the current seven administrative districts of: Kaabong, Kotido, Abim, Moroto, Napak, Nakapiripirit and Amudat.

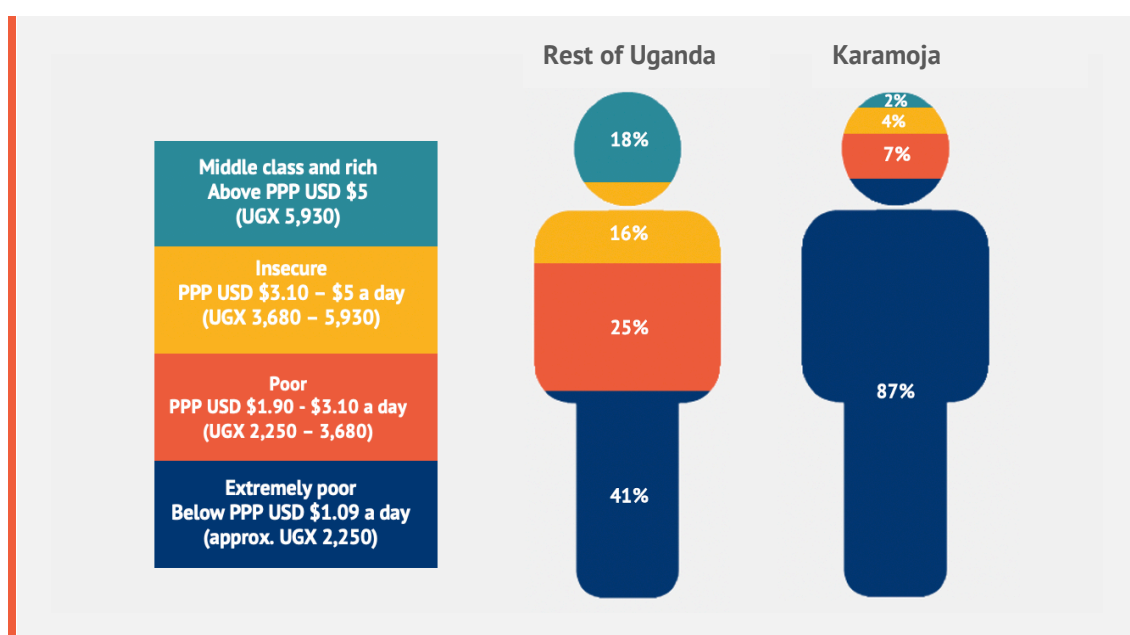
<sup>4</sup> Inhabitants of Karamoja have a life expectancy of 47.7 years compared to a national life expectancy of 59.2, a literacy rate of 21% compared to a national average of 63% and an infant mortality rate of 105 (per 1000 live births) compared to an average of 54 (per 1000 live births) for the whole of Uganda (Papabero et al., 2015).

<sup>5</sup> The term Karamojong is used to refer to the inhabitants of the districts of Karamoja, as listed above (footnote 2). It includes the sub-ethnic groups of the Dodoth (Kaabong), Jie (Kotido), Pokot (Amudat), Bokora (Napak), Matheniko (Moroto), Lobwar (Abim) and Pian (Nakapiripirit).

### 3.1 Poverty, inequality and consumption dynamics in Karamoja

Undoubtedly, Karamoja is the poorest sub-region of Uganda, with three quarters of the population living below the poverty line according to the 2012 National Household Study.<sup>6</sup> This is more than three times the percentage of the population living below the poverty line in Uganda as a whole. Figure 3-1 shows the percentage of people living below distinct per capita consumption levels in both Karamoja and Uganda. In Karamoja, over 85 per cent of the population lives on daily consumption of less than UGX 2,250 (PPP \$1.90) per day, while almost everyone has consumption below UGX 5,930 (PPP \$5) per day. Almost everyone, therefore, should be regarded as living in poverty. This image supports the narratives picked up during the research, as people in Karamoja still considered poverty to be widespread, and hence did not understand why some people were considered more vulnerable than others for development programmes (to be discussed further in Chapter 5).

**Figure 3-1: Different income groups according to international standards, 2012**



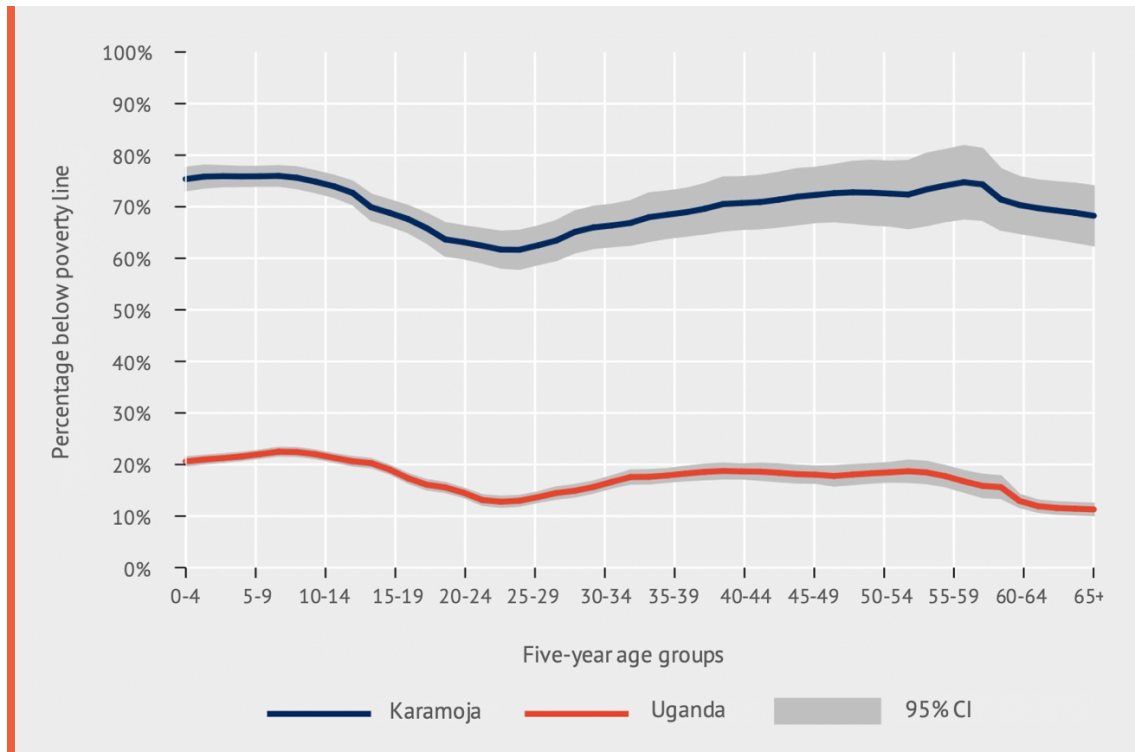
Source: *Development Pathways* (calculations using UNHS 2012/13 data). UGX values are in 2015 equivalent values.

In addition, as shown in Figure 3-2, for every 5-year age group the percentage of persons living below the poverty line is consistently and significantly higher in Karamoja relative to national levels.

<sup>6</sup> Uganda's National Household Surveys.



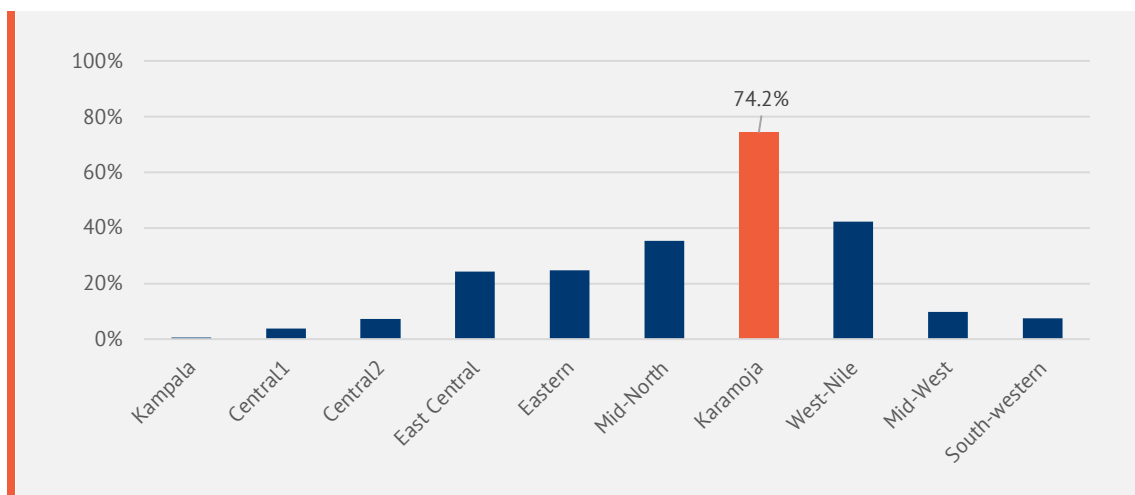
**Figure 3-2: Poverty headcounts for Karamoja and Uganda as a whole, by 5-year age groups in 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/13 data). Smoothing was done by using local polynomial regressions.

Figure 3-3 shows the poverty headcount ratio by sub-region. It indicates that whilst Karamoja hosts a relatively small share of Uganda’s total population (just 3.4 per cent), it has the highest poverty headcount distribution. Almost three quarters (74.2 per cent) of Karamoja’s population live below the poverty line.

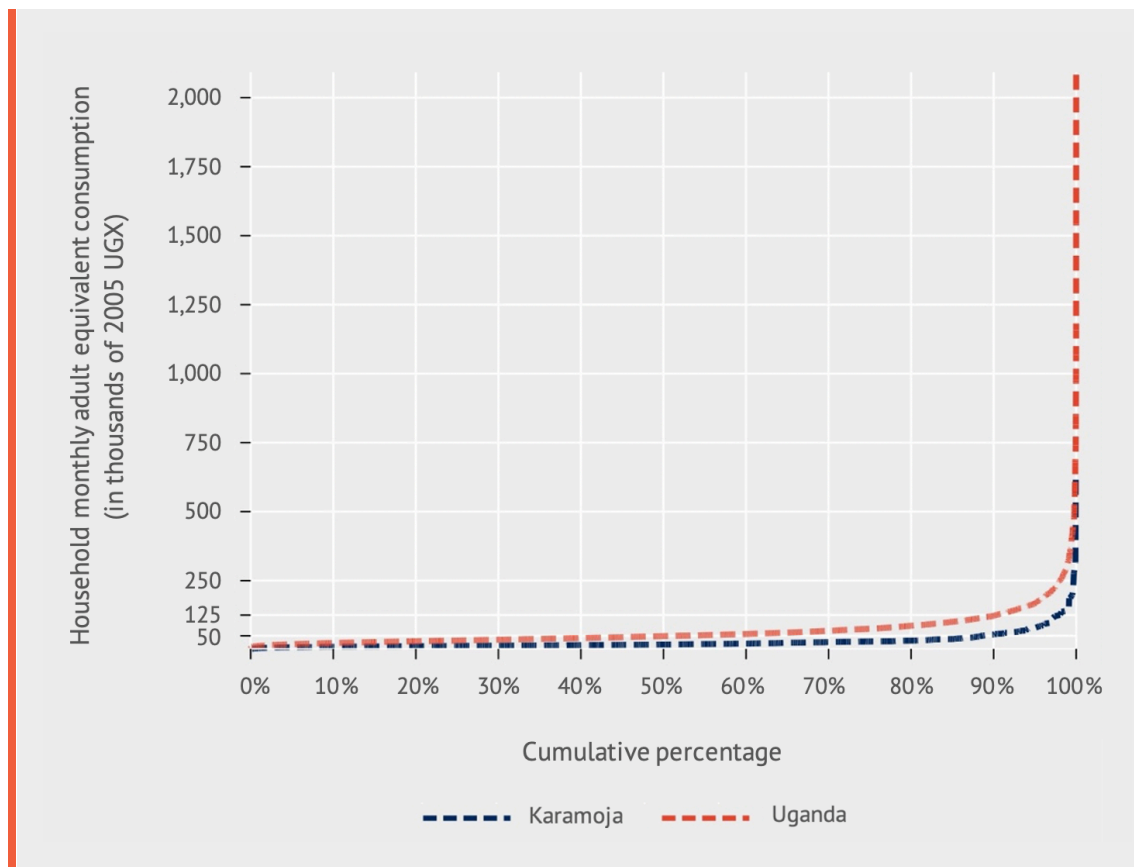
**Figure 3-3: Poverty headcount distribution by sub-regions of Uganda, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/13 data).

**Furthermore, Karamoja is a highly unequal society.** Karamoja, in 2012, presented the highest Gini coefficient across all of Uganda's sub-regions at 0.426, and a significantly higher co-efficient than Uganda as a whole (at 0.394). As Figure 3-4 indicates, there is relatively little difference between the consumption of almost all the households in Karamoja and it is only among the top quintile that consumption increases significantly. So, inequality is defined as a tiny proportion of the population as relatively well-off and the vast majority living in poverty.

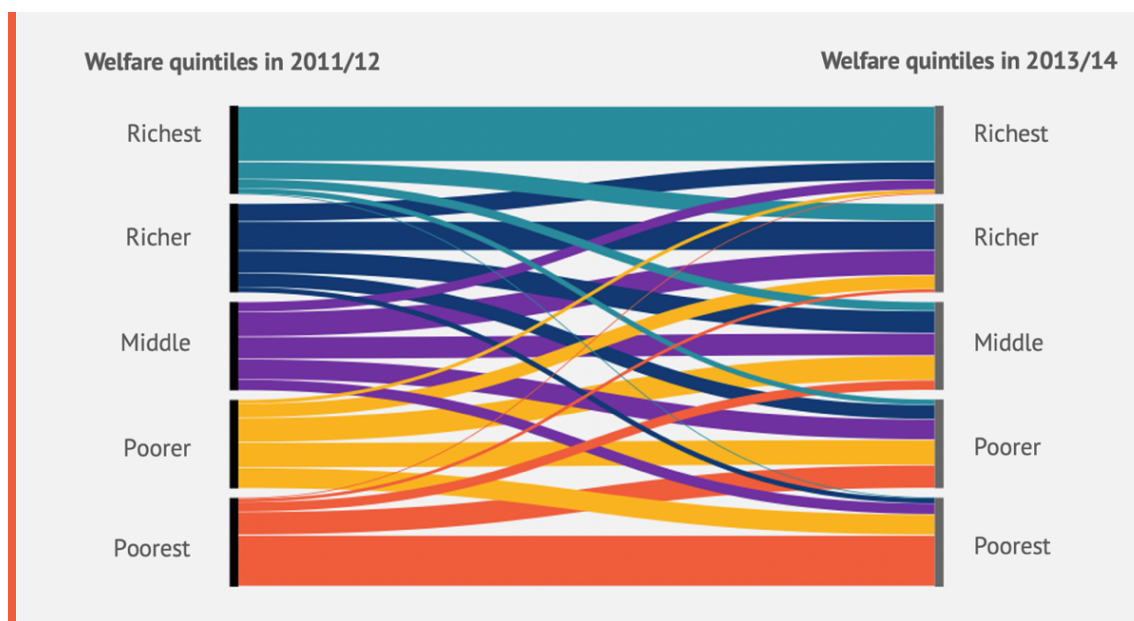
**Figure 3-4: Cumulative distribution of household monthly adult equivalent consumption in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/13 data).

Moreover, a glimpse at the impact of crises and shocks on the volatility of family incomes for Ugandans provides an additional factor to take into consideration with regards to vulnerability. Figure 3-5 shows the dynamic status of welfare between the different quintiles. Hence, any small shock a household suffers, might knock people's wellbeing backwards significantly.

**Figure 3-5: Changes in ranking of households according to consumption between 2011 and 2013**



Source: Kidd and Gelders (2016).

**Shocks and stresses are a key element in understating vulnerabilities across the lifecycle globally, also evidenced in Karamoja.** As illustrated in Table 3-1 below, people in Karamoja face a range of shocks and risks from normal life circumstances across the lifecycle (the death of a household member, sickness, loss of employment, among others), as well as the impacts of rising food prices.

### 3 Current context

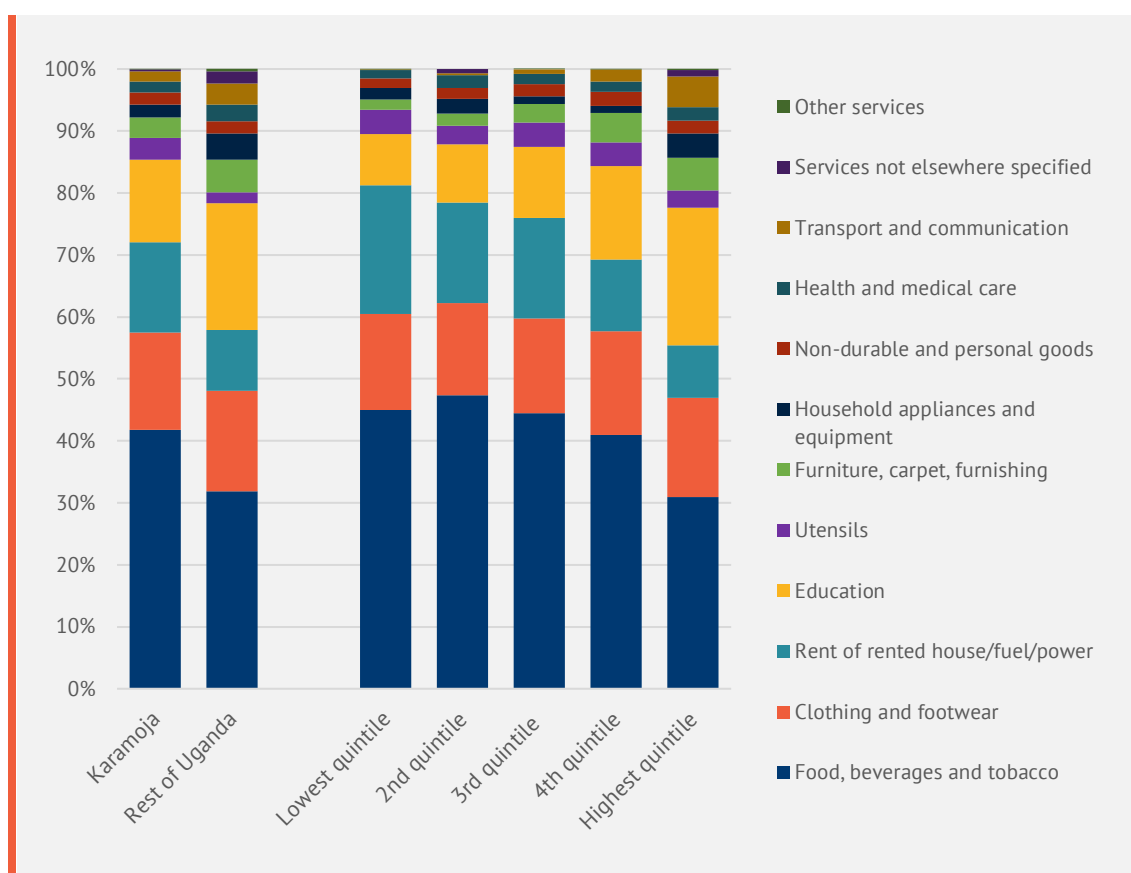
**Table 3-1: Main shocks faced by households**

Percentage of households across the type of shocks (in the month prior to the survey) by district, EHV, sex of household head										
	Abim	Amudat	Kaabong	Kotido	Moroto	Nakapiripirit	Napak	<b>Karamoja</b>	EVH card holder	Female-headed HHs
Loss of employment / reduced salary / wages	11.4	0.1	0.9	0.3	5	3.5	0.1	<b>3</b>	3	3
Crop loss due to rodents	14.1	6.8	12.2	0.3	10	9.2	0.4	<b>8</b>	8	9
Death of household members / funerals	2	0.6	5.8	1.3	2.6	3.8	3.7	<b>3</b>	3	4
High food prices	33.9	42.3	33.4	51.3	37.6	19.9	26.7	<b>35</b>	35	42
High fuel / transportation prices	2.2	1.8	0.4	0.8	2.2	1.4	1.2	<b>1</b>	1	1
Debt to reimburse	4.1	1.4	2.5	0.5	7.2	1.6	7.9	<b>4</b>	4	4
Floods, heavy rains, drought, etc.	14.7	30.6	19.9	35.2	13.3	9.3	17.7	<b>20</b>	20	14
Sickness / disease	5.2	4.5	11.5	3.7	15.7	4	22.6	<b>10</b>	10	11
No difficulty mentioned	12.6	12.1	13.4	6.7	6.3	47.4	19.8	<b>17</b>	17	11

Source: FSNA (Jan/2016), Table 4.

The impacts of shocks are a particular concern when examining the share of expenditures of broad items across the households in Karamoja. Figure 3-6 shows how, in Karamoja, food expenditures amount to over 40 per cent of overall household expenditures across the different quintiles. Thus, any shocks or stresses will have a stark impact on food consumption by households.

**Figure 3-6: Share of expenditure by broad household items in Karamoja compared to the rest of Uganda and by consumption quintiles in Karamoja, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/13 data).

**There is a prevalence of food insecurity across Karamoja.** Figure 3-7 demonstrates that

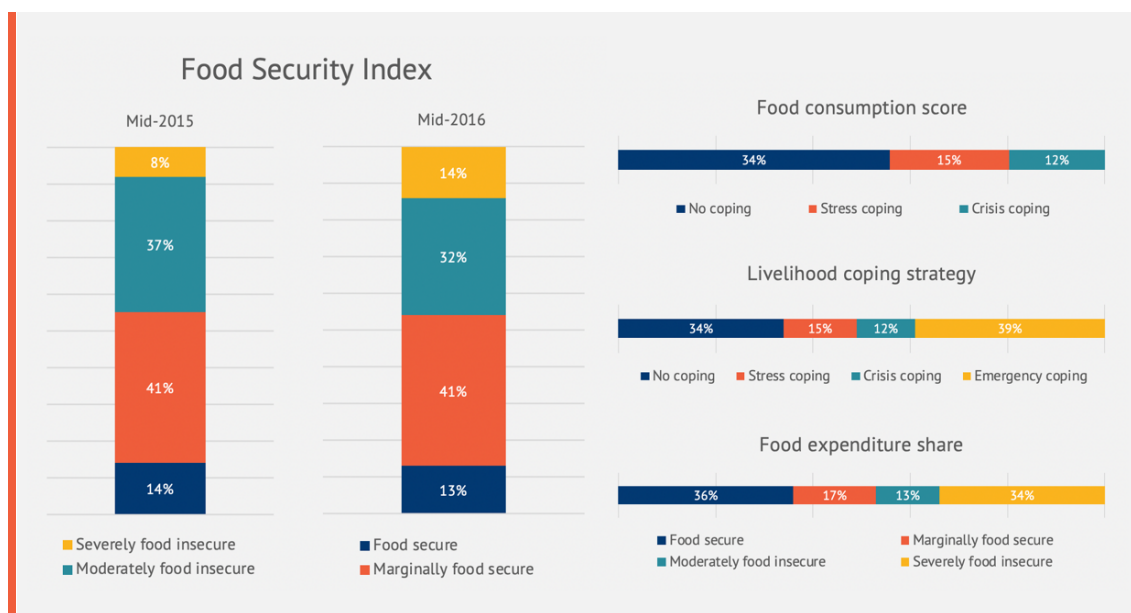
*“Hunger is eating all of them.”* (Elderly man, SCG beneficiary).

*“Food is practically absent – ‘Lotekonyen’ – we stare blankly.”* (Adult female, FGD).

nearly half of all households had moderate or severe food insecurity in 2015 and 2016. Moreover, the percentage of households with moderate or severe food insecurity – as measured

by the food expenditure share – increased from 34 per cent in mid-2015 to 47 per cent in mid-2016, and the proportion of households falling into the severe food insecurity category increased over that period (Mathys, Cashin, & Sethuraman, 2017).

**Figure 3-7: Food security index in Karamoja for mid-2015 and mid-2016 and its components<sup>7</sup>**



Source: FSNA July 2016 and June 2015 reports.

**There are significant interlinkages between food, nutrition, income insecurities and other vulnerabilities faced by the Karamojong.** As a result, there is a need to further examine these challenges from an inter-sectoral and multidimensional perspective.

## 3.2 Demographics

### 3.2.1 General

**The population of Karamoja, which amounts to around 3 per cent<sup>8</sup> of the population of Uganda, is geographically dispersed.** On average, there are 35 people per square kilometre, which is well below Uganda's 173 people average per square km.<sup>9</sup> Of course, population density varies significantly across districts, but no district is as densely populated as the Ugandan average. Long distances and isolation were reported on many

<sup>7</sup> Food Consumption Score is a composite score based on dietary diversity, food frequency and relative nutrition importance of different food groups. Food Expenditure Share is the percentage of total household expenditure that is allocated to food. The higher the percentage of total expenditure that is allocated to food by a household, the more food insecure the household. Livelihoods-based coping strategies reflect a longer-term coping capacity of households. The food security index is based on a combined score that takes into account all the aforementioned indicators. Food secure: Able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical coping strategies. Marginally food secure: Has minimally adequate food consumption without engaging in irreversible coping strategies; unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures. Moderately food insecure: Has significant food consumption gaps, or marginally able to meet minimum food needs only with irreversible coping strategies. Severely food insecure: Has extreme food consumption gaps or has extreme loss of livelihood assets that will lead to food consumption gaps, or worse.

<sup>8</sup> Uganda 2014 Census.

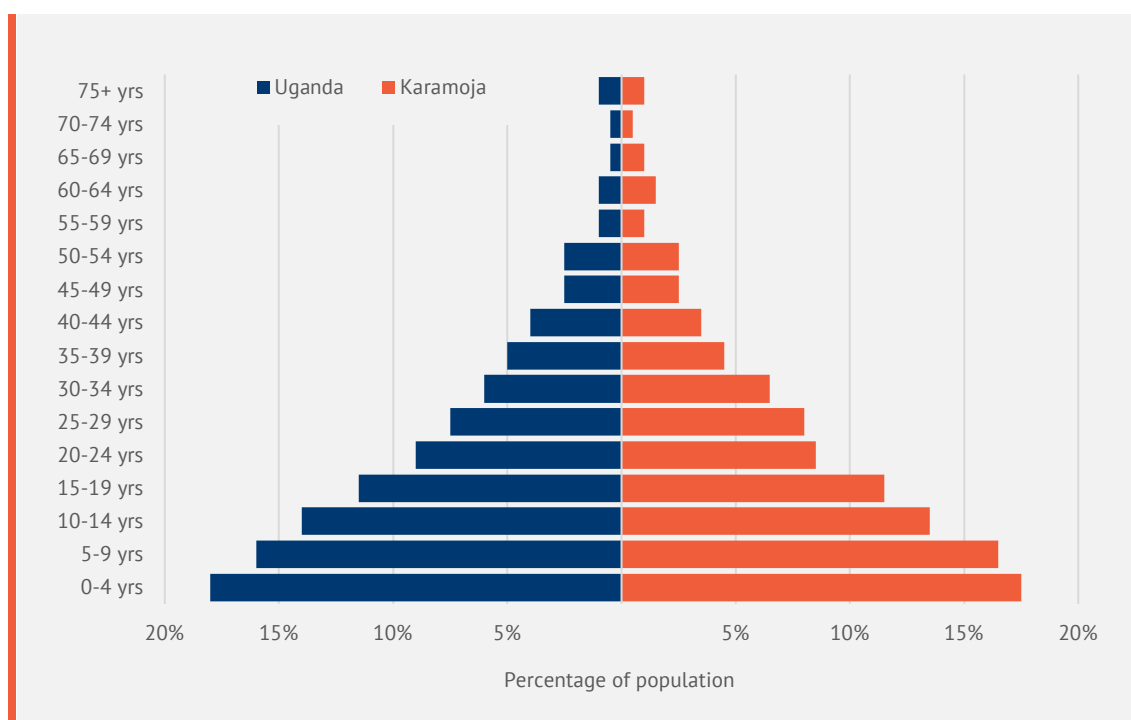
<sup>9</sup> Uganda 2014 Census.

### 3 Current context

occasions during the research as well as the idea that Karamoja and its people were isolated from the rest of the country. Thus, this might have an impact on the incentives for investment in public services and in basic infrastructure needed for Karamoja's wellbeing, as well as on the large portion of the population that are being marginalised.

**Karamoja is, in terms of the age of the population, the youngest of all the sub-regions of Uganda.** Over 63 per cent of Karamoja's population are children under 18 years of age whereas in Uganda – as a whole – the percentage is 58 per cent of the population.<sup>10</sup> This demographic bonus should be incorporated within development strategies across the board since the human capital of these groups could have a deep impact on the social and economic development of the region. In addition, it also raises issues around care responsibilities which, as will be shown later, affects mostly women (not only in Karamoja since this is a global trend). Another aspect related to the demographic bonus is the fact that working age adults comprise 32 per cent of the population Karamoja, which puts an additional burden on this age group to sustain households. Figure 3-8 shows a population pyramid comparing Karamoja with Uganda as a whole, by age group.

**Figure 3-8: Population pyramid for Karamoja relative to Uganda as a whole, 2014**



Source: Uganda 2014 Census.

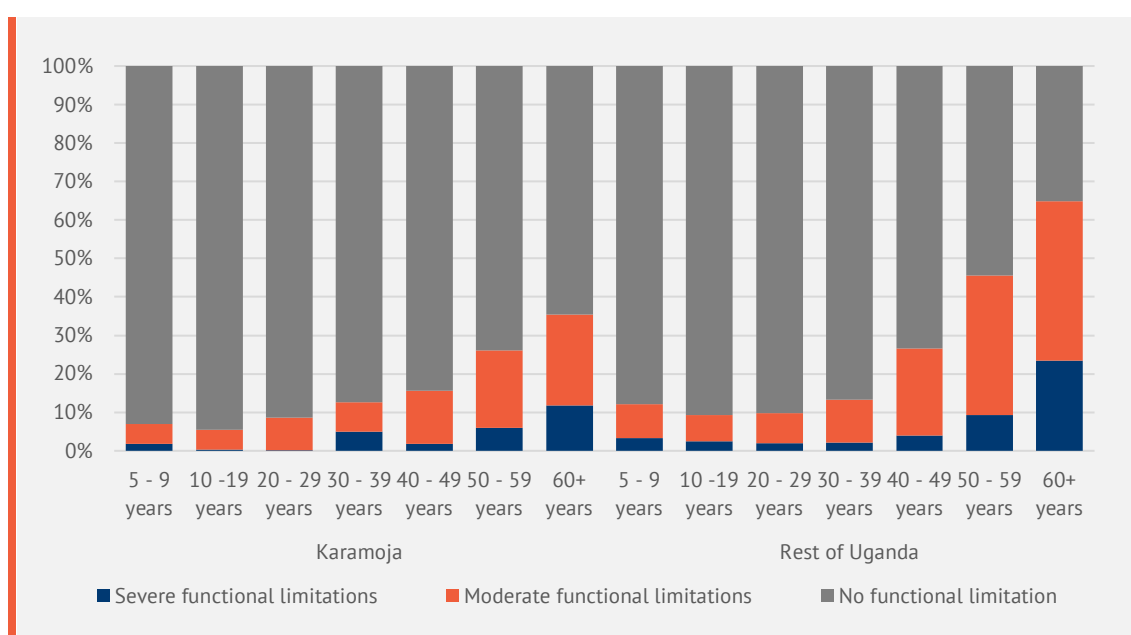
<sup>10</sup> Source: Uganda's UNHS 2012/2013 data. This may indicate challenges with the data in Karamoja.

### 3.2.2 Disability in Karamoja

**There is ample global evidence and literature that shows linkages between poverty and disability and the fact that they can be mutually reinforcing.** As Banks and Polack (2014) argue, conditions linked to poverty – such as poor sanitation and housing, ill-health, and lack of access to clean water – can increase the chances of disability. At the same time, disability can increase the likelihood of people living in poverty, due to the constraints it places on persons with disabilities in accessing education and obtaining work as well as the additional costs – including opportunity costs – of caregiving and accessing health services. In addition, the World Health Organization and World Bank (2011) have shown that there is a strong correlation between disability and poverty, and that people with disabilities and severe disabilities are more likely to be found among the poorer groups in society, in low, middle- and high-income countries.

**Karamoja's disability prevalence is, according to the data, lower than the Ugandan average, as shown in Figure 3-9.**<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, during the qualitative field research, persons with disabilities were recognised as being vulnerable in their communities. There might be issues around the percentage of persons with disabilities in Karamoja that have not been captured by the existing data sets.

**Figure 3-9: Percentage distribution of population 5+ by severity of functional limitation, 10-year age groups and whether the person is in Karamoja or other parts of Uganda, 2009**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2009/2010 data).

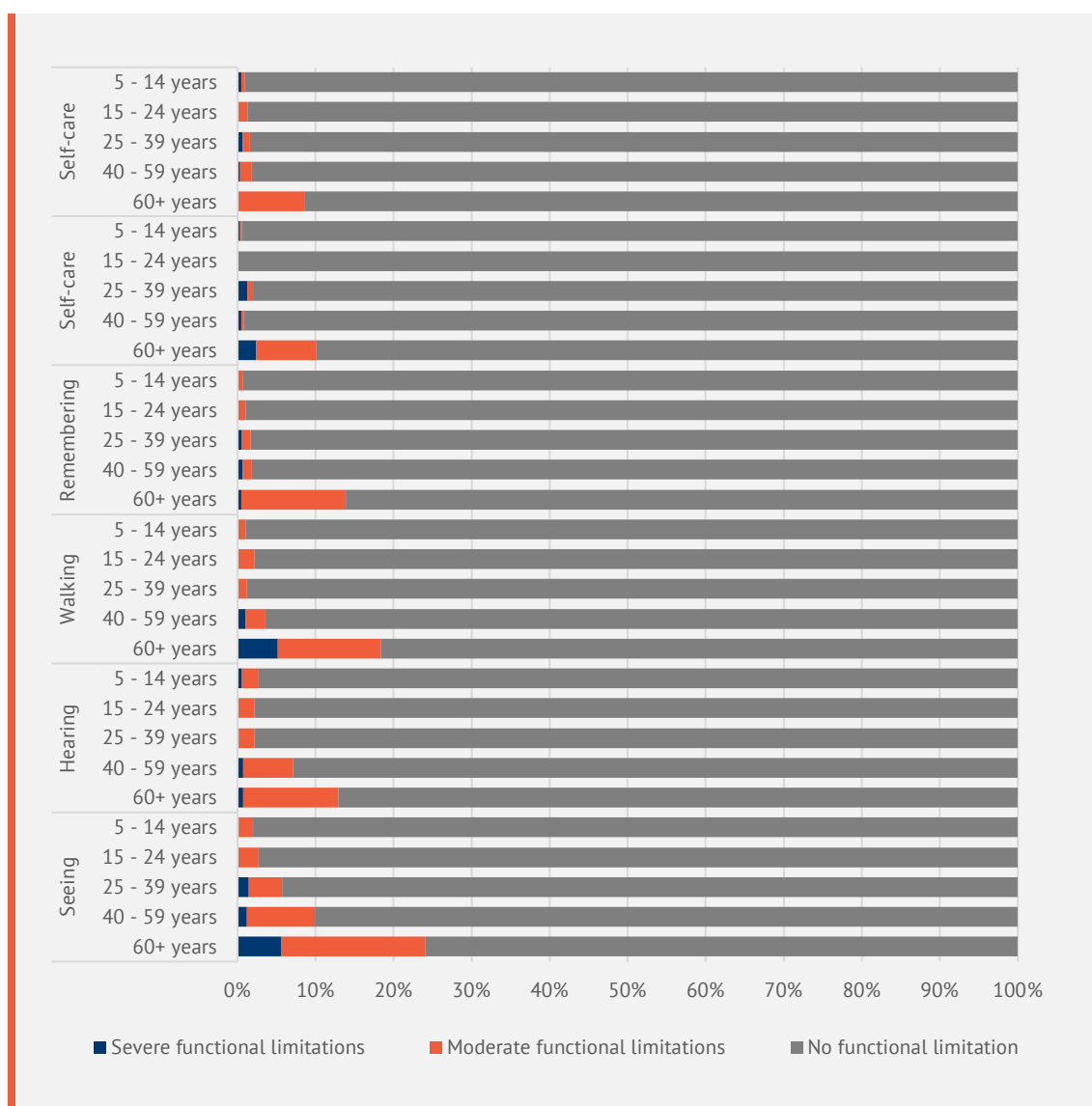
<sup>11</sup> According to Uganda's 2014 Census, and UNHS 2009/2010.



### 3 Current context

Figure 3-10 shows the percentage distribution of population 5+ in Karamoja by: severity of functional limitation, type of functional limitation and broad age groups.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 3-10: Percentage distribution of population 5+ in Karamoja by severity of functional limitation, type of functional limitation and broad age groups, 2009**



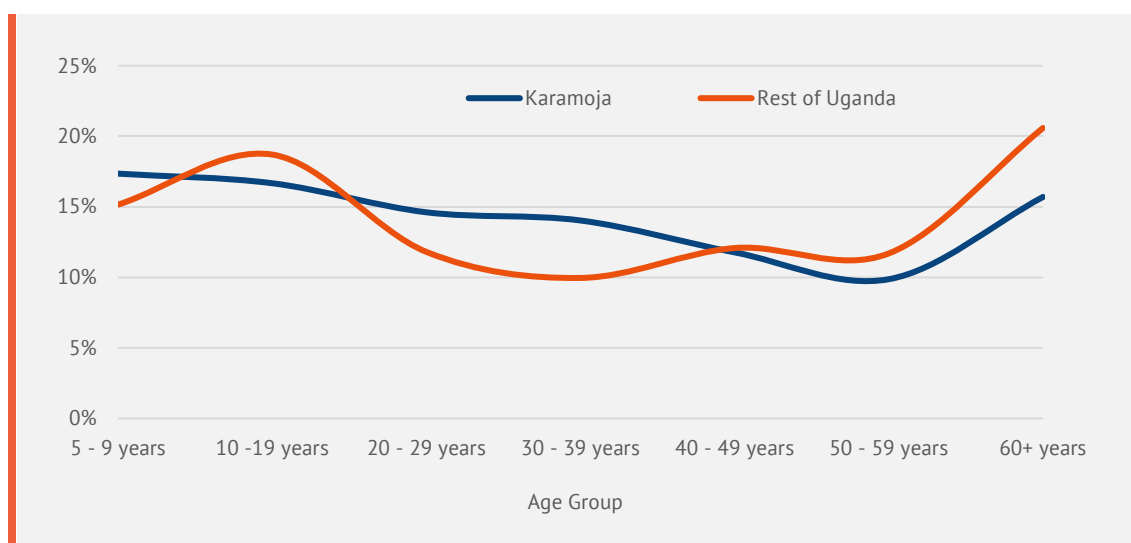
Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2009/2010 data).

<sup>12</sup> The Washington Group short set of questions is used to identify persons with difficulties across six core functional domains: seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, self-care, and communicating. For each domain, it asks whether the respondent has difficulty in carrying out the activity. The response categories are: “No, no difficulty”, “Yes, some difficulty”, “Yes, a lot of difficulty”, and “Cannot do at all”. We define a person with a severe functional limitation in a specific domain someone who answered “Yes, a lot of difficulty” or “Cannot do at all”, and a person with moderate functional limitation in a specific domain is one who answered “Yes, some difficulty”. Following this, the two multidimensional measures of disability used in this report are: Moderate and severe functional limitation – includes everyone with at least one functional domain coded according to any degree of difficulty reported; Severe functional limitation – includes everyone with at least one functional domain coded as “a lot of difficult” or “unable to do”.

**The lower prevalence of disability in Karamoja may be the result of challenges in collecting data but there may be another more worrying explanation.** It may indicate that mortality among persons with disabilities in Karamoja is higher than in the rest of Uganda, which is likely to be the result of the low incomes in the region and, potentially, the inadequate quality of services.

**Global trends suggest that disability is prevalent across all age groups.** Figure 3-11 shows that the number of people with moderate or severe functional disabilities in Karamoja does not vary greatly across the lifecycle, and the differences across age groups are less stark than for the rest of Uganda. Nevertheless, it is important to take into consideration what was pointed out in Figure 3-8: that most of the population (63 per cent) of Karamoja is under the age of 18.

**Figure 3-11: Percentage of distribution of persons with moderate and severe functional limitations across age groups comparing Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012**



Source: *Development Pathways* (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

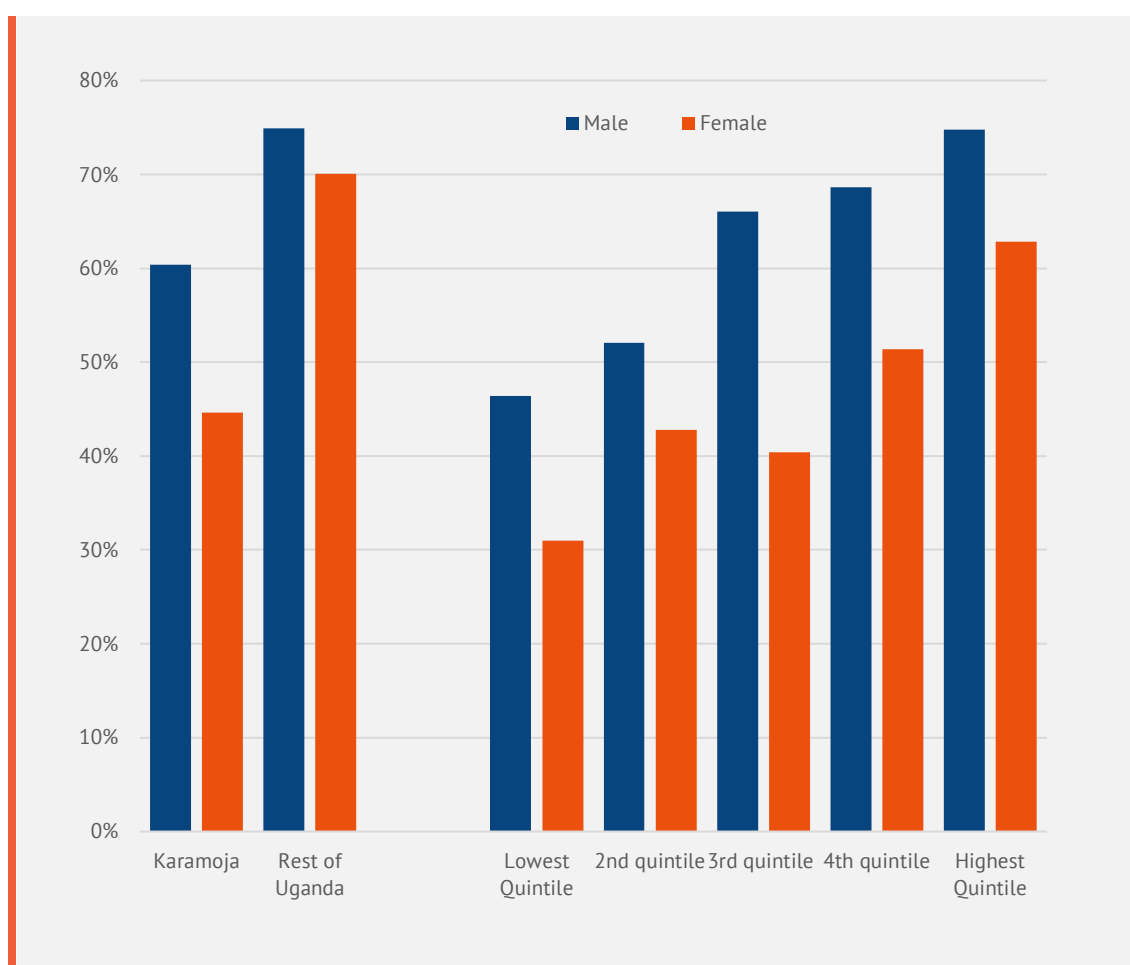
#### 3.2.3 Gender

**In Karamoja, gender inequality is a key issue.** A recent study on gender equity in Karamoja examined the current situation and context for promoting development and resilience, with respect to the empowerment of women and girls as well as men and boys (Crawford & Kasiko, 2016). Some of the key findings suggest that: the region is entrenched in social dislocation and “cultural depression”; traditional ways of being, and traditional livelihood strategies are no longer functional; people (particularly men) have lost their social and productive roles; and inequitable power relations and discriminatory cultural norms are the foundations for gender inequality in Karamoja. Some of these issues arose during the

qualitative research undertaken in Karamoja, in particular in relation to changes in traditional livelihoods and the impact on current social structures.

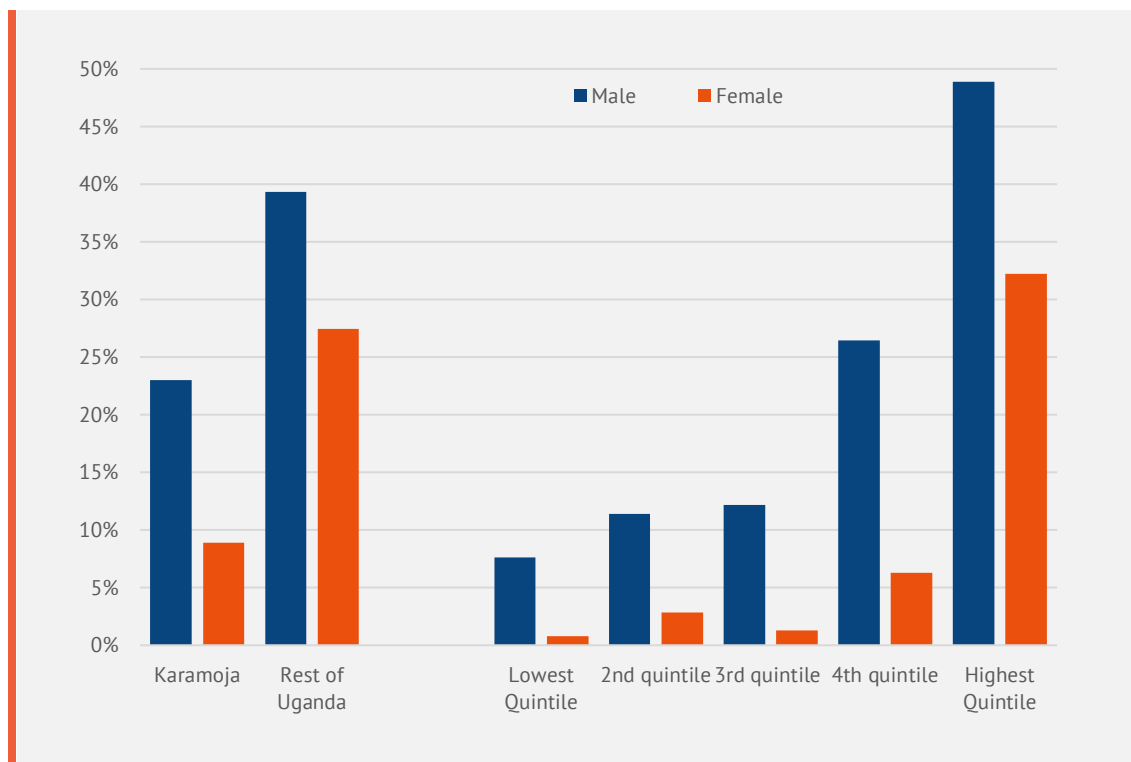
**Some of the gender inequalities are also evident in access to education and school attendance.** Figure 3-12 shows the percentage of persons under 25 years attending school by gender and consumption quintiles. Compared to Uganda as a whole, the disparity between males and females in school attendance is higher in Karamoja. Figure 3-13 – which examines the percentage of persons over 20 years who have completed primary school by gender – shows an even starker differentiation. Some of the reasons are related to social norms around girls having to help with domestic chores, with school fees, and the fact that many girls are taken out of school to be married. Further description around these issues will be provided in subsequent sub-sections.

**Figure 3-12: Percentage of persons under 25 years attending school by gender, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012/13**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**Figure 3-13: Percentage of persons over 20 years who have completed primary school by gender, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012/13**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**Gender inequality can also be found in productive asset ownership in Karamoja.** Societies

*“Women in Pokot are so oppressed they can’t even sell the cows and goats. If she does, she is beaten and abused... we look after them, we feed them, but we cannot sell them. Our husbands will sell and give us nothing.” (Adult female, FGD).*

in Karamoja are traditionally polygynous and, due to the practice of ‘bride price’ (giving cattle to marry a woman as a form of dowry), the number of wives is indicative of a man’s wealth status. All productive assets are owned

by men and they are the primary decision-makers when it comes to household economic activities. Women are the carers of children, in charge of the domestic sphere and on non-agricultural activities (e.g., brewing, collecting firewood etc.). Regarding agriculture production, men are expected to clear the fields only, while women and children do the weeding, planting and harvesting.

**Unequal gender relations can be seen across different sub-regions. Some of the practices, such as the ‘price’ that is paid to acquire each woman and hence the man assuming full ownership over his wives, can be seen as hindering women empowerment.** In a context of deprivation, families with girls prioritise them as a means for replenishing livestock, so the incentives to educate them are, therefore, low. Marriage of young girls in order to receive the ‘bride price’ is a greater priority than their education, and most are forced to

*“With my baby on my back, I have to work in other people’s farms. We are overworked.” (Adult female, FGD).*

*“According to the men, girls are meant to be married off and if they are not and you are sending them to school – you are denying them the right to get cattle.” (Adult female, FGD).*

drop out of school by the time they complete Primary 7. As such, according to young girls, parents often refuse to pay their school fees. Furthermore, secondary school is not viewed favourably due to its higher costs (i.e., opportunity cost of keeping them in

school, and the school fees themselves, among others).

**The loss of livestock as a main source of livelihood and changes in men’s identity as household guardians within pastoral settings has, in fact, created a disproportionate economic burden on women.** Women - who are primarily responsible for feeding the family - bear the pressure of engaging in farming and earning cash to buy food. Local authorities recognise this burden of unpaid work on women, yet it is largely ignored in conventional assessments. However, the field research undertaken showed that in the present-day context these rigid norms have been debilitated in the absence of the pastoral livelihood systems around which their societies were previously organised. Compared to a generation ago, men are more involved in agricultural activities, collecting firewood and the construction of huts, all traditionally women’s activities. Both men and women now work as casual agricultural labourers, in mining, fetching and selling water. However, traditional gender structures remain for certain activities such as cattle trading, which (done by men) and collection of aloe vera (done by women).

**Care tasks are also mostly undertaken by women, thus placing an immense burden on the female population.** Not only are women (and children) responsible for household chores and providing food for their households, but they are also responsible for caring for children as well as persons with disabilities and older people.

### 3.3 Vulnerabilities across the lifecycle

**This section covers some of the main risks, shocks and vulnerabilities that people in Karamoja face across their lifecycle.** As such, the first five subsections cover each age group for the Karamojong and outline information from quantitative surveys as well as findings from the literature and qualitative fieldwork. The final subsection focuses on the perceptions and conceptualisations the Karamojong have of vulnerability. Box 3-2 explains what a lifecycle approach entails.

**Box 3-1: What is a lifecycle approach?**

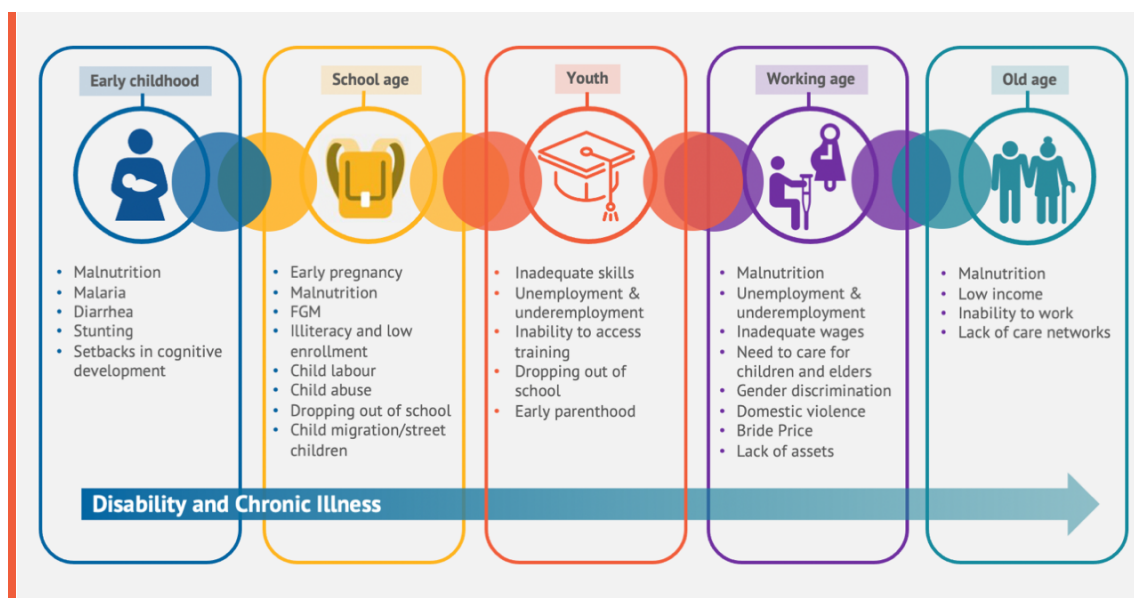
Throughout their lives, all individuals – regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity or social status – are exposed to a wide and varied range of risks, challenges and vulnerabilities which are linked to their stage in the lifecycle. These can include birth, death, illness or disability, illness or disability of a family member, loss of employment or income source, a job-related accident, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse problems, care issues etc.). In addition, they may face covariate risks such as drought, flooding or economic recession.

A lifecycle approach is crucial in addressing the chain of inequities that individuals experience from childhood to old age as well as the intergenerational transmission of poverty. In addition, a lifecycle approach to addressing vulnerabilities and risks is embedded within a rights-based approach, as all economic and social rights are interdependent. Moreover, when designing and implementing inter-sectoral public policies, a lifecycle approach is necessary to be able to coordinate different sectors.

**People in Uganda and Karamoja, as in any other society, are subjected to different shocks and risks across their lifecycle which can impact on their individual and/or household wellbeing.**

During the field research in Karamoja, participants identified a wide range of covariate risks and health shocks that they are exposed to across the lifecycle. Figure 3-14 shows the risks that the Karamojong may experience during their lifecycles. Although some risks were identified equally across the age groups, such as disability, chronic illnesses and malnutrition, other vulnerabilities were specific to age groups. In Section 3.4 of this Chapter, further information regarding the conceptualisation of vulnerability among the Karamojong has been included.

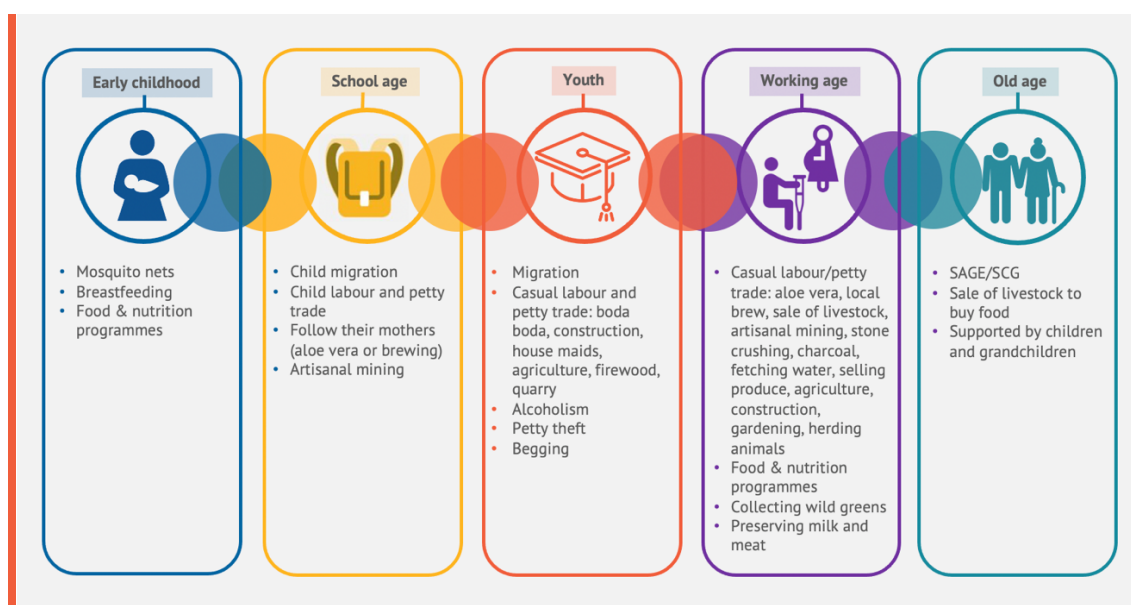
**Figure 3-14: Risks across the lifecycle in Karamoja**



Source: Development Pathways

Participants in the field research identified some of the main strategies by which they address some of the vulnerabilities and/or “cope” with risks across the lifecycle. Figure 3-15 shows the main strategies identified by participants. Some of the strategies reported coincided across more than one age group – such as casual labour identified for children, youth and working-age adults – as there is a significant deficiency in access to formal employment in Karamoja and evidence of child labour. Other strategies are dependent on support from the government and/or development actors, often with different target groups (although, as with the Senior Citizens Grant, there were also indirect beneficiaries).

Figure 3-15: Strategies to overcome vulnerabilities across the lifecycle in Karamoja



Source: Development Pathways

### 3.3.1 Early childhood

As stated before, the largest proportion of the population in Karamoja is under the age of 18 years. Hence, there is a great need to consider the main vulnerabilities facing this age group.

Nutritional insecurities of young children were among the main concerns of the

*“We associate starving and hunger to levels of child health - the more the food, the better the nutrition – the better the health of the children.” (Adult female, FGD).*

Karamojong during the research.

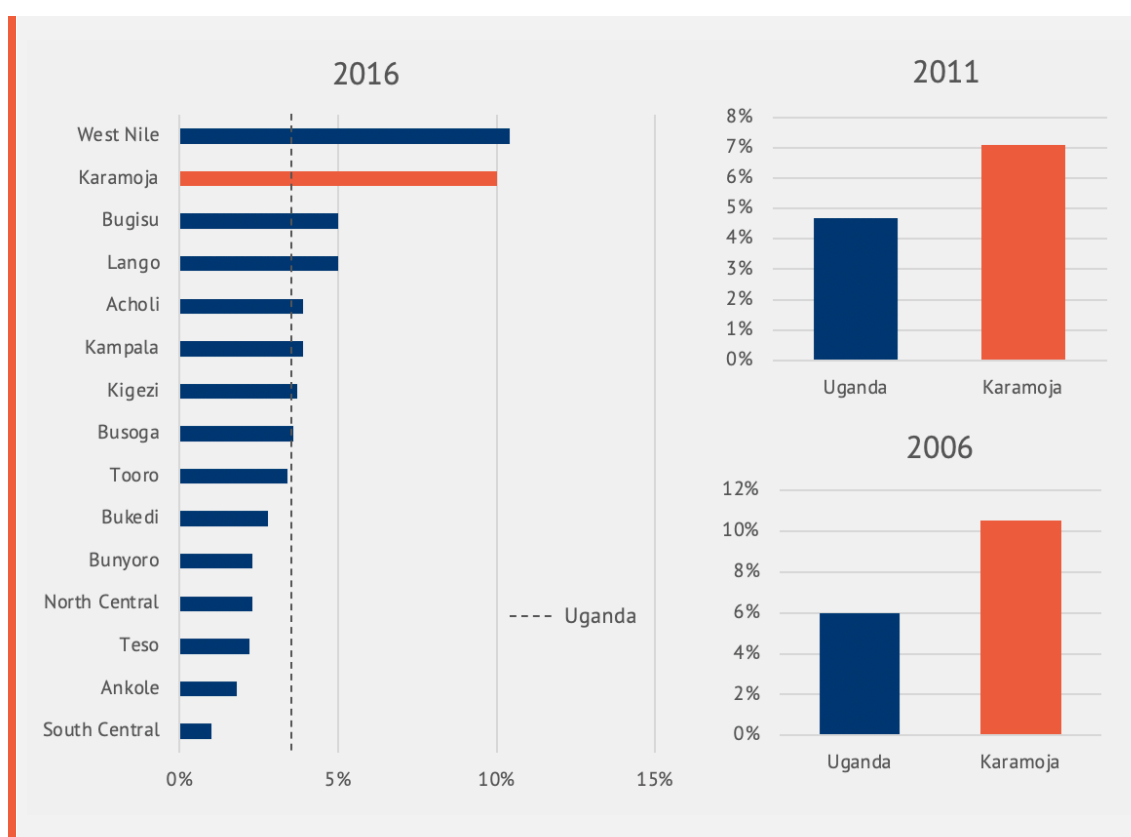
Although according to available data sets (see Figure 3-16), the wasting of children in Karamoja under 5 years of

age fell from over 10 per cent in 2006 to over 6 per cent in 2011, it is still higher than the percentage for the whole of Uganda during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (from 6 per cent in 2006 to 4 per cent in 2011). By 2016, 10 per cent of children in Karamoja under the age of 5 were wasted, in comparison to an average of 3.7 per cent in all of Uganda.

### 3 Current context

The share of children in Karamoja under the age of 5 who are stunted (Figure 3-17) decreased from 50 per cent in 2006 to slightly over 40 per cent in 2011, while the share for all of Uganda reduced from just under 40 per cent in 2006 to just over 30 per cent in 2011. Stunting rates remained high in 2016, both in Karamoja and all of Uganda: 35.2 per cent of children under the age of 5 were stunted, in comparison to 28.9 per cent in all of Uganda.

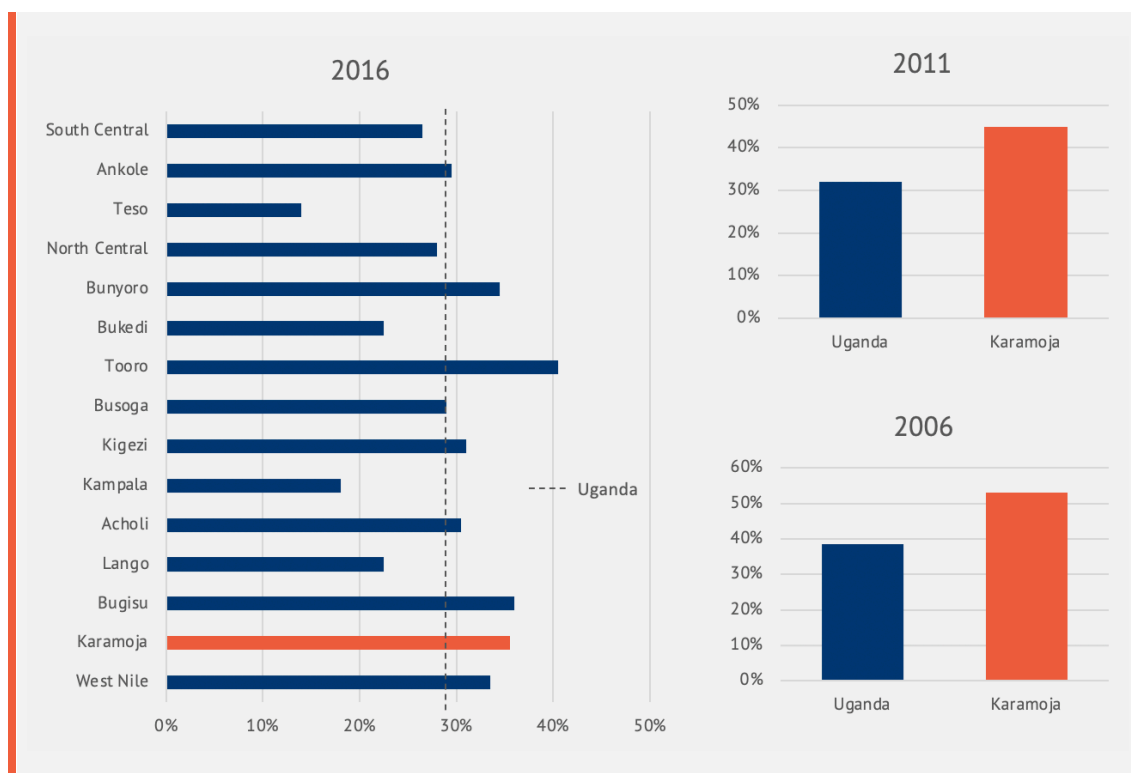
**Figure 3-16: Percentage of children under 5 who are wasted in Karamoja, 2016, 2011 and 2006**



Source: UDHS Key Indicators report (2016), table 12; UDHS (2011); 2006 final reports.



**Figure 3-17: Percentage of children under 5 who are stunted in Karamoja, 2016, 2011 and 2006**



Source: UDHS Key Indicators report (2016), table 12; UDHS (2011); 2006 final reports.

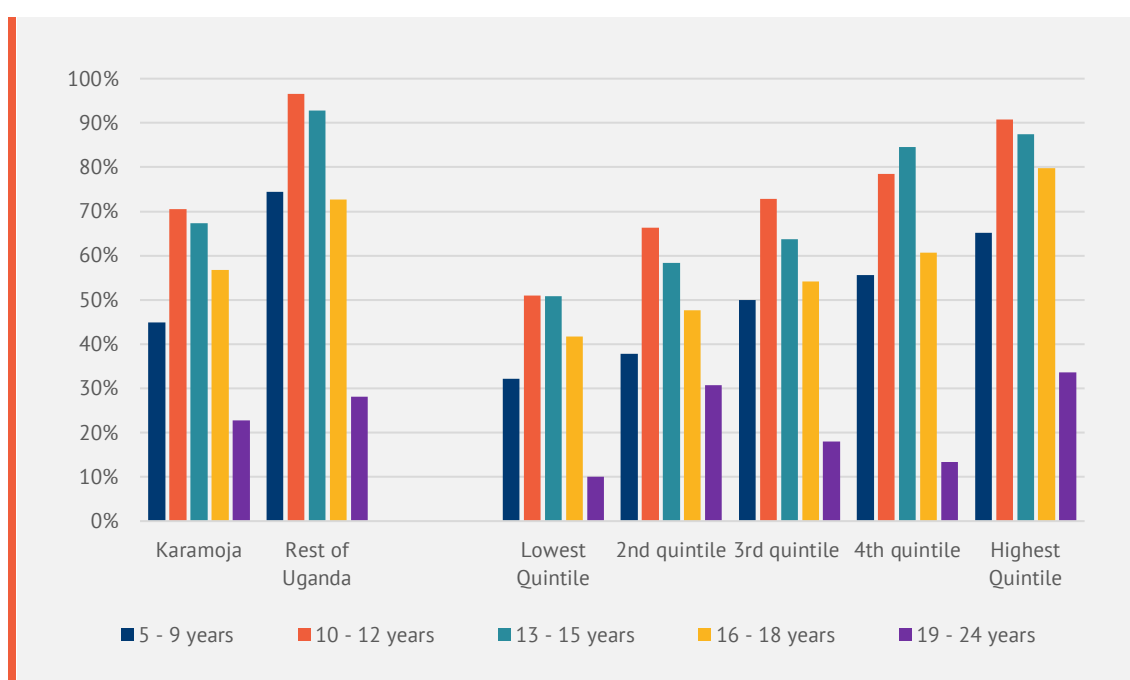
**During the fieldwork, it was made quite clear that there were two periods during which children were somewhat neglected due to heavy workload: during cultivation and harvest.**<sup>13</sup> In the discussions with adult women, they mentioned that, when cultivating, they would leave their children in the care of other household members. Since this is also a period of food scarcity, when the children become sick it is difficult to give them medicines when they had very little food intake. It must be mentioned, though, that in almost every discussion concerning periods when there is sufficient food, the research indicated that the first priority is to give ‘porridge with sugar’ to the children. The usual food intake for members of a household (adults and children) is two meals (or one, depending on the region) a day, which shrinks to one meal during times of scarcity. The only household members receiving three meals a day at any period of the year were children (including school age children).

<sup>13</sup> Although the research tools were not designed to interact with children less than 14 years of age (for child protection purposes), the seasonal calendar was structured to capture information on young children by using child health as a proxy during discussions with all other age categories.

### 3.3.2 School age children

The research showed stark differences in levels of school attendance between Karamoja and Uganda as a whole. Figure 3-18 shows the percentage of those aged below 18 years who are attending school, by age. It shows that 74.5 per cent of all children across the whole of Uganda aged 5-9 years are attending school, compared with just 44.9 per cent of children in the same age group in Karamoja. Furthermore, 96.5 per cent of all children across the whole of Uganda aged 10-12 years are attending school, compared with just 70.6 per cent of children in the same age group in Karamoja. Also, 92.8 per cent of all children across the whole of Uganda aged 13-15 years are attending school, compared with just 70.6 per cent of children in the same age group in Karamoja. Also, 92.8 per cent of all children across the whole of Uganda aged 13-15 years are attending school, compared with just 70.6 per cent of children in the same age group in Karamoja. Also, 92.8 per cent of all children across the whole of Uganda aged 13-15 years are attending school, compared with just 70.6 per cent of children in the same age group in Karamoja.

**Figure 3-18: Percentage of persons under 25 attending school by age groups, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012**



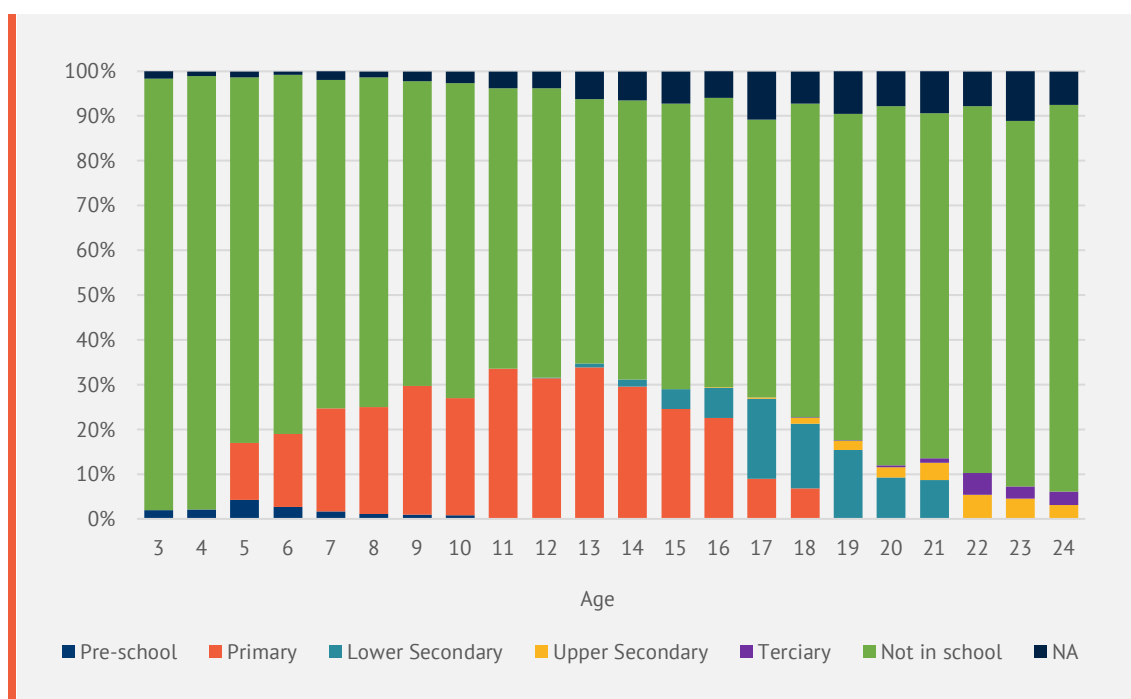
Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

School attendance has an enormous impact on the quality of life of all children (as discussed further down), especially in terms of future job opportunities. Figure 3-19 shows the percentage of children attending school in Karamoja, by age and type of education according to the 2014 census (10 per cent sample). As such, the columns in green show the number of children that are out of school by age groups. The figure shows that the majority of school aged children in Karamoja are out of school, with the highest percentage at age 5, with almost 82 per cent not attending school. In addition, the data shows that children in Karamoja started lower secondary school at a later age, at around

### 3 Current context

15 years of age, which also shows these children would be “lagging behind” in terms of education.

**Figure 3-19: Percentage of children and young people attending school in Karamoja, by age and type of education, 2014**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using 2014 Census, 10% sample).

**Given the limited returns on investment (i.e., unemployment), there is little incentive to**

*“Girls get pregnant in school – it is very common for us. Many girls get pregnant. When they get pregnant, the parents chase them away and the boy’s family rejects them as well. The school chases them away as well, and the other children laugh at them. But the boy who impregnates them continues to study. Parents have to pay for school supplies – but as soon as they see you are ‘grown up’, they say that we should get married. Parents also fear that the girl will get pregnant in school (acting as an incentive for early marriage).” (Minor female, FGD).*

**send children to complete higher secondary education.** Although the main apparent disincentive is the high cost, social barriers also exist, especially for girls. The major push factor is teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy is a prevalent risk for pubescent and adolescent girls in schools. It is difficult to establish whether pregnancies arise from

consensual sex or sexual abuse by the opposite sex and education staff, which would raise obvious further concerns. Parents expressed a reluctance to allow girls to pursue studies beyond Primary 7 – which happens at around 15 years of age – due to the fear of getting pregnant, which would bring shame to the household and force them to marry an older man. Young girls spoke of the humiliation befalling them once they are pregnant.

### 3 Current context

*"We now see no use of going to school. Due to the school fees, they drop out at P7 or Senior School – once they dropout, they become street children in town – they rob, they steal and do all kinds of bad things. Once they have gone to school, they have changed and no longer want to be in the villages and work hard. So, it is better that girls are married off instead of getting pregnant in school."*  
(Adult female, FGD).

The boys are, however, able to continue studying. The major pull factor for early marriage is the incentive of the 'bride price', especially in communities which still own cattle. In a context of unsafe conditions for girls and the concomitant high costs, parents are able to rationalise their decision not to

support girls to complete their education. Hence, the findings suggest that there are clear gender differences in terms of how parents perceive education for boys and girls, and the difference in value they place on education for both sexes.

**Several reasons were provided for children dropping out of school.** Distance from school

*"Children attend primary school until year 6, when they are around 12 or 13 years of age. Afterwards, the father often takes the girls out of school in order to get married."*  
(Adult female FGD).

was cited as a reason for dropping out after primary school, in areas where there is only one primary school. In discussions with adults and elderly people, the main reasons for children

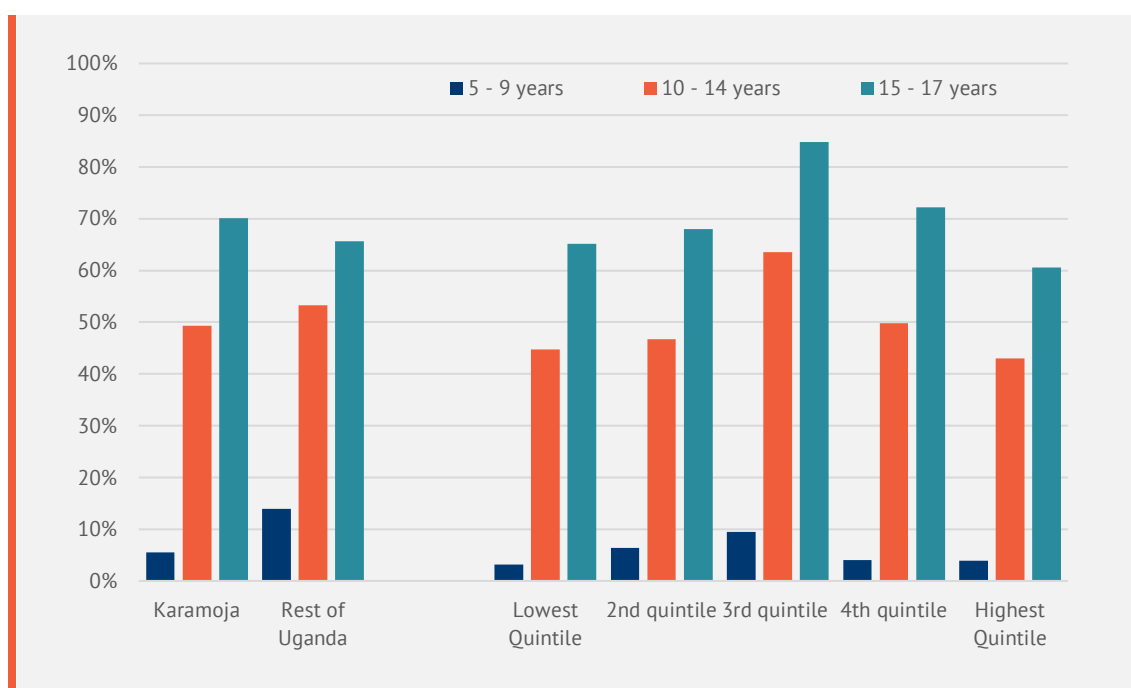
dropping out from school were cited as: school fees, school supplies, marriage, and transport costs. In addition, on many occasions, girls were brought back into the home so they could take care of siblings and household chores.

**The quality of education – or lack there-of – is also an issue.** There is, sometimes, only one teacher in a school. By the time s/he has done the rounds – from one classroom to the next for lessons – the students are bored and, often, just wander out. This directly impacts on the engagement students have and overall quality of learning, which are also factors in students dropping out after primary level.

**Children are involved in more than just light household chores but also other forms of child labour.** Due to the strong reliance on low incomes and casual labour to earn income and purchase food for the households in Karamoja, Mueller and Bbosa (2016) have emphasised the high opportunity costs of sending children to school given that they could support household income through their – somewhat meagre – wages. Figure 3-20 shows that the percentage of children aged 5-17 who are part of the working population in Karamoja is not significantly different to the rest of Uganda. Nonetheless, it remains a

concern as almost 50 per cent of children aged 10-14 years are engaged in labour, rising to 70 per cent for those age 15-17 years.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 3-20: Percentage of children aged 5-17 who are part of the working population by age groups, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja versus and parts of Uganda, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**Pursuant to Article 34 of the Ugandan Constitution and the Child Labour Policy (2006), it is established that employing children as child labour increases their vulnerability** (see Box 3-3 on worst forms of child labour). Moreover, orphans and school dropouts are most likely to be employed in child labour, impinging on their right to protection under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions to which Uganda is a signatory.

**Children are also engaged in a wide range of activities.** These include selling food items like mandazi (fried dough), chapati (flat bread) and cooked greens in the local town centres; gathering wild greens for consumption for the family (especially in times of food scarcity); brewing and collecting firewood, although this is restricted to girls; and, charcoal burning and selling. Similarly, in Loyoro and Kalapata it was reported that, at times, mothers ask their adolescent daughters to substitute as proxy labour on the

<sup>14</sup> According to Uganda's Employment Act, the minimum age for employment is 14 years old and while children may engage in light labour that does not hinder their education, it must be supervised by adults of 18 years and above. Moreover, the Constitution of Uganda states that children under 16 years old have the right to protection from social and economic exploitation and should not be employed in hazardous work or work that interferes with their education. The Government of Uganda (GoU) has ratified ILO Conventions No. 138 (Minimum Age) and No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour).

Food/Cash for Assets work undertaken by World Vision. In Kalapata, a 16-year-old girl informed us that one of her responsibilities was to work on the project's kitchen gardens and wood lots. When asked if she was a beneficiary of the project, she responded that her mother was the listed beneficiary but she provided the labour so the mother can tend to other work.

#### Box 3-2: Worst forms of child labour

The ILO Convention No. 182 defines the worst forms of child labour as work that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. This includes, but is not limited to, child soldiers/combatants, child sexual workers and use of children for illegal activities.

In Moroto, street children were considered to be in danger of exploitation. In discussions with adolescent girls, street children were ranked high on the list of vulnerable groups. We were told that they are routinely beaten up, sometimes they end up sleeping on shop fronts and, when they are under threat or danger from predatory adults, they cannot turn to their parents or guardian for help as they are, often, orphans or living unaccompanied away from their families.

*"There are some 15-16-year-old students from secondary school who earn money for school by working here (mining). We have problems with child labour."* (Sub-county official, KII).

In Loyoro and Kalapata, children under 18 were reported to be involved in, largely, unregulated gold mining. In discussions with young people, they confirmed that boys and girls – of ages 15-16 years old – are regularly part of the groups that work at mining sites, where work can be particularly hazardous. On the other hand, information shared by the District Administration described commercial sex work as a growing challenge around the mining camps, in particular with middlemen from other areas who purchase the gold panned by the locals.

In some instances, children, especially girls, were sent as domestic labour to both towns within the region as well as outside Karamoja. They were paid a wage in advance, which they worked off. Although not strictly slavery, it resembles bonded labour in terms of having to work off the advanced payment.

**Some Karamojong children migrate to urban destinations, raising questions around the appropriateness of this new internal migration pattern as a livelihood strategy for households in Karamoja, as well as the risks involved.** Children in Lokopo, especially girls, became migrants to other cities, making them susceptible to exploitation. The main activities engaged in by children include begging and theft (Czuba, 2014). This same study confirmed that children from the Napak district (mainly inhabited by the Bokora) were found to be more likely to migrate due to an increased vulnerability to cattle raids resulting from disarmament operations. However, another factor stimulating migration was the early exposure to education from missionaries which created links and opportunities to urban centres (ibid.). Children were found to leave their homes, often without prior parental consent. They were encouraged by friends who had recently returned reporting positive experiences from their time in cities (ibid.). As a result, a large proportion of the younger population in Karamoja are moving further away from

traditional livelihoods strategies and customs (Huisman, 2011). Migration to urban areas is similarly argued to lead to a loss of social care networks through which many children end up being unsupervised and lose out on both intergenerational and cultural exchanges (Stites & Akabwai, 2012).

#### 3.3.3 Young people

**As described above, parents place a different value in the education of their sons and daughters.** Hence, gender inequalities start from an early schooling age and transfer to young people, since teenage girls are taken out of school to marry and/or perform household chores. Only 9 per cent of women above the age of 20 have completed primary school, compared to 23 per cent men.<sup>15</sup>

**Most young people in Karamoja are not in school.** As was shown by figure 3-19, many of the children that continue beyond primary school, start secondary school much later. As such, young people also lag behind in terms of schooling years. Figure 3-19 also shows that around 64 per cent of 15-year olds and 86 per cent of 24-year-olds are not in secondary education. Likewise, the percentage of persons over 20 years of age that have completed primary school in Karamoja is 15 per cent, while it is 33 per cent for the rest of Uganda.<sup>16</sup>

**Based on discussions held with communities, the vulnerability of male youths is rising as society transitions away from being tradition-based (e.g., in instances where changing social structures were unsettling the role of young males).** These young men, at the social level, no longer have defined identities within cattle herding, protection of kraals and other such traditional roles. This also impacts on the potential to use cattle as part of the 'bride price' custom.

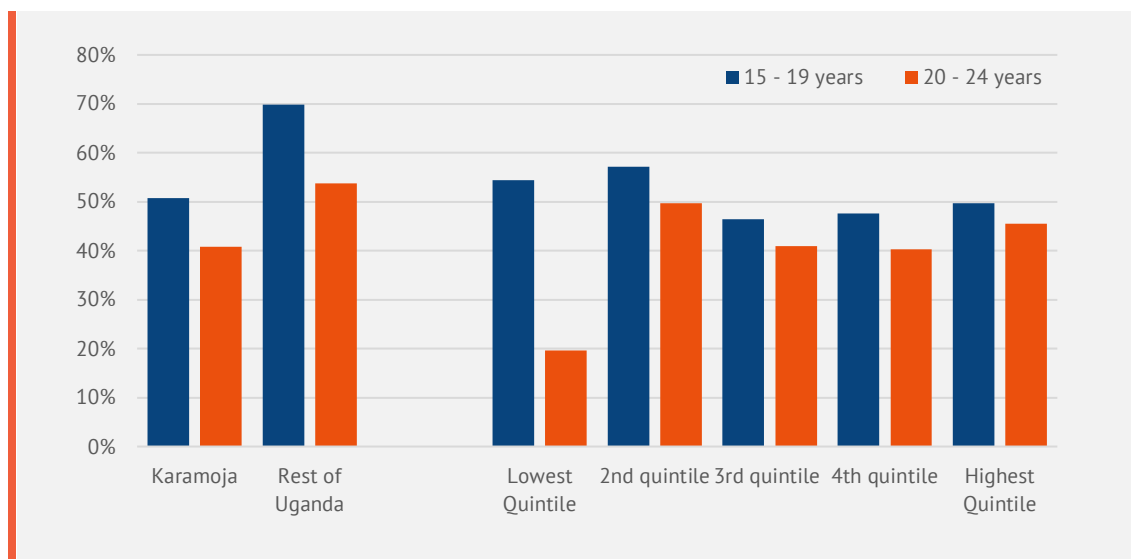
**Unemployment among young people is prevalent in Karamoja and across Uganda.** Figure 3-21 shows that 50 per cent of Karamajong aged 15-19 years are unemployed (rising to 70 per cent for Uganda as a whole). Also, 40 per cent of those aged 20-24 years are unemployed (rising to just above 50 per cent for Uganda as a whole). These differences in the levels of unemployment become even more stark when comparing by quintiles. For the two lowest quintiles, the percentage of unemployed is above 50 per cent.

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<sup>15</sup> Source: Own calculations using 2014 Census (10% Sample).

<sup>16</sup> Source: Own calculations using 2014 Census (10% Sample).

**Figure 3-21: Percentage of young people aged 15-24 who are either unemployed or working for subsistence only by age groups, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012**



Source: *Development Pathways* (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data). Calculations are based only on those in the labour force. As such, the analysis excludes persons who are not economically active.

**Unemployment and the inability to pursue pastoralism and/or engage in any other viable livelihood – due to the aforementioned structural issues – creates a constant stress of**

*“We rather get arrested – at least there are 3 meals a day in prison.” (Youth male, FGD).*

**food provisioning, especially for young people.**<sup>17</sup> It has also caused an increase

in the consumption of alcohol – with

people often selling off part of their meagre harvests for alcohol. Alcoholism reinforces unemployment and causes major health issues, further perpetuating the inter-generational cycle of poverty and insecurity. Local governments have been attempting to prioritise this social hazard and create awareness. A case in point was an under-18 respondent – who was referred to as “*the Streeter*” – as he spends most of his day in the streets of the town – turned up for the research discussions drunk and dazed. He works as a casual labourer fetching and selling jerry cans of water at construction sites, and offloading goods trucks (sugar, alcohol etc.). On average, he earns UGX 10,000 a day, of which approximately UGX 1,500 goes on buying vegetables and flour for the family, and the rest is spent on alcohol. He suggested that it helped him relieve his stress.

<sup>17</sup> During discussions, some Karamojong referred to unemployment as “idleness”.



**In looking at dispelling myths around the youth in Karamoja, the research found the main**

*“It is very dangerous, but we have a saying: ‘it is better to live a short, good life than to suffer’ – we have suffered for too long. We don’t want to engage in farming activities. It takes too long to get the yield. For 4 months you won’t be eating anything, so we prefer going out and doing something where we can earn in a shorter period.” (Youth male, FGD).*

**problem is the lack of opportunities, not idleness.** Local authorities tend to portray a negative picture of young people – especially young men – as disaffected and unwilling to do ‘hard work’, with a preference for idleness or undesirable activities. Yet, it was not a

lack of ideas or inspiration but an absence of appropriate opportunities that could interest young people who are literate and more urbanised. The unfortunate denial of the needs and interests of young people is building another generation of people trapped in very low paid jobs. During discussions, young men were found to prefer *boda boda*<sup>18</sup> driving as an income generating activity, as it provides direct access to cash, thereby enabling them to spend it on food for the family and on their personal leisure activities. One particular young person mentioned during discussions that *boda boda* has turned young boys away from being thieves. Now they would like NGOs or the government to help them start a garage to repair bikes, repair compressors and fill gas etc. Some others reported having to choose hazardous occupations such as artisanal gold mining and other risky illegal activities that made them even more vulnerable.

**There also seems to be a disconnect between the schooling of young people and job opportunities.** People were told to send their children to school, so they did, but, after they finished school, young people were often jobless and left without sufficient opportunities in the deficient labour market (Caravani, 2017).

#### 3.3.4 Working age

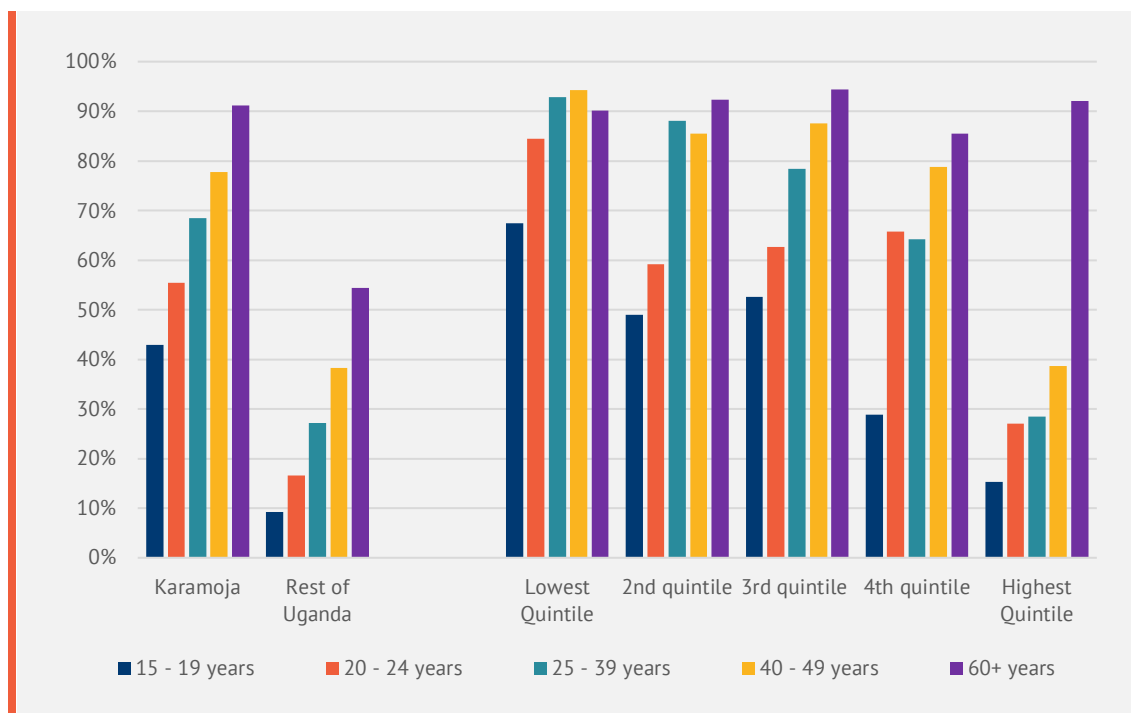
**Literacy among the Karamojong is well behind the rest of Uganda.**<sup>19</sup> The literacy rate for adults is 31 per cent for Karamoja compared to 68 per cent for the whole of Uganda. With regard to educational attainment for persons above 15 years of age: 63.3 per cent in Karamoja have no formal schooling, versus 17.9 per cent for Uganda; 25.4 per cent have some or completed primary school, versus 56.7 per cent for Uganda; 8.8 per cent have some or completed secondary school, versus 21.6 per cent in Uganda; and finally, 2.5 per cent have received education above secondary level, while for Uganda the figure is 4.3 per cent.

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<sup>18</sup> Motorcycle taxis.

<sup>19</sup> This data on literacy rates is from UNHS 2012/2013.

**Figure 3-22: Percentage of persons over 15 who are unable to read and write by age groups, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012/13**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**Overall, working age women face a huge burden in terms of providing for their families.**

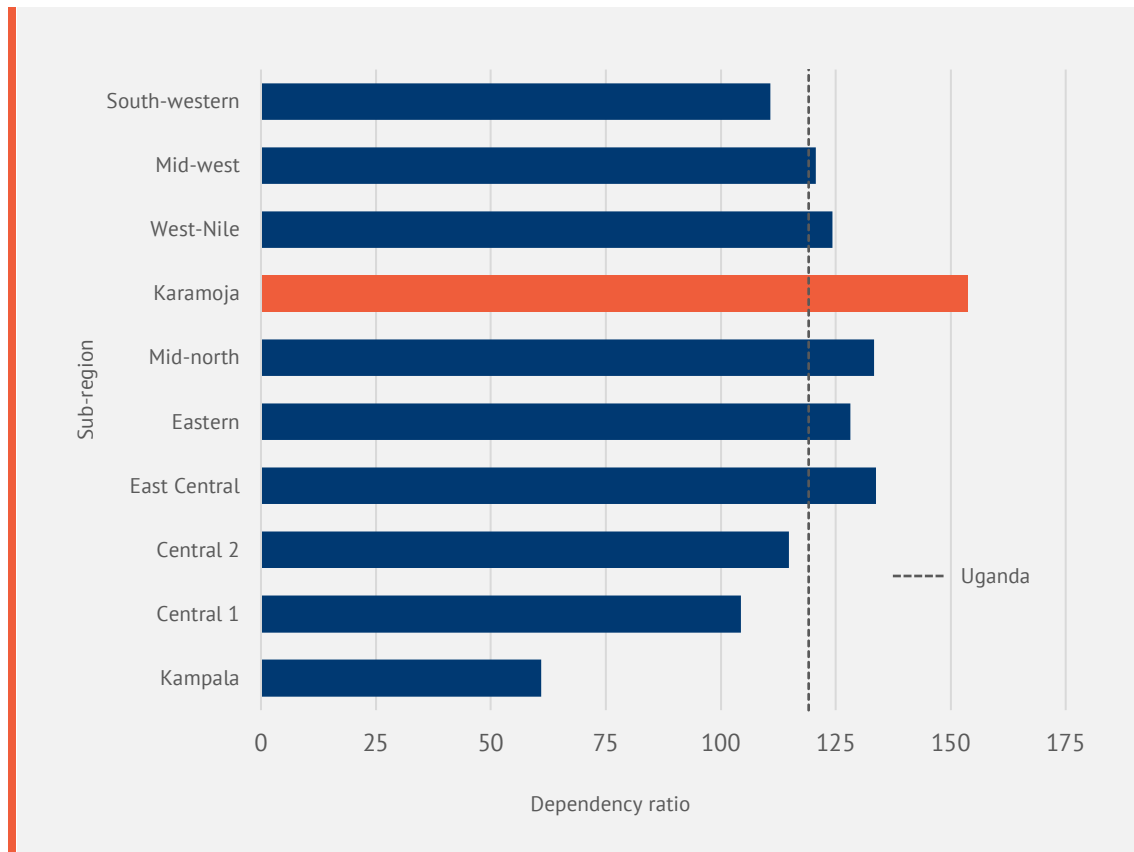
As such – and as will be described in Chapter 4 – women are involved in casual labour activities that imply heavy and long working hours (including: the picking of aloe vera, brewing beer, the collection of firewood, among others). These occupations are to be combined with household responsibilities, as women and girls are the ones responsible for these activities. Moreover, care issues also represent a significant burden for women when they have to combine these with labour activities, as they are mostly in charge of taking care of children, the elderly and persons with disabilities within their households.

**The dependency ratio is an important factor to consider, in particular given some of the key care issues and the additional burden it places mostly on women.**

In research discussions, adult men appeared to be disengaged from the family unit and it was apparent that they do not take up the duty to provide for or feed the household – as that is considered the duty of the women. Thus, it is women who are the carers of children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, as well as the domestic sphere, land and food provisioning. Figure 3-23 shows the dependency ratio in Karamoja compared to the rest of the country. The dependency ratio refers to the ratio of persons older than 64 years and younger than 15 years to the working-age population (15-64). Hence, the dependency ratio represents a significant burden on working age adults, as they are to provide for the

other age groups. As noted above, in terms of the demographic trends, most of the population in Karamoja is below the age of 18.

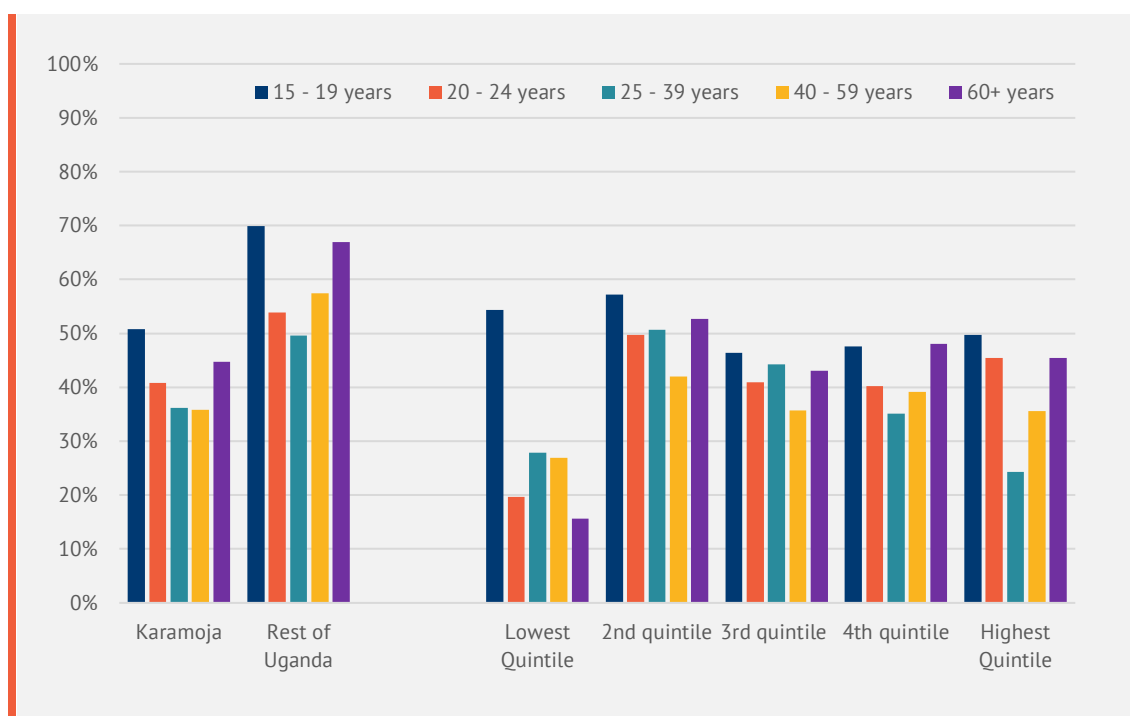
**Figure 3-23: Dependency ratio by sub-regions in Uganda, 2012**



Source: UNHS 2012/13 Final Report, table 2.8.

**A large percentage of working age adults in Uganda – as a whole – are estimated to be unemployed or working for subsistence.** Figure 3-24 indicates that 36 per cent of people aged 25-29 in Karamoja are unemployed or working for subsistence (versus almost 50 per cent for the rest of Uganda), and the same percentage of people aged 40-59 for Karamoja (whereas the percentage for that age group for the rest of Uganda rises to 60 per cent). Nevertheless, these figures still point to an issue around unemployment for this region. This of course, has a stark impact on this age bracket, in particular on their responsibilities as main income earners for their families. Moreover, as Chapter 4 on income sources explains, most of the casual labour the Karamojong engage in, does not allow working age adults to support and sustain their families.

**Figure 3-24: Percentage of working age people 15+ who are either unemployed or working for subsistence only by age groups, and consumption quintiles in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data). This excludes persons who are not economically active.

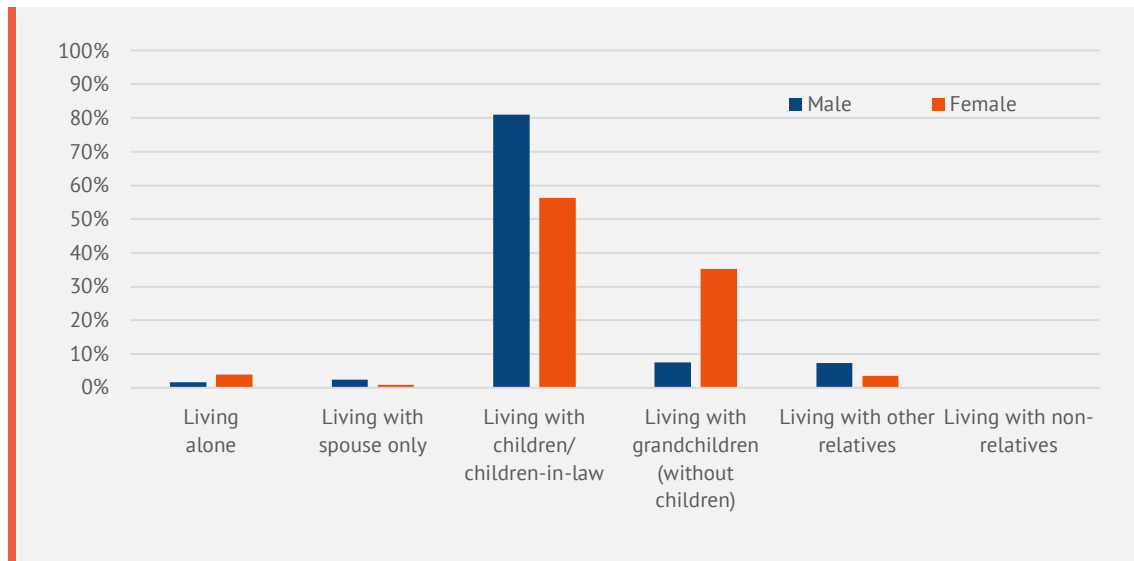
### 3.3.5 Older people

**Most older persons over the age of 60 in Karamoja live with their children or children in-law.** As Figure 3-25 shows, in the case of men, this number rises to more than 80 per cent, while it is over 50 per cent for women. Only 2.9 per cent of people over the age of 60 in Karamoja live on their own, and even fewer (just 1.6 per cent) live with their spouses. The fact that most older people live with their children impacts on the care responsibilities of their adult children if they are unable to care for themselves. However, if the elderly living in inter-generational households are able to support with household chores and/or care responsibilities, this can have a positive impact in terms of them lessening the care burden of working age adults, by helping them with childcare etc. One of the biggest challenges facing older women is that almost 40 per cent live only with their grandchildren, presenting them with a significant challenge both in terms of care as well as the responsibility of providing for them. During discussions in the fieldwork, it was mentioned that Uganda Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) transfers were shared with the rest of the family, thus having a redistributive effect. Hence, if more (or all) of the women over 60 years of age responsible for the care of their grandchildren were to receive pensions, it would have a significant impact on their wellbeing.

### 3 Current context

Notwithstanding, some districts in Karamoja do not have the Senior Citizens' Grant (SCG), so they miss out on income security. It is also to be noted that despite the positive results, since the SCG is relatively small in value, many of the elderly must continue to work.

**Figure 3-25: Percentage distribution of older persons over 60 by living arrangements and gender, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**In general terms, given the weakened state of traditional social structures, the elderly (in**

*“The elderly cannot move to access services or look for food. They are generally weak and some stay in their huts alone. It is mainly for the young ones to help them so that the elderly can get out of the huts, or fetching them water, providing food, and cleaning for them. For orphans, they are even more badly off but there are informal support networks at the community level.”*  
(Youth male, FGD).

**particular, men) have suffered from marginalisation and changes in the power structures within communities.**

During discussions, it was mentioned that there is a quiet desperation among disempowered older persons who no longer have the authority or the ability to guide their clans and communities in an

emerging state power and less traditional context. Nevertheless, in areas where the SAGE was present, beneficiaries were not considered as vulnerable as they had a regular income. In addition, in some of the discussions, younger adults highlighted that some of the male elderly still owned livestock, and that was one of their measures of wealth, thus reducing their vulnerabilities.

## 3.4 Conceptualising vulnerability among the Karamojong

**The Karamojong have their own perspectives on vulnerability across the lifecycle.** Self-perceptions around vulnerability, as well as their own ideas on how to overcome the challenges and risks they face, are potentially key to addressing poverty and inequality in the region. As active participants in their own development and as capable agents of change, the research aimed to further explore the underlying assumptions regarding Karamoja and the reasons why government and non-government interventions appear to struggle in bringing about inclusive development (see Box 3-4 on a definition of the Capability approach).

### Box 3-3: Capability approach and capability deprivation

Amartya Sen uses the term agent as “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well” (p.19).

Along these same lines, “poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes” (p.87). Therefore:

- 1) Poverty can be sensibly identified in terms of capability deprivation; the approach concentrates on deprivations that are intrinsically important (unlike low income, which is instrumentally significant).
- 2) There are influences on capability deprivation – and thus on real poverty – other than lowness of income (income is not the only instrument in generating capabilities).
- 3) The instrumental relation between low income and low capability is variable between different communities and even between families and individuals (the impact of income on capabilities is contingent and conditional).

Source: (Sen, 2000).

**Vulnerability is largely understood by the Karamojong as being characterised over the lifecycle by their (lack of) access to care and social networks, access to food and livestock, ability to support others, physical strength and the ability to work and receive cash income and external support (government and non-government).** This of course coincides with many universally perceived risks across the lifecycle. Respondents commonly identified people with severe disabilities as people with physical disabilities, including blindness, that inhibited their ability to engage in any labour activity, while people with mild disabilities were associated with challenges that did not entirely restrict the ability to work. However, the question of ‘who do you think is most vulnerable?’ prompted puzzled reactions before respondents were eventually able to identify groups that are generally targeted as vulnerable. At the end of the vulnerability ranking exercises (one of

the participatory tools used during the qualitative field research), many respondents remarked how difficult it was to truly distinguish the most vulnerable in an impoverished region such as Karamoja.

#### **Vulnerability rankings were undertaken in discussions with adults, young people and adolescent males and females.**

*“They [orphans with severe disability] are abandoned by parents and have no vaccinations or access to nutrition, or vitamins. So, they develop various problems – there are children on the streets with polio.”* (Youth male, FGD).

*“Elderly are not vulnerable as they have cattle, and they are able to support adults – they even get money from the government.”* (Youth male, FGD).

Vulnerability was discussed across age groups, by seasonality and gender regarding access to productive assets, food availability and planning, access to care networks and informal safety nets. Moreover, lifecycles in rural societies are not defined by

chronological age but by defining events in one’s lifetime. In the case of Karamoja, respondents distinguished between adults and young people not by age but by whether someone is single or married; adults were identified as those who are married and have their own homestead, whereas young people still live in their parent’s homestead.

**In general terms, widows, orphans, and people with severe disability (including older persons, as they have severe disabilities in many cases) are ranked as the most vulnerable given they have no care networks and informal safety nets, thereby leading to a lack of food and productive assets, and because they are ‘physically weak’ or incapable of hard work.** The local elites and businessmen, on the other hand, were ranked as least vulnerable due to their ready access to cash and, therefore, their ability to ‘do anything’. For older people and orphans, it is quite clear that access to care networks was considered necessary. In one discussion, the elderly were ranked above orphans. For young people, lack of employment opportunities and hazardous occupations made them vulnerable. For working age adults, the ability to work is a widely held perception distinguishing the vulnerable and non-vulnerable. In addition, lactating and pregnant women were categorised as vulnerable and having special nutrition needs, which may not be available in a food-scarce environment.

**In the case of locations receiving the SCG, the transfer was most notably mentioned as the reason for rendering elderly men as ‘least vulnerable’ (added to them being the most likely to own livestock).** They are, therefore, more capable to continue with traditional family structures (as opposed to non-SCG beneficiaries), whereby the head of the family supports their younger generations with cash and wealth, and in return receive care, meals and support in terms of labour. Young men were viewed as least vulnerable due to their physical ability to undertake labour intensive jobs.

**Livestock ownership is intricately linked to Karamojong identity and is a major issue in local discussions.** Given the central place of livestock within the local lore, associated with cultural identity and social structures beyond means of livelihood, discussions during the field research did circle around the issue, whereby the lack of livestock ownership was considered to increase vulnerability to risks and shocks. In many cases livestock ownership was seen as a saving.



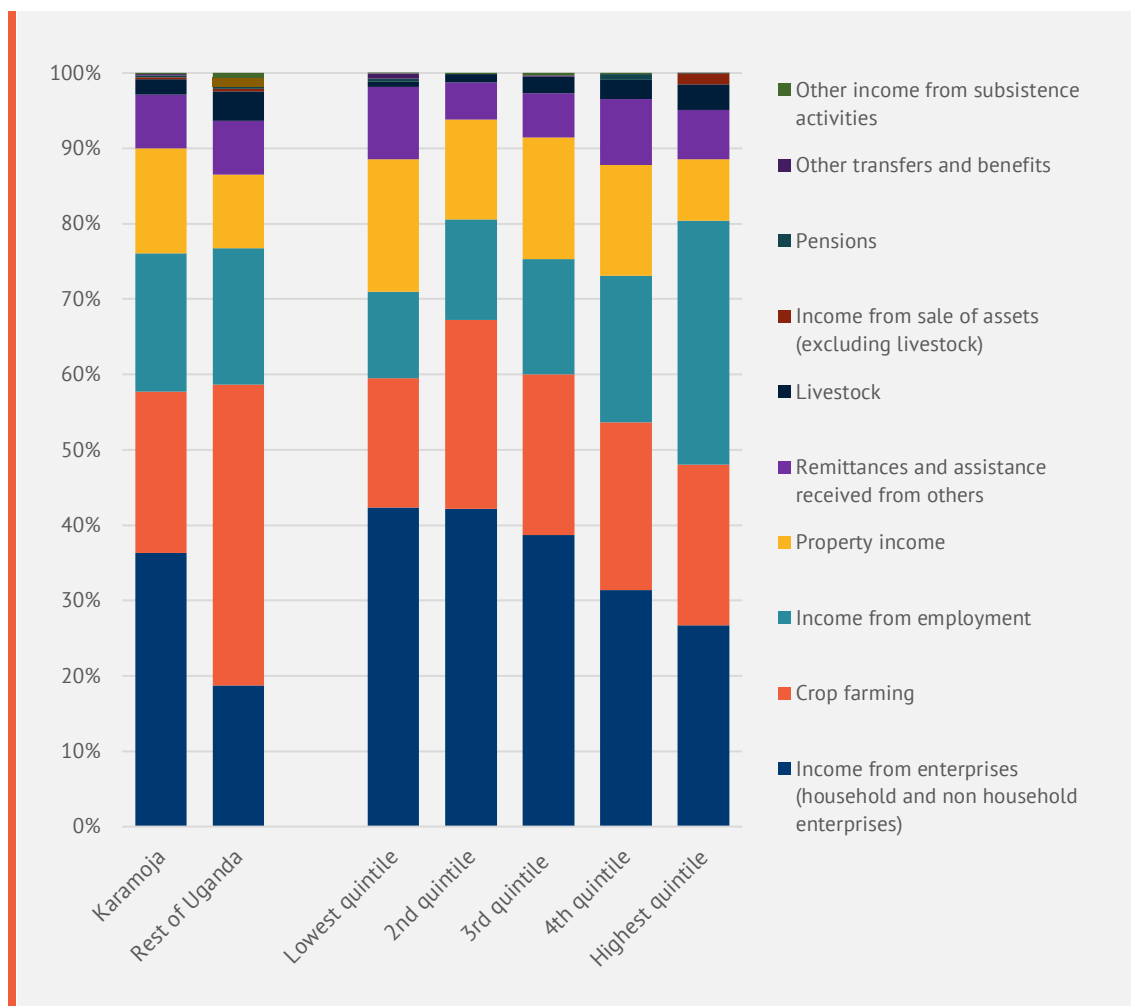
## 4 Income sources

**People in Karamoja engage in a wide range of economic activities to sustain their livelihoods.** This Chapter will uncover some of the main findings regarding the existing labour market in Karamoja, the wide range of economic activities the Karamojong engage in, current production lines and the potential for developing value chains. It will also detail some of the main constraints that individuals face in accessing the labour market. In general terms, it is to be noted that the labour wages most Karamojong receive for these tasks, is not enough – nor predictable – to sustain their families.

### 4.1 Labour, income generation activities and unemployment

**Households in Karamoja are increasingly relying on wage incomes for survival and as their primary source of income.** However, wage employment in Karamoja occurs mostly in the informal labour market and wage levels fluctuate significantly between areas, depending on the relative scarcity of labour (Mueller & Bbosa, 2016). Indeed, a study by Kavuma et al. (2015) found that 80 per cent of workers in Uganda are employed in the informal sector, consisting of household workers and own-account workers. The study showed that workers with a lower educational attainment were more likely to be employed in the informal sector, or to transition between formal and informal labour. As shown by Figure 4-1, the Karamojong mostly rely on income from small enterprises (household and non-household), much more so than the rest of Uganda (makes up 36 per cent of income for the Karamojong, compared to 19 per cent of income for the rest of Uganda). The other main difference between Karamoja and Uganda as a whole is in crop farming. Just 21 per cent of the Karamojong depend on crop farming as a source of income, compared with 40% of Ugandans. Another difference is found in livestock, as the rest of Uganda (almost 4 per cent) is double that of Karamoja (2 per cent), despite the latter being generally regarded as a region mainly inhabited by pastoralists.

**Figure 4-1: Share of income by source in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, and by consumption quintiles in Karamoja, 2012**

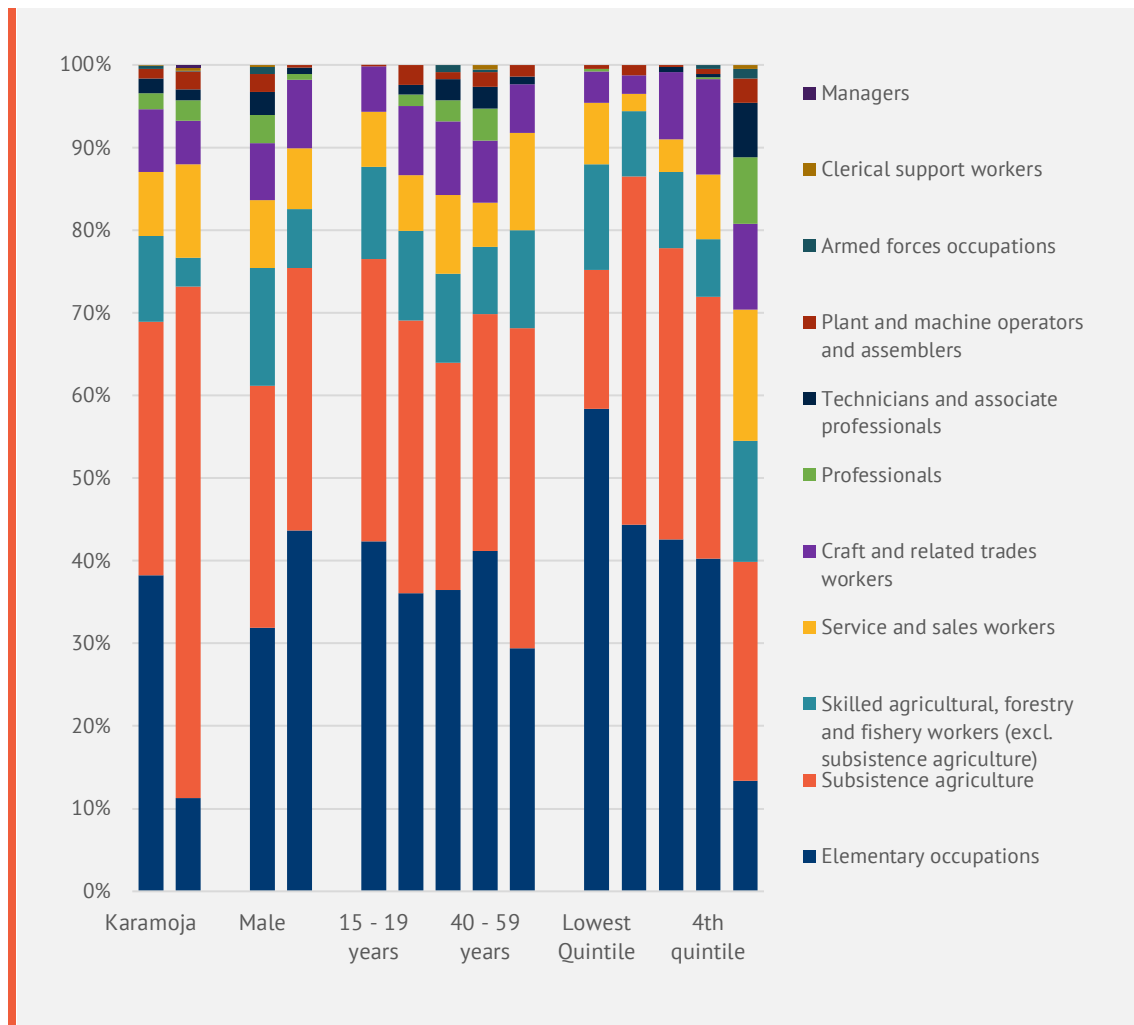


Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

As Figure 4-2 shows, in terms of occupations around 38 per cent of those in Karamoja hold unskilled manual labour<sup>20</sup> elementary occupations, versus only 11 per cent across the rest of Uganda; and while, in Karamoja, around 31 per cent are occupied in subsistence agriculture, in the case of the rest of the country the percentage is around 67 per cent. It demonstrates that, in reality, agriculture does not appear to be a viable and sustainable option in Karamoja. This issue should be further looked into with further in depth-research.

<sup>20</sup> The UNHS refers to elementary occupations.

**Figure 4-2: Percentage distribution of occupations by source in Karamoja and other parts of Uganda, gender, age groups and by consumption quintiles in Karamoja, 2012**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNHS 2012/2013 data).

**WFP’s Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Report of November 2016 indicated that all households in Karamoja had at least one income earner.** The main sources of income were listed as: agricultural wage labour (16 per cent), petty trade (16 per cent), non-agricultural wage labour (14 per cent), brewing (12 per cent) and sale of charcoal/firewood (11 per cent). However, household engagement in agricultural wage labour was found to have been declining since July 2016 due to a decrease in agricultural activities. Other sources of income included: fishing/hunting, food assistance, salary, income derived from sale of livestock and/or animal products, remittances, food crop production/sale, pensions, government allowances, gifts/begging, cash crop production/sales and handicrafts (WFP, 2016).

**Casual and informal work appears to be the norm across most of Karamoja.** A combination of poor literacy, lack of employment opportunities, weak markets, unviable subsistence agriculture and limited or unprofitable business opportunities (to be discussed in the next section) have led to entire communities depending on casual and irregular low paid work as their primary strategy for earning income. Mueller and Bbosa (2016) emphasise the importance of casual labour in Karamoja, noting that whenever cash expenses arise or food is short, most households report taking part in casual wage labour (preferably in agriculture) in order to receive cash. Due to limitations in access to land and/or assets, wage work was found to be an essential income earning activity, especially among households cultivating three acres or less or with few assets and livestock.

**As casual labourers, people engage in a wide range of activities.** The research found that wage work and self-employment are carried-out across a wide range of economic activities in Karamoja, although most of these activities are secondary, therefore following the seasonal calendar and taking place when agricultural work is unavailable (Mueller & Bbosa, 2016). Qualitative field research identified some of these activities as the following (see Table 4-1 for a ranking of income generating activities by age):

- **Mining:** Done by both men and women. Gold and marble mining in Amudat, especially Karita and Loroo sub-county as well as in Katikekile. Marble and limestone quarrying in the Napak district.
- **Aloe vera collection:** Collected and sold by women and children in Amudat. It is a painstaking, time-consuming process that also causes considerable health problems.
- **Agricultural labour:** Men and women work on other people's gardens for UGX 2,000 a day during the dry season, at most, once or twice a week. This commonly covers 1 cup of maize for UGX 700, snuff for UGX 300 and a small cup of silver fish for UGX 500. At times, employers may provide UGX 1,000 for breakfast and another UGX 1,000 at the end of the day.
- **Construction:** Young men and women engage in construction work which is relatively better paid. Men can be paid up to UGX 12,000 a day. However, the work is seasonal and construction workers can migrate for more regular work only if they have networks and connections.
- **Boda boda driving:** "You can earn anything between UGX 4,000 – UGX 25,000 [per day]. That is why we like the boda boda (Youth male, FGD). Despite being a dangerous occupation, high school students and young men have increasingly become boda boda drivers due to the favourable access to instant cash.

## 4 Income sources

- **Others:** Men reported temporarily migrating (for around 3 months) and working as shepherds in areas where communities still own cattle. They can earn approximately UGX 20,000 a month. Women also work as housemaids.

**Table 4-1: Occupations as ranked by different groups (X=relative frequency of response)**

Activity/Age	Elderly	Adults	Youth	Adolescents
Mining (Gold)	X	X	XX	XX
Mining (Stone Quarrying)	X	XX	XX	X
Stone Crushing	X	XX	X	X
Farming	XX	XX	X	X
Labour on Farm	XX	X	XX	XX
Livestock/Cattle Rearing	XX	XX	XX	XX
Petty Trade (local shops/stalls)		X	XX	
Petty Trade (Charcoal Burning)	XX	XX	XX	XX
Petty Trade (Selling Firewood)	XX	XX	XX	XX
Brick Laying		XX	X	X
Selling Water	X	X	X	X
Hunting	X		XX	XX
Brewing	X		XX	XX
Petty Theft			XX	XX
Migration	XX	X	X	X

Source: Fieldwork. Each X represents the frequency the activity observed during the field research.

### Discussions with respondents at the community and household level clearly showed that

*“In the past, there was no focus on selling food. Nowadays, people are becoming commercial and can sell their produce.” (Male adult, FGD).*

**none of the above economic activities are carried out in isolation.** In reality, a combination of productive activities is undertaken. The strategy for household

economies is based on undertaking an optimum combination of activities to generate enough income and/or production to provide for the family. Some respondents stated that selling produce from the gardens was frowned upon and regarded as poor post-harvest management. However, farmers in Kaabong district argued that it was a strategic choice to sell off most of the produce as in order to meet household needs. In Kaabong there was a clear preference for selling, in particular to Turkana and Toposa. Often, they mentioned crossing the border (to Kenya) to sell as well. FEWS Net (2016) reported that retail prices in Lodwar (Kenya) were about twice those in Soroti (outside of Karamoja), while prices in South Sudan were even higher.

**Although there are limited opportunities for local business in Karamoja, people strive to engage in different businesses and self-employment activities.** Some of the existing businesses that people commonly engage in are as follows:

**Cattle trade:** Given the natural affinity and familiarity towards livestock, cattle trading continues to be a profitable endeavour in this region. Young men with business acumen and access to working capital normally engage in this trade. It involves more affluent locals acting as middlemen to buy livestock and selling them in a bigger market, with a significant profit margin. They visit kraals and buy around 20 animals each time. However, the trade of livestock can also suffer from irregularities due to the relatively low levels of livestock ownership compared with previous years. Families generally sell their animals during an emergency, disease epidemics or the lean season, at minimal prices (i.e. in desperation). After harvests in September, the cattle trade is slow as there are not many families willing to sell their livestock. Therefore, cattle prices are associated with the seasonality and availability of food staples. When food availability is high, cattle prices go down, and vice-versa. In the dry season, a large bull can generally fetch between UGX 600,000 and 1,000,000, which can fall to between UGX 500,000 and 700,000 if there are many animals on the market. People often sell off their cattle in the lean season and replace them after the harvests.

**Food trading:** Cereal banking was prevalent until a few years ago, prior to the long drought of the past 2-3 years. Young men normally buy the cereals during the harvests in August/September when prices are low. They stock them until April when prices rise and then sell them during the wet season. However, this practice has been affected by the lack of harvests in the region over the last few years and insufficient storage facilities. This activity is presently supported under the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), however they have been struggling to continue in the food trade. Due to the prolonged drought, people are more reluctant to sell part of their meagre harvests to middlemen.

**Petty trade:** In the midst of the continued stress of hunger and poor harvests, people have relied on petty trade as an additional source of income. However, most of these activities, contrary to being profitable, are characterised by labour intensive activities with no collective bargaining power, and with no guarantee that the product will be successfully sold. Nonetheless, despite the extremely low prices in a cash-poor economy, some people are able to make a living with these activities with potential for increase if the proper labour standards and market accessibilities were in place. Some of the main items that are sold are:

**Charcoal and firewood:** Firewood is cut from the trees and sold as it is, or it may be first turned into charcoal. It is primarily a female activity, but men have also begun to involve themselves in this trade. They receive around UGX 1,000 – 2,000 for a sack of firewood, or

between UGX 25,000 to 30,000 for a sack of charcoal, dependent entirely on demand. The findings showed that the production of charcoal has been viewed by local government officials to be extremely detrimental to the environment, which they anticipate will deteriorate further.

**Local brew:** This is a traditional practice maintained by women. The alcohol content is considered minimal as it is made from sorghum and/or maize. People also consume the residue when there is nothing else to eat. The “Pentagon” model of selling local brew was developed by a woman in Napak in the 1980s. The women sell the brew in the main markets where it is purchased by young men who sell it in the villages, creating a cost-effective distribution network.

**Honey:** Traditionally undertaken on a very small scale in certain areas in Napak and Amudat districts (famous for their honey). The traditional method is to burn out the beehives to collect the honey. Only recently have some organisations attempted to introduce modern methods of honey extraction. The government has created an initiative for beekeeping, whereby they identify farms in more fertile areas where bees are concentrated and provide farmers with modern beehives.

**Ekorete (local name for a type of desert date):** The *Ekorete tree* was identified as an indigenous tree and has several uses. It provides medicinal leaves, food from its seeds, fruit and charcoal from its timber.

**Water:** Sold at UGX 200 per 5 litre jerry can.

**Wild greens, fruits and seasonal vegetables:** Collected and sold by women. Cattle herders also bring back wild fruits from the grazing areas.

**Meat:** Wild animals such as wild hares, ostriches and wild boars.

**Clothes:** Sold mainly by female traders.

**Handicrafts:** For example, stools. Produced by men, including the elderly.

**Tobacco:** Pounded and sold as snuff or sold as dry leaves by men in areas with *Gum Arabica* trees.

**Grass and tree poles:** Sold for the construction of traditional huts.

**Others:** Shea nut for cosmetics, poultry and eggs, and groceries (including salt, cooking oil and soap).

**Aloe vera:** In some Amudat sub-counties such as Karita, aloe vera collection has emerged as a key economic activity for women and children. In the dry season, it takes a week to fill a 5-litre jerry can and 2 days in the wet season. The collection of aloe vera juice is a

strenuous and time-consuming activity that requires women and children standing in the sun all day with their backs bent forward and downwards. If there is demand, the women are able to sell a 5-litre jerry can for a meagre UGX 5,000. The women usually carry the jerry can for more than 4 kilometres to Kenya where the aloe vera is dried, processed into solidified labs and taken to Nairobi. From Nairobi, it is finally exported to manufacture costly aloe vera products. Box 4-1 offers a case story on aloe vera production.

### Box 4-1: Case story on hardships of aloe vera production

*“We are doing this hard work just because of a lack of food and water. We have no choice but to struggle. Our husbands cannot provide for us: if my clothes are torn and I need new clothes and my man will tell me to cut aloe and get money. Men here believe you should work for yourself. There is no assurance with cattle anymore (due to disease and lack of water), so it is better to collect aloe vera.”*

*“We work in the sun all day, every day, and the money we get is partly used to buy Panadol as we get headaches. And then we also have to feed the entire family. We do it throughout the year, but sometimes the buyers have no money, so we stop then.”*

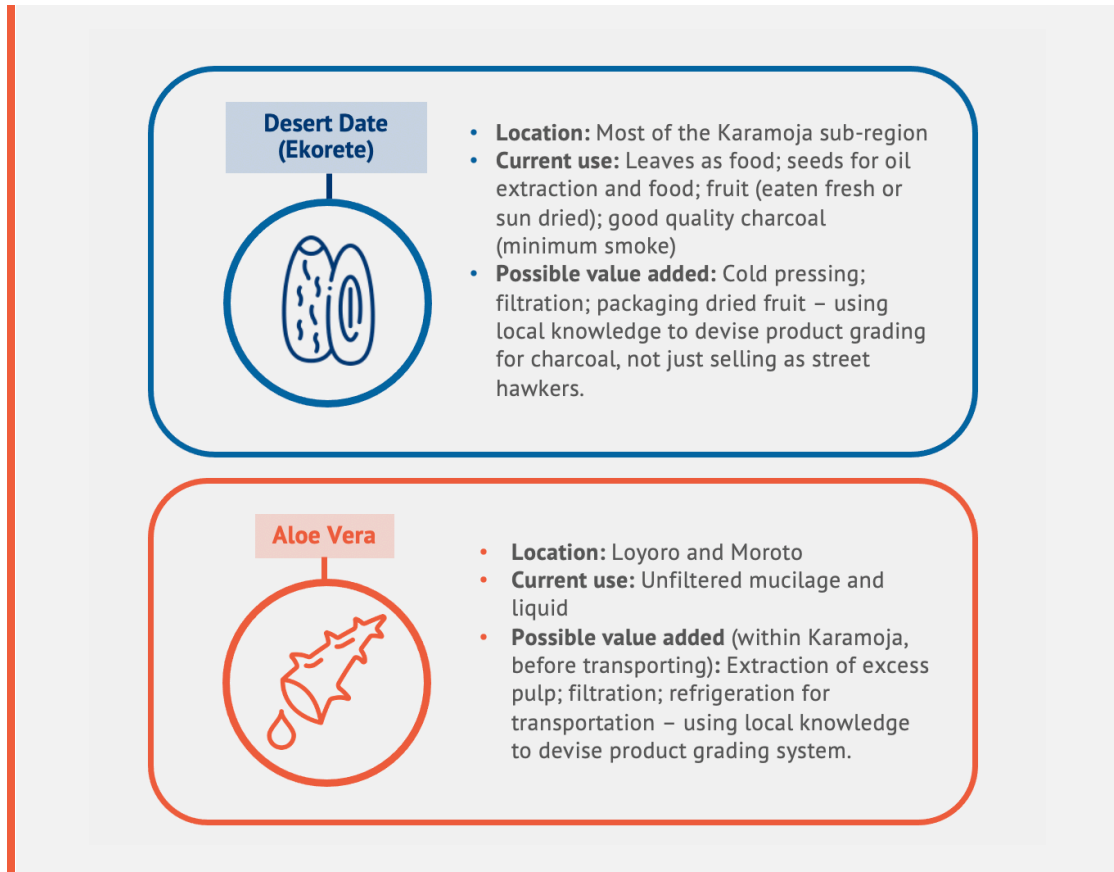
*“Often, it’s difficult to work because it makes you sick – you work in the bush out in the sun, and then in the evening you get a headache and you cannot get up the next day. Your back aches as well – and you have to lie down. Moreover, sometimes the buyer says it is too watery and returns it, and you have to start again. But that’s how it becomes in the sun – it becomes watery.”*

*(Adult female, FGD).*

**Although some of the products might not have been used to their best potential and for the benefit of the labourers, there is potential for further developing some of these markets.** The research found that the market knowledge was mainly of the middlemen who bought the product. The potential for larger cosmetic and/or food markets remained minimal. The buyers are integrated into their networks and have market information. However, the producers are not integrated, creating information asymmetry between producer and buyer. For *Ekorete*, except for some KIIs with a model farmer who was heading the Private Sector Association of Moroto, there was no knowledge of possible commercial uses of *Ekorete* within the limited research sample. He, however, was aware of its use as massage oils, cooking oil and hair products. Any knowledge or linkage with markets would, therefore, have to be explored. Though, other African countries, for example Senegal, are exporting *Ekorete* and may provide models to follow. For an example, see Figure 4-3.



Figure 4-3: Local products for potential market



Source: Development Pathways

**There has been no interest by government or development partners in restocking cattle.**

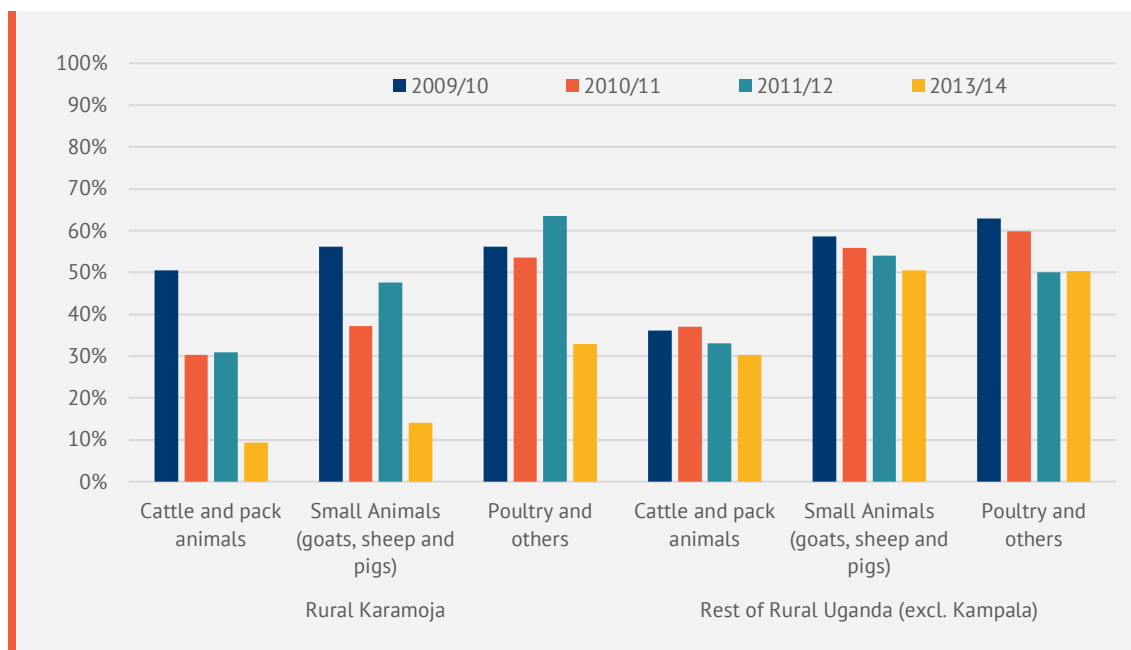
Due to the history with cattle raiding in Karamoja, as well as the “de-pastoralising” (Caravani, 2017) of the local economy, it is often argued that restocking cattle might bring insecurity to the region once more (ibid.). Livestock keeping has some limits in Karamoja due to mobility and the difficulties in obtaining permissions for grazing outside the region, poor access to water, animal health issues and the reduced area of communal grazing land. Nevertheless, re-stocking could be promoted for consumption, small-scale production, and the larger scale production of meat, milk and other by-products (e.g. cow dung, hides and skins). Re-stocking will also offer opportunities for males to work and increase their contribution to their family’s welfare.

**Overall, in Uganda the percentage of households who own or have raised different types of livestock has decreased across the board.**

As shown in Figure 4-4, in Karamoja the possession of cattle and pack animals, for example donkeys, fell from almost 50 per cent in 2009/10 to 10 per cent in 2013/14; for small animals, possession reduced from 56 per cent in 2009/10 to 14 per cent in 2013/14; and, for poultry and others possession reduced from 56 per cent in 2009/10 to 33 per cent in in 2013/14. Compared with the rest of

Uganda (excluding Kampala) the ownership rates for livestock in 2013/14 were: 30 per cent for cattle and pack animals, 50 per cent for small animals, and 50 per cent for poultry and others.

**Figure 4-4: Share of households that own or have raised livestock, by type of livestock in rural Karamoja and other rural parts of Uganda, 2009-2013**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11 and UNPS 2009/10). These are unweighted estimates. The total number of observations in rural Karamoja for each wave is 85, 126, 86, and 89 respectively for the UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11, UNPS 2009/10 waves; while the total number of observations for other rural parts of Uganda (excl. Kampala) is 2,213, 2,105, 2,016 and 2,114 respectively for the UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11, UNPS 2009/10 waves.

**In some parts of Karamoja, agriculture as a source of income is challenging.** In a context

*“We do not rely on farming, so we turn to other jobs such as cattle trading, livestock and boda boda.”*  
(Adult/youth males, FGD).

of arid and semi-arid lands, farmers largely rely on rainfed agricultural methods that are often unsuccessful. There has also been a lack of

diversification of drought resistant crops, such as sorghum, cassava and groundnuts. Instead, interventions by development partners and government commonly distribute maize seeds which are more likely to die in case of drought. Families tend to farm near rivers or towards greener areas which are often 4-5 kilometres away from their homestead. Lokopo sub-county (Napak district) presents a case where gardens are either situated far away towards the Teso region which falls in the green belt, or the gardens are situated within the semi-arid parishes where almost nothing can be grown. Overall, the distance to the gardens (the local term for landholdings) along with poor yields has been a deterrent to cultivation and wild vegetation is still a crucial source of food that is more reliable than their gardens. The gardens are communal, and there is not enough harvest

to provide for the large family sizes. Each homestead within a clan may in fact control only about ½-1 acre of land, which renders the yield insignificant for consumption. Even when people are able to harvest it is not enough for a year, lasting for approximately 4-5 months only. The communities normally harvest sorghum, which is used partly for the household and partly for sale in order to purchase essentials such as salt, soap and beans.

### **Unemployment rates in Karamoja are high and the share of young people who are**

*“We are mostly idle and roaming around on the streets. Most of us dropped out in senior school.” (Youth male, FGD).*

### **unemployed is greater than that of**

**working age adults.** Young people, whether literate or not, face

unemployment due to few appropriate

opportunities that provide sufficient wages or access to capital. As such, most start-up businesses focus on agriculture and cattle trading. There is an entire unemployed work force in Karamoja. Qualitative research indicated that young people generally perceive themselves to be casual workers in construction, distributing local brew, mining, *boda boda* drivers, agricultural labour and the collection of water, firewood, charcoal, aloe vera and/or even wild greens for sale. The findings showed that the Karamojong place enormous pressure on being able to work and provide for others, showing signs of vulnerability if they are unable to do so. As such, this becomes a key issue to address for future policies and private sector investment.

### **Despite lack of opportunities, young people demonstrated creativity and a desire to**

**prosper.** One particular young woman, who lived with her aunt after becoming an orphan, described dropping out of school in 2016 after her completion of primary school. She explained that it was impossible for her to continue with her education due to the high cost of fees and her responsibilities taking care of the younger children in the household. Furthermore, her school was far away, and she would have had to board. At the local hair salon, she is paid between UGX 10,000 – 15,000 for any hairdo – so there are days she can earn UGX 30,000 and others when she earns nothing. She describes having also worked on other people’s gardens or fencing homes. She aspires to expand her hairdressing business, build a big house and to be able to send all her nieces and nephews to school. Another young man described having finished a technical health degree only to find that there were not enough jobs at the local health clinic in Karita. As such, he depends on casual jobs and the food that his mother provides. He described his hope that more health facilities would open in the surrounding areas so that he could eventually obtain a job in the industry.

## 4.2 Extractive industries

**Given that Karamoja is a wealthy region in terms of natural resources, there is great potential for exploring (not exploiting) them to the advantage of the local population.**

This industry entails the extraction and removal of raw materials from the earth and includes activities and operations surrounding oil, gas, mining, and quarrying, among others. The extractive industry comprises commodities such as gold, stones, sand, marble, and limestone.

**Uganda's first systematic mineral policy was published under a pamphlet called "The New Dawn of Mining" under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development in 2001.** The "New Dawn" had a central objective to capitalise on Uganda's potential in mining and creating an attractive climate for private investment. As part of this process, artisanal and small-scale mining was encouraged and regularised (Siegel & Veiga, 2009). Moreover, with the simultaneous implementation of the Mineral Policy and Mining Act, the legislative environment in Uganda was adapted to attract foreign investments into large-scale mining activities and further encourage small-scale mining.

**The licensing of mining activities requires compliance with a multitude of laws and involves many institutions.** Currently, the management of mineral resources in Uganda cuts across various legal frameworks, as it falls within the provisions of the Constitution, the national fiscal policy framework, environmental policies and legal frameworks and other sectoral laws and regulations (see Annex 4 for further information on the legal framework for land and mining).

### Box 4-2: Experience in the extractive industries in Karamoja

**Construction materials (stones and sand):** Stone crushing and sand excavations are common activities across Karamoja for men, women and older children in the dry season. More women engage in it than men, as they have the primary responsibility to earn money and feed their families. The work is hazardous, and people are prone to injury and damaging their hands. Ugandan construction companies – such as Tororo construction – send their trucks to collect these stone and sand lots, although there is no certainty on their schedule. As a result, people often wait for days to sell their materials, stones and products.

**Marble and limestone mining:** Based on discussions during the research, marble and limestone extraction is prevalent in Napak and Moroto districts where it is a common sight to see men, women and children working together. Children often miss school or go there during their holidays. People are prone to severe injuries on their hands and permanent health problems, especially to their lungs. For marble, it takes about 3 days to burn the soil to allow the marble stones to separate easily, break them into small stones and finally be carried down the hills. A person can earn up to a maximum of UGX 50,000 for a marble lot. Limestone mines on the other hand are now controlled by mining companies who have been bringing in migrant labourers. Respondents complained about the restricted access to these mines and the low wages that are given for their hard work. For a full truck, a maximum of UGX 110,000 (US\$30.3) is paid to a group of labourers.

**Gold mining:** “We don’t know how to measure how much gold we collect – the least we get is 2,000 Kenyan Shillings” (Community Resource Mapping, Karita, Amudat, 25/05/17). Mining activities in the Amudat district mainly consist of gold mining in sites such as Chakwarat parish, in the Karita sub-county. One can easily find migrant communities from other parts of Uganda that moved there since the gold mines were first discovered decades earlier. Artisanal mining involves children as young as 10 years old working alongside their parents in these hazardous mines, which lead to permanent health problems such as skin and lung cancer. Men go down to the mines while the women and children sift through wetted soil looking for gold. Gold is said to be easier to find during the rainy season, although finding a few specks of gold can take up to 2/3 weeks. People are at the mercy of the buyers that come irregularly to the nearest market in Kenya and they are unable to measure how much gold they have collected, leaving them open to deception and extortionate prices that are not aligned with global gold rates. It is, therefore, unsurprising that respondents expressed a growing preference amongst men and women to fetch and sell firewood instead of engaging in extremely physically demanding mining activities.

**The daily earnings from working on a stone quarry varied between UGX 2,000-4,000 if hired by middlemen organising a team and between UGX 10,000-14,000 a day if self-organised (depending on the size of the crew).** Smaller, self-organised crews receive slightly more. The retail price for a 50kg cement bag in 2016 was between UGX 31,000-33,000.<sup>21</sup>

*“The company decides where to send the trucks every week, so the people on the other side may have to wait for months to sell their stones. You will see people sleeping here under the bushes, as long as there is no rain. People will take water as a meal. People survive on the local alcohol.” (KII, sub-county).*

<sup>21</sup> Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201606170984.html>

Hence, the sale of one bag of 50 kg is enough to pay 3 workers their daily wage. The payment by the buyer was reported to be UGX 210,000 and UGX 170,000 for 10 tonne and 7 tonne lorries, respectively. It takes around 5-7 days for a 3-5-member crew to fill a 10 tonnes truck. Around UGX 40,000 is paid for loading the truck. However, there is no predictability on when a truck will come to pick the stones. For gold, clear estimates were not forthcoming, as respondents could not estimate weights. However, the daily earnings averaged between UGX 12,000-20,000.

### **Karamoja as a whole has seen a surge in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) with an**

*“In the last three years, there hasn’t been a good harvest, because of climate change, there has been no rain. 2013/14 was the last good season. 2014/15/16 there was no harvest, so therefore people depend on the mining.” (KII, Sub County).*

*“If you have family you work with your family, if you are alone you work alone, if you have money you hire someone to work for you. There are some 15-16-year-old students from secondary school who earn money for school here. We have problems of child labour. There are many injuries, for example people breaking their legs, somebody died recently.” (KII, Sub County).*

**estimated 18,000 to 20,000 men, women and children, already employed in the sector before the 2011 minerals survey (Hinton et al., 2011).**

During discussions throughout the field research, the two most frequently cited reasons for participating in ASM by all age groups was that it was seen as a relief and source of income in particularly lean periods. Among young people, though, the top reason cited was access to ready cash, specifically in relation to gold

mining. In fact, young people comprise the majority of the gold mining workforce. In addition, child labour, hazardous work conditions and lack of bargaining power are endemic to the issues of ASM. What seems to come across quite clearly in the research is that the Karamojong do not feel that they are benefitting from the extractive industries being undertaken in the region, and that there is still not much control in terms of what leaves the region and who it is benefitting. Further in-depth research should be focused on some of these issues.

## 5 Explanations of failed development in Karamoja

**Having described in previous chapters the past and current situation of people living in Karamoja, this Chapter seeks to uncover some of the structural factors explaining the vulnerabilities, as well as food, nutrition and income insecurities in Karamoja.** Based on the literature and the research findings, the underlying causes of “failed development” in Karamoja derive from a range of issues that go beyond blaming the Karamojong people for their failings and need to be understood from outside a narrow sectoral approach. The Karamojong, like many other indigenous peoples, have been constrained by underlying structural issues, some of which will be outlined in the following sections including: perceptions and language used to describe the region and its people; the weakening of traditional social norms and economy; governance and adverse incorporation into national social and economy policy; economic constraints and corruption; environment and climate change; inadequate and poor quality public services; migration; land tenure; lack of data and proper planning tools; and finally, the dissonance of development interventions. It is to be noted that some of these structural issues are examined in more detail while others are only touched upon, as they go beyond the original scope of the research.

### 5.1 The powerful and the imagining of Karamoja

**For many decades, Karamoja has been described and assessed by the government and development partners, as consistently and repeatedly performing poorly against development indicators.** It is widely recognised that poverty, marginalisation, poor infrastructure, conflict, insecurity, drought, and repeated food shortages have afflicted the area for a long time. It should also be acknowledged that most existing development interventions have not had a significant impact on communities because they have mainly treated the symptoms instead of addressing the structural causes responsible for the situation of chronic food, nutrition and income insecurity in the region (Caravani, 2017).

**While the above description is widely endorsed, the possible causes for this situation are disputed.** The first debate among policy makers is usually cast around which livelihoods, between pastoralism or agriculture, should be supported by the government and development partners. Those in support of agriculture – the mainstream position – usually characterise pastoral livelihood as “unsustainable” and “primitive”, and the cause of overgrazing. Hence, there is an obvious need, in their eyes, to “modernise” the Karamojong through the promotion of policies of settled farming and replace transhumant livestock production (Caravani, 2017). In many ways, this is an oft-repeated

story that has played out in the pastoral pockets of East Africa. It is a story that invites many negative stereotypes on pastoralists, such as being “primitive”, “violent” and “cattle raiders”. It is a story borne out of the longstanding “wisdom” of colonial and post-colonial governments, as well as development partners, that transhumant cattle production is not a viable economic option for Karamoja (ibid.).

**Since the British colonial period, pastoralism in East Africa has been widely considered as an inefficient and irrational livelihood system due to low productivity and purported devastating effects on the environment.** Thus, the process began to “civilise” the “indigenous people in the bush”, confining them to permanent rangelands and imposing sedentary lifestyles. The pastoralist societies became in danger of losing, not only their cultural identities, but access to resources and livelihood strategies as a result of the State’s appropriation of the communal grazing land they inhabited and traversed with their herds. Up until to the present day, the negative stereotyping of pastoral societies has persisted, despite it being misguided and unfounded.

**On the other hand, those minor groups of activists and policy makers supporting pastoralism believe that transhumant livestock raising has been the most successful livelihood because it has enabled pastoralists like the Karamojong to survive in an arid and semi-arid environment, even in the face of repeated droughts and/or other natural disasters.** According to them, the Karamojong survival has been possible through their highly rational and dynamic mode of livestock keeping, which allows them to exploit the temporal and spatial variability of natural resources, while agriculture is regarded as an unviable production system in most of the region due to the average low crop yield per hectare. In addition, their traditions were aligned to maintaining and sustaining the ecosystems of their region, of which they had deep knowledge. It thus follows that, with the promotion of agriculture as the major and main source of livelihood, the Karamojong will never be able to produce enough food for their own subsistence, unless there are significant investments in irrigation (Caravani, 2017).

**Interestingly, this debate between the promotion of pastoralist versus agricultural livelihoods is also reproduced at the local level where most investments favour agricultural production, with limited support for pastoralism, even when agricultural activities traditionally pertain to the female sphere and agriculture and wage-labour are considered shameful activities for men.** This has in turn created a type of development “for women” in the region, which has inevitably created tensions between men and women (Caravani, 2017) and increased their workload and burden.

**Our research experience showed a subtle defiance and rejection of ways that are considered foreign to the Karamojong.** At the heart of the problem is the prevailing misconception that pastoralists suffer because of their self-induced traditional ways that



limit their ability to adapt and thrive within the modern state. Yet history clearly shows that pastoralists have been well adapted to changes over the centuries. Their current predicament is more a rejection of policies that ignore their knowledge and aspirations. Instead, they would more naturally support systems and services that validate their way of life (African Union, 2010).

**These debates around which livelihood system is more suitable for the Karamojong are *de facto* creating an artificial language that does not reflect the real challenges they face.**

Depending on which paradigm is used to conceptualise the Karamojong, they are constantly referred to as either pastoralists or ex-pastoralists, and their poverty is either seen as caused by the loss of animals and mobility and/or by their poor knowledge of agricultural practices. In this report, we propose a different interpretation whereby the Karamojong's problems are more similar to those of other rural areas of northern Uganda and related to issues such as deficient universal goods (healthcare, education and social protection), land rights, very low wages and high unemployment rates (Caravani, 2017).

**A second paradigm that is often proposed as a means of understanding the region is the “alternative livelihoods framework”, which comes in as a middle ground position between the usual pastoralists *vis-à-vis* agriculture debate** (Caravani, 2017). Interestingly, in many reports on Karamoja livelihoods and food insecurity, which are mostly written by donors and development partners, the so-called alternative livelihood activities available in the region are often “demonised” as “unsustainable”, “risky” and “enhancing vulnerability”. In fact, many of the economic activities the Karamojong have been pursuing – since the loss of livestock – are viewed from a negative perspective and in some cases, have been “criminalised” by both government and development partners. For instance, in discussions with respondents, charcoal burning and firewood selling – which are two of the most popular means of earning cash in the region – were categorically talked about as a “negative coping mechanism” due to the impact on the environment and people practicing them were seen as being irresponsible (though needy) for not saving trees, which were considered to be community assets.

**Other alternative livelihoods (which begs the question: alternative to what? Farming? Pastoralism?) which are also portrayed negatively are alcohol brewing and *boda boda* driving.** Brewing, though an important source of income, especially for women, is still generally categorised as a negative coping mechanism to poverty because it is perceived as the cause of alcoholism in the region. There may be opportunities to transform these activities into something more positive, rather than ignoring them: one example might be artisanal-style beer brewing and developing a market for it. Activities around aloe vera on the other hand, are frowned upon mostly due to being a source of low income. Nevertheless, for many, these are the main sources of income.

**People involved in activities other than pastoralism and agriculture are portrayed either as undertaking alternative livelihoods or as engaging in “coping mechanisms”, even though these are activities that have, in some cases, been ongoing for more than 30 years and could, if so desired, be referred to as complementary income generating sources, entrepreneurship, jobs or micro/small businesses** (Caravani, 2017). This narrow focus comes from the view that the Karamojong nature and tradition is one of pastoralism while modernisation is one of agriculture and all other activities outside these two are seen as either “coping” or “alternative” to them (ibid.). The same is true for financial remittances, migration and wage labour, interrelated activities which are cast again as “coping mechanisms” in a crisis instead of being analysed as the structural and more fundamental activities that are keeping many families alive (ibid.).

**Other than analysing which livelihoods are more suitable for Karamoja, other causes are believed to explain why this region is the poorest of the country, such as the negative stereotype of people’s “idleness” and “laziness” and that the longstanding presence of development partners in the region has created a culture of dependency.** As noted earlier, “laziness”, for instance, was suggested by respondents as a challenge on more than one occasion while discussing vulnerabilities. When probed, the issue was expressed as some people (not the ones speaking, but others among them) being lazy and this not only creating problems for themselves but also casting the Karamojong in general in a negative light. The other consequence of these stereotypes is to create and instil the idea of the working age Karamojong as “undeserving poor”, which is particularly common among Ugandan citizens. Within this context of alleged idleness, laziness and dependency, conditional aid (food, cash and inputs) – which is one of the major interventions provided in the region by development partners – is carried out as a form of education to “teach” the Karamojong that, after so many years of receiving free/unconditional aid from development partners, they are now required to work in order to earn money or food (Caravani, 2017).

**Subjective ideas about vulnerability or imposed visions of identity also affect perceptions around being “vulnerable.”** The exogenous mainstream narrative about being Karamojong and identified with being “lazy”, “maladapted”, “uneducated”, “uncivilised” and “ungrateful” towards the government has had an impact on self-identification and self-worth. Box 5-1 provides an example of how some Karamojong internalise the wider stereotypical narrative about themselves.

### Box 5-1: Stories as identity markers

Laziness was suggested as a challenge on more than one occasion while discussing vulnerabilities. When probed, it was always phrased as some people (not them but from among them) being lazy and not only creating problems for themselves but also casting everyone in a bad light as they are, after all, from Karamoja.

Similarly, whereas burning charcoal and selling firewood were highlighted as two of the most popular means of earning cash during a Community Resource Mapping (CRM) discussion, it was categorically considered as “negative” and those indulging in it as being irresponsible (though needy) for not saving trees which were considered as a community asset.

Among some of the elderly, regarding their non-use of traditional attire, they insisted that the problem was not that Amin Dada tried to dress them – since they themselves recognised that they did not know any better before they started using clothes – but the problem was the violent way it was done.

Moreover, all the respondents would make a point of appreciating the health facility and the school provided by the government. Yet, as the discussion progressed, it became evident that many of their health and education needs are not being met. This is, perhaps, best captured in a statement by one of the Karamojong facilitators during discussions: *“We have come to this point that even when the government does half a task, we appreciate it lest we be on the wrong side of their truth.”*

Stories become identity markers, in that to express solidarity with the powerful, one should embrace their socially approved version of the story. As such, the Karamojong, to express solidarity with wider Uganda, had internalised the dominant/mainstream narrative about being Karamojong and identified with being “lazy”, “maladapted”, “uneducated”, “uncivilised” and “ungrateful towards the government”.

**Local authorities tend to portray a negative picture of Karamojong young people – especially young men – as disaffected and unwilling to do “hard work”, with a preference for “idleness” or undesirable activities.** We found there is no lack of ideas or inspiration among young people who are literate and more urbanised, but there was a lack of appropriate opportunities to help them to advance. When prompted during discussions young men and women provided a wide range of ideas in terms of small businesses. The unfortunate denial of young people’s needs, and interests is creating another generation engaged mostly in casual labour jobs. Again, this also relates to the overall “imagining” of outside agents with influence (donors, NGOs, Government of Uganda) – which is prejudiced by mainstream stereotypes – which has led them to impose on the Karamojong forms of development that fit their own imagination, rather than the real needs and priorities of the Karamojong. Hence, “civilising activities” are imposed on the Karamojong, that reflect an image of “undeserving poor” (such as laziness). As a result, many of these activities from development partners are bound to fail. It was pointed out during discussions many times that young people feel they are forgotten in development programming and that social security transfers – similar to the SCG – would be of use.

**Conceptualisations exist around vulnerability, and some of the mainstream subjective ideas about vulnerability or imposed visions of identity have resulted in affecting self-perceptions around being “vulnerable”.** External negative views and generalisations that the Karamojong were “lazy”, or “maladapted”, or “uneducated”, or “aid dependent” has clearly had an impact in self-identification and self-worth.

## 5.2 Weakening of traditional social norms and economy

**External sources of change have also resulted in radical shifts in traditional social norms and how Karamojong society is organised.** Exogenous forces such as colonisation, violence from the Idi Amin regime period, raiding of natural resources, climate change and drought have had a drastic impact on the way Karamojong society was organised and structured.

**Most of the government and development partners’ interventions and programmes have**

*“Earlier we could move freely to look for water but now there are restrictions. We are forced to stay in one place, whether there is water or not, whether the grass is infected or not.” (Community Resource Mapping).*

**focused on formal societal structures, leaving behind some of the key informal structures that traditionally organised society.** Some of these informal structures include traditional

leadership structures, household structures, the *manyatta* leadership structures, and some of the traditional survival practices. In addition, the traditional land tenure system and customary practices around land use have been eroded. Historically in Karamoja, land was communally owned – as is customary with pastoralist communities – and, hence, customary institutions provided the means for managing vulnerability through the cooperative use of land as a grazing source (Carlson et al., 2012). Customary institutions managed the use and accessibility of lands but exogenous interferences on land use have had a negative impact on cooperative practices, building up tensions and conflicts (ibid.). Moreover, over the past years, the government pushed for individual/household land tenancy to move the “de-pastoralising” (cf. Caravani, 2017) of Karamojong communities forward. However, the government has not moved fast enough on formal titling of lands and has not moved forward on customary tenure for communal lands. In addition, land grabbing by local elites and external parties has impacted on the land rights of local communities.

**The aforementioned changes in terms of land tenure have brought about increasing tensions between the formal and informal structures of organising the Karamojong society.** The informal structures of Karamojong society were not based on territory and sedentary claims on land whereas the imposed formal structures are based on sedentary and individually owned land tenure. Moreover, the shifts in land tenure and land tenure disputes have marginalised those already at the margins, as many of the communities in

Karamoja do not know how to navigate the formal system for individual land tenure. Hence, it leaves these communities vulnerable to corruption, land “brokers”, land grabbing, natural resources extraction and labour exploitation by both local elites and external actors.

**The change in livelihood strategies over the past years has left significant marks on traditional social norms and on cross-generational and gender relationships.** The loss of traditional livestock keeping activities contributes to creating a scenario in which men mostly remain idle and spend most of their time and money on alcohol. As a result, in some instances male alcoholism can be attributed to the loss of a clear social and family role, which can also further exacerbate gender imbalances by which women are becoming the major providers in the family through their domestic, commercial and humanitarian work (Caravani, 2017). Nevertheless, it is to be noted communities in Karamoja still place value on livestock, especially older people, although many no longer own them. This has greatly affected traditional social structures and the economic activities for income generation.

**There has been a loss of positive masculine identity among men as a result of the loss of livestock and their main occupation as herders.** This has led to idleness and alcoholism, as well as further pressure on young girls to be married off in

*“Even our men did not drink alcohol because there was milk. After all, they drink because there is lack of food, and they are stressed.” (Adult female, FGD).*

exchange for cattle. It is now common to see young men and children attend to the relatively small number of livestock while older adult men remain idle, simply because there are not enough cattle to herd while there are not enough new activities that are not considered shameful for men. Several adult men appeared disengaged from the family unit and do not partake in providing for or feeding the household, as that is considered the duty of the women. One of the reasons for the prevalence of domestic violence is the high rate of alcoholism. A UNDP (2015: 82) study points out that these changes to traditional livelihood strategies and power structures within communities have spurred a backlash in the form of domestic violence affecting women “as men seek more control over resources in areas such as crop farming, where women have previously exercised most of the control.”

**In Karamoja, as in many other rural societies, vulnerability is experienced as a communal reality, not individual, which also explains the organisation of resources – such as land and food – as communal entities, and the emphasis on social networks and sharing, even in the midst of widespread deprivation.** For example, when there is a relatively good harvest in the green belt, the local communities take responsibility and share food with migrants from other areas, despite this meaning there will be no food reserves for the lean season. Box 5-2 describes a case study on some of the traditional safety nets. Women

also have traditional revolving funds for acquiring resources for their local brew, whereas men traditionally rely on storing and selling food grains in groups, rather than individually. Likewise, the SCG also strengthens communal resource sharing practices: beneficiaries help non-beneficiaries with ready cash, and even cover expenses for extended families, especially children's school fees and health emergencies. Further information on informal support and sharing mechanisms is provided in Annex 2.

### Box 5-2: Remembering a way of life: Informal sharing practices nets of yore

John is 83 years old and lives with his wife who has a hearing impairment. He was the head of a polygamous family and, at one time, had 6 wives: he had given between 30 and 150 cattle as a "bride price" for each. After the famine and cholera in 1980, he still had 85 cattle that he was living comfortably with until they were subsequently "stolen" from a Kraal protected by the UPDF.

John's situation had a lot to do with the distorting of lives, of lifestyle. Before the famine, the court of elders was the assembly (*akiriket*), which discussed all the issues of the community. The courts of elders' meetings were also important occasions, where bulls would be slaughtered, and meat distributed in all *manyattas*. After harvest, the court of elders would meet and make sure everyone had enough. Women would come together and make local brew, which was also distributed to all *manyattas*. Nevertheless, he mentioned that *"the famine distorted the social system. The meetings of the court of elders still happen but it's like tickling a child to amuse him/her"*.

Recalling his youth, John also mentioned some food specialties that the Karamojong traditionally used. "*Emuna*" – a type of meat preserved with ghee and groundnuts – was good to use for up to a year. It was, mostly, reserved for men and special guests. Another specialty, which was often preserved, was sour milk with sorghum and dry meat (*akuring*).

He recalled that, after the famine of 1980s, four white men came to distribute food and seeds in Loyoro. It was food and seeds that the white men chose, but since the people were suffering from abject hunger in the famine, they took it. Since they only received very little of this "foreign" food, they kept it for their own consumption only. In John's opinion, such periodic events of being dependent on very little food, having no choice but to accept help from outsiders, led to the community support, distribution and sharing structures becoming redundant. Their way of life became more individualistic and less dependent on community structures and mechanisms such as the courts of the elders.

John clarified that he is thankful for the help given by the white men as it saved them in the immediate aftermath of the famine. However, he did think that in the longer run it had left them more vulnerable to hunger as the community support structure that used to exist no longer functions in the way it used to.

**Migration within Karamoja has traditionally formed an essential livelihood strategy to deal with seasonal variabilities in rainfall and dry seasons in Karamoja and relies on a dual settlement system.** This strategy encompasses regular movements between wet and dry seasons in response to changing climatic and geographic conditions to provide for livestock and enable food production, and to reduce the risks from recurrent shocks on food supplies. The imposed limits on movement within Karamoja have, of course, also had a negative impact on the traditional livelihood strategy.

### 5.3 Governance, power structures and adverse incorporation

**Politically and administratively, Uganda has both central and local governments.** The central and local governments share political and administrative responsibilities in Karamoja (Annex 3 gives the details of the local government system). A particularity of the governance structure for Karamoja is an institution within the executive branch devoted to the region: The Ministry of Karamoja Affairs has a special status under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Karamoja Affairs are overseen by the Minister for Karamoja Affairs supported by the Minister of State for Karamoja Affairs and Under-Secretary for Pacification and Development. This makes Karamoja unique - the only region to have a Special Minister, and thus yet again an artificial “exceptionalism” is fabricated by the central government for Karamoja. Indeed, the term “Pacification and Development” encapsulates stereotypes of the region.

**Limited local government structures and funding can be found across Karamoja.** The local administrative structure for Karamoja is composed of districts, sub-counties, parishes and villages. Karamoja comprises the following seven districts: Kaabong, Kotido, Abim, Moroto, Napak, Nakapiripirit, and Amudat. However, local governance capacity is affected by limited budgets provided by the national government which, in turn, affects budgets for the implementation of government programmes at the local and community levels. In addition, people perceive that, while local governments structures and officials are present in the region, the “real power” – in terms of decision-making – takes place in Kampala. This is certainly true in terms of budget allocation and development policy agendas (e.g., agriculture, natural reserves and minerals extraction). The recent governance of Karamoja has been characterised by the process of “splitting” the region into a growing number of administrative units. These growing districts reflect sub-ethnic boundaries, thereby exacerbating the territorial identities of sub-ethnic groups (Caravani, 2017). This, in turn, is a risky policy in light of the recent period of conflict between these groups.

**As indicated in the historical section of this report, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime established itself in the region as the dominant player from 2006.** Since then, government defined development for Karamoja with bringing peace, increasing agricultural production and, more recently, exploiting the mineral wealth resources to the region (Caravani, 2017). After a decade of the government’s extensive involvement in the region it is clear that security was achieved at the expense of development (ibid.). In this regard, the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP) was successful in removing the guns from the region but without addressing the deeper and more structural causes of insecurity, such as a context of almost total absence of “law and order”, poor state protection and few employment opportunities (ibid.).

**The social contract in Karamoja between the government and citizens appears to be dysfunctional.** Many people see government support as a favour, not as an entitlement, and that there is no questioning of what comes from the government or proper accountability mechanisms as per the services provided (or whether they should be provided in the first place). Thus, the linkages to becoming full citizens is hampered by the multidimensional nature of the exclusion and marginalisation of most people in Karamoja.

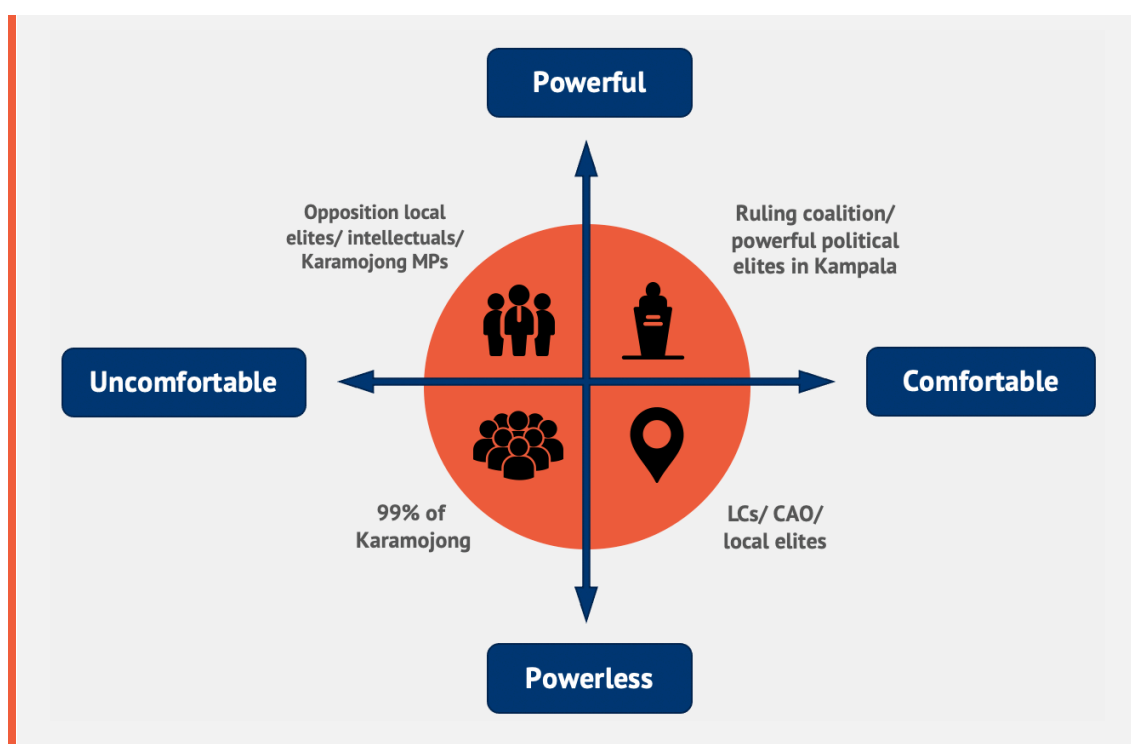
**Citizens and local structures have been “adversely incorporated” into development strategies for Karamoja.** The concept of adverse incorporation becomes particularly relevant in the analysis of the situation in Karamoja. In a comprehensive account of the concept of adverse incorporation, Hickey and du Toit argue that it provides elements for an analysis that brings in multidimensional elements, relationships of dependency, as well as an emphasis on structure and agency, and their inter-relations (Hickey & du Toit, 2007). They argue that the concept of adverse incorporation “*captures the ways in which localised livelihood strategies are enabled and constrained by economic, social and political relations over both time and space, in that they operate over lengthy periods and within cycles, and at multiple spatial levels, from local to global*” (Hickey & du Toit, 2007). Moreover, the adverse incorporation can be seen “*as a multiple-dimensional concept that refers to particular forms of interaction involving the State, market, community and household. It draws explicit attention to the terms of inclusion in these institutional forms and thus to the relations that keep people poor over time.*” (Hickey & du Toit, 2007: 4).

**Local elites in Karamoja, as well as national elites, seem to have a strong influence over local power structures and the use and distribution of natural resources.** The notion of adverse incorporation also focuses on the role of political factors in the reproduction and reduction of poverty, on political processes of incorporation and exclusion, on exploitative patron-client relationships and the institutional arrangements that hamper possibilities to change said relationships (Hickey & du Toit, 2007). This has a significant impact in further deepening structural obstacles for the development of Karamoja and also affects other underlying factors, such as access to markets, value chains and the labour market, among others.



**Power structures within Karamoja suggest an “alliance of the comfortable against the larger society of powerless and uncomfortable.”**<sup>22</sup> Figure 5-1 incorporates an analysis by influential Karamojong (in particular David Pulkol) showing divisions within the region. At its root is the proposal of an alliance between the comfortable in Karamoja – in other words, the international capital interest groups, NRM ruling coalition, local elites and local administration – against the uncomfortable, comprising the majority of the local population and the political opposition. This reproduces the national political economy context and facilitates the “looting” of the lands and resources of the majority of the Karamojong.

**Figure 5-1: Analysis of the unequal power relations in Karamoja**



Source: This concept and structure was provided by David Pulkol during a workshop held in Kampala on 31 May 2017.

**There also exist, in Karamoja, parallel structures to those of the national and local government’s governance structures, which can undermine good governance and development.** In some instances, this occurs due to deficient government structures and their absence in local communities. Nevertheless, it is also the case that some non-governmental programmes and interventions in Karamoja are run through parallel structures that do not include political actors within local governmental structures. In some of these instances, political actors are overridden by technical staff of certain

<sup>22</sup> This concept and structure were provided by David Pulkol during a workshop held in Kampala on 31 May 2017.

programmes, leaving no role for local political actors to have a say in the design and/or implementation of local programmes. Often, there is no clear mechanism of ensuring accountability through government structures and the local democratically elected institutions. Questions around accountability for non-governmental and development initiatives might arise when the agenda is being led by technical officials (see also the section on development initiatives) with no involvement of the local and regional political agendas that may, potentially, reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. This pattern also seems to reinforce colonial structures from the past, where technical outsiders (including national government authorities) override local democratically elected officials (e.g., LCs).

## 5.4 Economic constraints and corruption

**A range of economic constraints – alongside corruption – affect the development of Karamoja.** These constraints are both exogenous but also stem from the local elite's capture of power structures (as discussed in the previous section).

**Sources of insecurity – such as cattle raiding and violence before disarmament – have, to a large extent, been replaced by other kind of raids, including corruption.** External forces (to Karamoja), including globalisation itself, are regarded by the Karamojong as the “new raiders”. Issues around land grabbing (further described in section 5.8), elite political and economic capture, corruption, and natural resource exploitation (discussed in section 5.5) are all seen as the new sources of insecurity.

**Throughout the research, there were several accounts of elite capture of economic resources and workers' exploitation.** One example is the Karamoja Industrial and Business Park, which is under the auspices of the Uganda Investment Authority. *Prima facie*, the Industrial and Business Park is the kind of investment that could benefit Karamoja as it should attract investment and generate employment. Behind the scenes however, the collusion of interests has resulted in one Karamojong, serving with the central government, selling the 500 acres of communal land and benefitting individually. The community has since reasserted its right over the land, thereby halting any development on the proposed park (see details on KDF website).<sup>23</sup>

**Another example of elite capture is around the mining industry and the intertwined nature of collusion-based interests.** There is a complex web of collusion-based interests and pressure groups. As an example, a road sanctioned by the district government for use by trucks taking stones to a cement factor fell into disrepair. The truck started taking an

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<sup>23</sup> See: <http://www.kdfug.org/we-want-our-land-not-a-factory/>

alternate route, which essentially was not allowed. The local community called upon the district administration to help as the heavy traffic was damaging their road. A notification was issued by the local government to stop the trucks from using that road. The problem was resolved until the District received a call from Kampala to retract the notification and allow the movement of trucks, with which the District authorities complied. It is, therefore, difficult to gauge the boundary between where the private sector stops being regulated by the government and becomes represented by government. Informants in Moroto mentioned that, “*the problem with the private sector is that it is not really true private sector. It is pseudo private sector, it has a lot of influence*” (KII, Moroto).

**There is a need to create incentives for private sector investment – and address corruption – and improve the access of local communities and individuals to markets.** The local administration has concerns about the lack of government interest in creating industries, factories (such as meat factories) and permanent, larger wholesale markets that could also offer employment for many local inhabitants.

**A key economic constraint is the lack of formal employment in much of Karamoja.**

*“Even if there are jobs, we don’t stand a chance. I need to give something to get a job. I applied to so many places, but I think they just threw it away in the river. Our social status is low to be considered for employment. We are now sleeping on paper [referring to the certificates], that is why many prefer to drop out and do any other business.”* (Youth male, FGD).

Respondents cited that the only formal employers in the area are either the government (i.e., administration, hospitals, schools) or the development partners. However, it was frequently mentioned that access to formal jobs depends on socio-economic status,

social networks and ability to pay a bribe of some sort. As a result, casual low paid employment (i.e. unskilled, daily wage, without benefits) or petty trade remain the most realistic employment options for the majority.

**Perhaps, one of the more striking features of the informality and casual labour in Karamoja is the lack of collective bargaining by labourers and small entrepreneurs.** This is exacerbated by the absence of direct contact with the final buyer of their produce, whether it be minerals, charcoal or aloe vera. It is linked to weak integration within markets and inadequate knowledge of market dynamics. As was mentioned in the previous section, the Karamojong do not have access to information with regards to the value chains that they are linked to.

**Given the loss of livestock, and the push by the State towards agriculture (with its poor yields), there are no reliable sources of in-kind income.** Instead, cash has increasingly become a major lifeline, especially during the lean season. Yet, the conditions for moving towards a cash-based market economy are absent in this region, leading to men, women and children engaging in labour (as described in Chapter 4) as casual low-paid labourers.

Moreover, there is an absence of adequate financial services which can provide products such as micro-credit for business start-ups or to smooth consumption, insurance and savings mechanisms.

**This lack of cash in the region has hampered the development of small businesses.** This was pointed out several times during the research as one of the reasons for small businesses failing. The circulation of cash among consumers is an essential pre-requisite for the success of entrepreneurs, both large and small. Successful economies address this issue in a range of ways, but a key tool is the redistribution of wealth through social security transfers: for instance, much of the economic success of high-income countries is their investment of an average of 12 per cent of GDP in transfers in the form of cash. In fact, in Uganda, there is evidence that those districts with the SCG perform better across a range of indicators when compared to those districts without the scheme.<sup>24</sup> There is other strong evidence on how the SCG stimulates local economies<sup>25</sup> while, in refugee areas in Uganda, the provision of cash transfers to a refugee household increases annual real income in the local economy by around UGX 3.8 million (US\$1,106), a significant impact.<sup>26</sup> However, apart from the SCG – and, perhaps, the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) – the government does not have at its disposal this key economic tool. Box 5-3 offers a case story of the interlinkages between food, nutrition and income insecurities and lack of cash.

### Box 5-3: A vicious cycle of food, nutrition and income insecurity

Ngorok runs a small restaurant in Iriiri, Napak. She is originally from Nakapiripirit, but moved to Iriiri when her husband, a pastor, was transferred to the county. They have 7 children of their own but also look after 6 orphans belonging to her brother and her husband's brother. Most of their own children are in school, but some of the orphans in the household are not. They have an acre of land for subsistence agriculture. On the surface – given their location in the green belt, their income generating activities and access to land – they may appear as less vulnerable to food insecurity and income shocks. Yet: a) Ngorok's income is low as the restaurant is not profitable in a cash-poor area; b) her husband's salary is very low; c) there is a lack of cash to hire labourers to plough the entire land, leading to poor harvests; and e) they are unable to adequately feed the large number of children.

Ngorok has always been enterprising. She started out with a petty trade selling bread, which eventually grew into a small restaurant where she cooks and serves food. The income from the restaurant obviously depends on the number of customers and experiences seasonal fluctuations. During the dry season, the locals do not have money to eat at the restaurant, so she relies on the few travellers passing through. Sometimes she may earn UGX 150,000 a month, but there are days when she has no customers. The older

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<sup>24</sup> Samson et al., (2016).

<sup>25</sup> See Kidd (2016) for a summary of the evidence.

<sup>26</sup> Zhu et al., (2016).

children also contribute to household income by working as casual labourers, undertaking activities such as clearing grass from people's homes. It is difficult when the business does not generate any income.

Currently, due to the prolonged drought, harvests have been bad and food prices are high. There are times when the family does not have enough to feed all the children. The absence of a tractor has made it difficult to plant the entire acre of land. Sometimes they hire people to work on the field if there is additional money. When the food reserves are over, they have to buy food from the market. When food prices were lower, they could eat three meals a day. Now they normally have two meals or even just one during the lean season. In addition, they can only afford the cheapest food, maize and beans, so there is little variety in their diet. They prioritise nutritious food such as porridge with sunflower seeds and occasional vegetables for the youngest children.

### 5.5 Environment and climate change

**Environmentally, effects from climate change, droughts and floods, as well as soil erosion, have complicated the ability of the Karamojong to perform their traditional livelihoods.** In part, this has been exacerbated by a lack of human agency as the Karamojong have suffered from mobility restrictions. This, in turn, has resulted in overgrazing. In addition, climate change has extended the periods of drought and the unpredictability of rainfall.

**The changes imposed on traditional pastoralist livelihoods have left the Karamojong with less tools to overcome the negative effects of climate change and build resilience.**

According to a UNDP report, it is livestock, rather than crops, that would make it possible for the Karamojong to endure the harsh semi-arid environment (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). Hence, development interventions focusing only on crop farming instead of livestock hamper the Karamojong's capacities to cope with severe environmental conditions.

**In addition, the productivity of land in Karamoja is quite low.** Acquiring land in Karamoja

*"We can move cattle, but not land – so the crop dies."*  
(KII, sub-county).

does not necessarily mean higher productivity since some land is not productive at all, in particular if

landowners do not have available labour to employ and/or irrigation/permanent water sources nearby the garden.

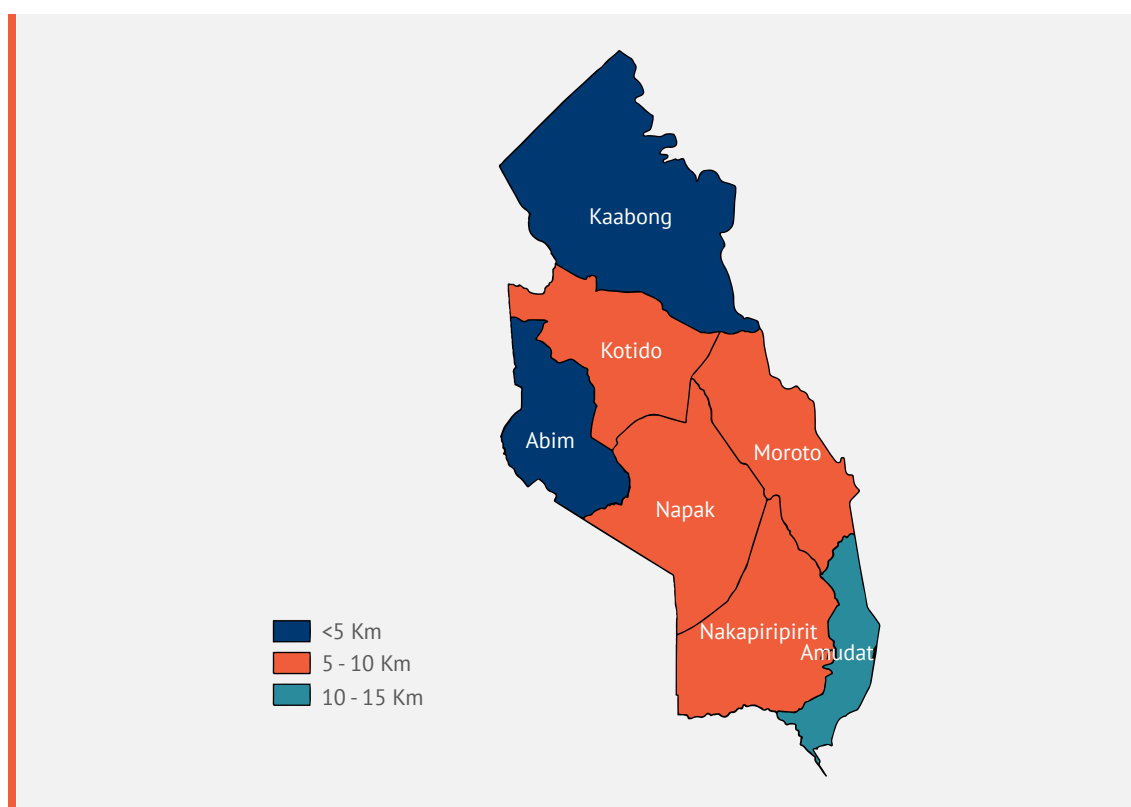
### 5.6 Inadequate and poor quality of public services and infrastructure

**Access to public services and adequate infrastructure are key for development.** Yet, within Karamoja, the access to public services and infrastructure, as well as their quality, is rather limited. Investments in basic public services, including social security, are key in addressing the underlying causes of vulnerabilities, as well as food, nutrition and income insecurity.

### 5.6.1 Education and health

**The availability of public schools and public health centres is not too different between Karamoja and the rest of the country.** The main difference is in terms of the availability of private education and health services, which are almost non-existent in the region. According to UNHS 2012/2013 data, the main differences in health facilities relate to government hospitals, which are non-existent in Karamoja while private hospitals are rare. Figure 5-2 also shows the average distance to the nearest public health facility by districts in Karamoja, Amudat being the district that has the longest distances of 10-15 km, and most of the other districts between 5-10 km. The issues of distance and transportation costs for both educational and health facilities are common concerns for the Karamojong.

**Figure 5-2: Average distance from home to the nearest public health facility by district, 2014**



Source: Development Pathways (calculations using 2014 Census, 10% sample)

**Access to education and the quality of educational services in Karamoja are deficient.**

There are issues around insufficient education infrastructure in many of the most marginalised communities. In addition, access to schools is hampered by indirect costs

involved with sending children to school, such as fees for school maintenance, uniforms, school supplies, transportation, loss of family labour and in some cases food.

**Due to poor infrastructural investment in schools, parents are expected to contribute towards school maintenance funds, which include the school feeding programme.** On average, households spend between UGX 50,000 and 100,000 on school supplies (books, uniforms, toiletries) in primary schools which are meant to be free under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme. Moreover, these contributions increase in Senior Schools, on top of having to pay formal school fees. The common strategy for families is to keep most children at home and send one or two to primary school, depending on their financial situation. Therefore, the highest rate of dropout happens at P7, the final year of primary school.

### 5.6.2 Water

**Lack of access to water is a key concern.** The nomadic tradition and migration patterns used to enable the Karamojong to manage water availability. With the changes imposed on their livelihoods, as well as the droughts due to climate change, water availability has also been altered. Around 83 per cent of households obtain their water from boreholes, 8 per cent from rivers, dams or ponds, and only around 4 per cent have access to piped water.<sup>27</sup> However, the unpredictability of rain makes it difficult to plan agricultural activities and crops are destroyed either due to flash floods, waterlogging or excessive heat. The prolonged drought also affects the availability of water sources and pastures for livestock grazing.

**Despite the existence of a national strategy for irrigation (2010-2035), which covers Karamoja, there is little knowledge of this strategy at the sub-county level and no observable development has taken place in the region.** Given that communities are increasingly restricted and discouraged from migrating to look for water sources, local representatives and government officials insist that the problem could be solved by taking water sources to the communities. Yet, resources are still to be allocated for this purpose. There are others, however, who are sceptical about the feasibility of creating irrigation systems in such an arid zone, where water tables are very low, and which is prone to prolonged drought. Overall, people are unanimous in their view that access to water is critical for the region's economy. Small dams have provided seasonal relief, offering water for livestock and for cultivation, while boreholes and taps have eased access to drinking water, another important aspect often overlooked in discussions

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<sup>27</sup> Source: FSNA Jan/2016, Table 9.

around improving health and nutrition. However, it is a challenge to identify spots for boreholes and taps since water tables need to be high enough to make drilling feasible.

### 5.6.3 Roads

**The lack of proper road infrastructure was cited as a key factor for “underdeveloped markets”.** Most local markets are revolving markets, which are set up in different locations each day of the week. Karamoja’s livestock markets are concentrated in districts in which people still own livestock. In Amudat, for example, which is a relatively new district, people largely rely on cross-border food markets in Kenya, such as in Kunyao. However, it is a challenging process since they need to convert their income to Kenyan currency and the distance to the markets at the town centres is, on average, more than 5 kilometres. There are number of other challenges faced by petty traders such as the distance to the town centres (where the markets are normally located), poor accessibility during the rainy season, and the weak purchasing power within communities. During the research, it became apparent that investment in roads and access to those existing ones is lagging in Karamoja.

### 5.6.4 Social security

**Social security is a core public service and, indeed, in most high-income countries, it is the highest area of investment (larger than in health and education, for example).** It is also a key component of the sustainable success of any market economy and an essential tool in addressing poverty. Internationally – including within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – it is recognised that it is not possible to effectively tackle poverty without investing in social protection. Furthermore, Uganda’s National Social Protection Policy recognises the importance of investing in social security. The most effective design of a national social security system is an inclusive, lifecycle system, as outlined in Kidd and Bailey-Athias’ (2016) proposals for a national social security system in Uganda.

**However, within Karamoja – as elsewhere in Uganda – there has been minimal investment in social security.** The only core inclusive lifecycle scheme is the SCG which provides everyone aged over 60 years of age with benefits in the districts of Moroto, Napak, Amudat and Nakapiripirit under the pilot phase, and only the oldest 100 per sub-county in Kotido, Kaabong and Abim with UGX 25,000 per month. Kidd (2016) has outlined the significant impacts that the SCG has had on recipients of the programme across Uganda and the qualitative research confirmed these findings. In addition, as noted above, there is good evidence that the SCG has had significant impacts on other household members – in particular children – and has helped stimulate local economies, making them more dynamic. Box 5-4 offers some SCG beneficiary case stories.



### Box 5-4: Senior Citizens' Grant beneficiary case stories

When prompted, most elderly people at an SCG payment point (May 2017) said they were very happy with the SCG, and that, even though the money was not too much, it really helped them and their families. Most SCG beneficiaries mentioned that the money is spent in this order: 1) buying food at the local shops to share with their families, 2) buying a goat as a saving (they use the milk and if things go bad they can slaughter it for food), until the next payment comes in, 3) school supplies/fees for grandchildren, and, 4) if there is still money left, they save it for more food, or share it with family and friends. When asked whether they saved the money, they asked back: "if you had money, would you not share it with your children?"

Beneficiaries raised some concerns mainly regarding the predictability of payments, as they never know when they will get paid, or how much. In the case of the May payment observed (May 25<sup>th</sup>), it was for February, March and April, so many were asking why it did not include May. Moreover, some were receiving past payments they had not collected before or were receiving balances from when SCG shifted from Mobile Money to Post Bank. One of the elderly men said: "I do not know how much I will get today and, as I can't read or write, I just have to trust what they give me". One elderly man mentioned he was afraid of complaining, as they might just take the benefits away from him.

#### A SCG Beneficiary; Elderly Female in Karita

She is 64 years old and has lived all her life in the same village. She presently lives with her 6 grandchildren who belong to one of her sons who has mental health issues. Of the 6 grandchildren, 2 boys attend school and the rest do not because she cannot pay for school fees. She has a garden, cattle, goats and 10 acres of land. She recently experienced a decline in the livestock numbers due to disease epidemics, drought and lack of food.

She identifies the reason for her poverty and food insecurity as having to take care of her grandchildren. Nonetheless, she assumes responsibility of her son who has mental health problems and his children as there is no support for people like him (persons with disabilities). She is entirely dependent on her SCG benefits and has no energy to engage in laborious activities. Sometimes her other son, in charge of the cattle, helps her to sell livestock in times of need. She sometimes relies on the church that provides support to elderly people and Action Against Hunger (ACF) nutritional supplements for young children.

A challenge is that she is never sure how much SCG money she will receive nor when. Yet she definitely feels that she is better off now with the SCG given that her husband is no longer able to work and take care of the household and lives with another wife. With the current transfer, she planned to go straight to the market to buy food from the local market and a goat if she is left with enough balance. She has to buy food for her grandchildren and her son and, if possible, she also extends cash to some her friends and neighbours that are not SCG beneficiaries.

*These stories were collected during a SCG payment at paypoints in Karita and Amudat.*

**The other programme often regarded as a form of social security is NUSAF, which is a type of public works.** However, as Box 5-5 explains, the definition of public works as a form of social security is often unclear and the distinction between a labour-intensive infrastructure scheme and social protection public works – conventionally referred to as workfare – is blurred. The rationale behind using public works as a social security scheme is often derived from an unwillingness of governments to offer unconditional transfers, as

they are often perceived as handouts which will make working age recipients lazy: a similar process happened with the English Poor Laws in the nineteenth century, when the workhouse – a type of public works – was introduced for the so-called “undeserving poor”.<sup>28</sup>

### Box 5-5: Types of public works

There are different types of public works schemes. The main distinction is between social assistance workfare schemes and labour-intensive infrastructure programmes. The core objective of the former is to offer income security to recipients; the latter prioritises infrastructure while maximising the use of labour. Workfare schemes often try to “target the poor” while labour intensive infrastructure schemes are more interested in the quality of the workforce although, in most developing countries, the employees tend to be from low-income households anyway. One challenge with workfare schemes, as McCord (2005) discusses, is the poor quality of the infrastructure developed, which significantly reduces the value for money of these schemes. This paper only considers workfare and does not examine labour intensive infrastructure schemes. Nonetheless, in the latter, measures should also be taken to not discriminate against persons with disabilities.

**There are challenges in using public works as a form of social security (often referred to as workfare).** Effective transfer values are usually lower than the amount people receive, since employees can face significant opportunity costs. In Ethiopia, there is an association between participation on the Productive Safety Net Programme and lower productivity of participants, while there is evidence – from independent reviews – of negative impacts on consumption and children (see Box 5-6 for further information).<sup>29</sup> The coverage and targeting of public works is also problematic. In Ethiopia, the “exclusion error” for the PSNP public works – which acts as the model for Uganda – is 81 per cent. There are also challenges for the inclusion of specific vulnerable categories of the population, such as persons with disabilities, pregnant women, carers of young children and persons with disabilities, etc.

**The current system of social security in Uganda still faces challenges in terms of its inclusivity, as there are no specific programmes for persons with disabilities.** There is currently no programme that provides income support for those that are unable to work or for those who have to give up livelihoods activities to care for them. The design of public works programmes, by default, exclude those unable to participate in labour-intensive work activities. NUSAF is meant to provide an unconditional transfer for families with no labour capacity, following a model of Vulnerable Family Grant that was already

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<sup>28</sup> Lindert (2004).

<sup>29</sup> Berhane et al., (2011) and Tafere and Woldehanna (2012).

rejected by the government in 2015 (although this study found no information on the extent of this component of the programme in Karamoja).

### Box 5-6: International experience with public works programmes

It should be noted that “productive” safety nets such as Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net (PSNP) seem to be closer to traditional workfare than actual social protection. These productive programmes are meant to exchange cash benefits for labour, which entails the notion of the “deserving poor” and beneficiaries not receiving “handouts”, versus citizens being entitled to access social security.

Furthermore, evaluations of programmes (Berhane et al., 2011) like the Ethiopian PSNP have proven that these programmes may not be productive or promote entrepreneurship among recipients, rather, participants on the PSNP actually become less productive and, hence, more dependent on the PSNP transfer. Thus, it was shown, the programme is not helping in graduating participants out of poverty. In addition, an evaluation focusing on PSNP from a children’s well-being perspective (Tafere & Woldehanna, 2012) found that although it might protect many children from hunger, the programme does not ensure food security, and neither does it contribute much towards poverty reduction and school attendance for children. The report also stresses that “People who were not included in the PSNP worked hard to increase the amount of payment they obtained from off-farm employment (wage labour and non-farm business), while many PSNP beneficiaries waited for low-paying public work, which they saw as less risky.” There is also international evidence that public works schemes can impact negatively on child and female nutrition (Manley et al., 2012).

**There is no reliable evidence on the impacts of NUSAF in Karamoja and whether it is benefitting or harming recipients.** Furthermore, the evidence on the quality of the infrastructure and assets is mixed. In the case of infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges, the research found instances that they had not been implemented with proper engineering support (technical capacity), hence impacting on the quality (and duration) of some of the public goods. The construction of dams was not always preferred by respondents as they are seasonal, although in other cases people appreciated the seasonal refuge that their livestock received, and that they could cultivate closer to their homesteads in the wet season. Respondents also mentioned poorly timed transfers, as food transfers in exchange for the labour provided are given after 6 months or even a year, subject to performance of the communities in constructing the public good. The research also found many woodlots that had failed. In some cases, woodlots consist of foreign species, such as neem, acacia, eucalyptus, and citrus which may not be suitable for the type of soil. Local people would have preferred indigenous trees that are an integral part of their pastoral systems and a rich source of food and income even today. The saplings are provided at the height of the dry season when there is a severe scarcity of water, and beneficiaries are put under pressure to ensure that they do not perish. There was reporting of local persons forcing beneficiaries to replace saplings that had not survived from their own income. Indeed, a common complaint from communities was that

a menu of assets had been imposed on them and they were not given the opportunity to offer their own suggestions, based on their experience of living in the area.

**NUSAF appears to be a good example of a public works programme that suffers from the lack of clarity on whether it is a workfare or infrastructure programme.** As a result, the employees do not receive the same benefits as they would under an inclusive lifecycle scheme, while the quality of the infrastructure suffers. Yet, Karamoja requires improvements in infrastructure and changing NUSAF to become a labour-intensive infrastructure programme may bring longer-term benefits and greater value for money. This would also imply using a higher quality workforce, while maximising payments to them in line with Ugandan legislation.

**Social protection policies, if designed and implemented appropriately can also contribute to people's capacity to absorb, adapt and mitigate climate-related shocks and stresses.** But, this depends on the regularity of the transfer (Ulrichs & Slater, 2016). In the case of Uganda, Ulrich and Slater (2016) argue that NUSAF II does not provide cash over several months or years: instead, it is short-term providing unreliable payments. They suggest that NUSAF II has not been addressing chronic vulnerability outside of – and during – the lean season, and absorptive capacity is limited because of the amount of food transferred, which is only 50 per cent of the recommended daily allowance. This raises questions around the minimum length of time necessary for seasonal safety nets to have a positive impact on seasonal food insecurity, let alone chronic food insecurity. Furthermore, the authors quote a statement from a development partner in Uganda that: *“Predictable cash transfers in communities is the safety net that is needed to build resilience. Currently the work in Karamoja is still very much about responding to cyclical food crises.”* Likewise, in terms of resilience capacities, Ulrichs and Slater argue that the SCG in Uganda arguably has a stronger impact on resilience capacities than NUSAF II, as it is long-term and more reliable. They also note the lack of evidence on the impacts of the assets created or rehabilitated through NUSAF II.

**Uganda's social protection policy framework recognises the role of social protection in reinforcing the state-citizen contract; the importance of social protection to address risks and vulnerabilities; and the need for the government to provide assistance to people who are vulnerable.**<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the Ugandan National Social Protection Policy establishes that: *“social protection is a visible, tangible way for the Government to directly reach the poor and vulnerable citizens and demonstrate the commitment to uphold the rights and dignity of the population. It plays a central role in building a cohesive society by reinforcing the state-*

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<sup>30</sup> Both the Uganda Vision 2040 and the National Social Protection Policy.

*citizen contract which contributes to political stability*” (Government of Uganda, 2015). Yet, it is far from being adequately implemented in Karamoja.

### 5.6.5 Inclusion of persons with disabilities

**Across Karamoja, around 32 per cent of households include a person with a disability making it a significant issue to address.**<sup>31</sup> As indicated earlier, households including persons with disabilities can experience significant extra costs resulting in lower standards of living when compared to other households with similar incomes. And communities identify persons with disabilities as among the most vulnerable. Yet, persons with disabilities do not receive systematic support – such as access to a Disability Benefit to compensate for the additional costs they face – which could enable those able to work to engage in employment and livelihoods activities. Furthermore, there is also no income support for those unable to work or for those who have to give up livelihood activities to care for them.

**Development interventions, and social policies in general, have not taken the challenges faced by persons with disabilities sufficiently into account.** A local official stated: *“We have tried to identify most of the people with disabilities and link them with income generation, like tailoring. But we don’t have adequate resources. We are trying to prioritise the available resources among all the different vulnerable groups. But they are there [people with disabilities], “complaining and crying out for support”. They want to be supported to implement their own projects, but their proposals are not within the budget we have; we have so many vulnerable groups to support. But they keep complaining that they are left aside. They need a project which is purely for them and which they can manage by themselves”.* In another location, a local authority mentioned that *“in terms of interventions, there is no major focus on disability – and based on very outdated concepts on disabilities. The Community based service department links people with disabilities.”*

**The inability of persons with disabilities to be fully productive is a significant loss to the economy of Karamoja.** As mentioned previously, across developing countries, it is estimated that the loss to economic prosperity from not supporting persons with disabilities is between 1 and 6 per cent of GDP (Banks and Polack, 2014). Similar impacts may also be found in Karamoja: certainly, a high proportion of households are experiencing significant challenges due to the absence of adequate support.

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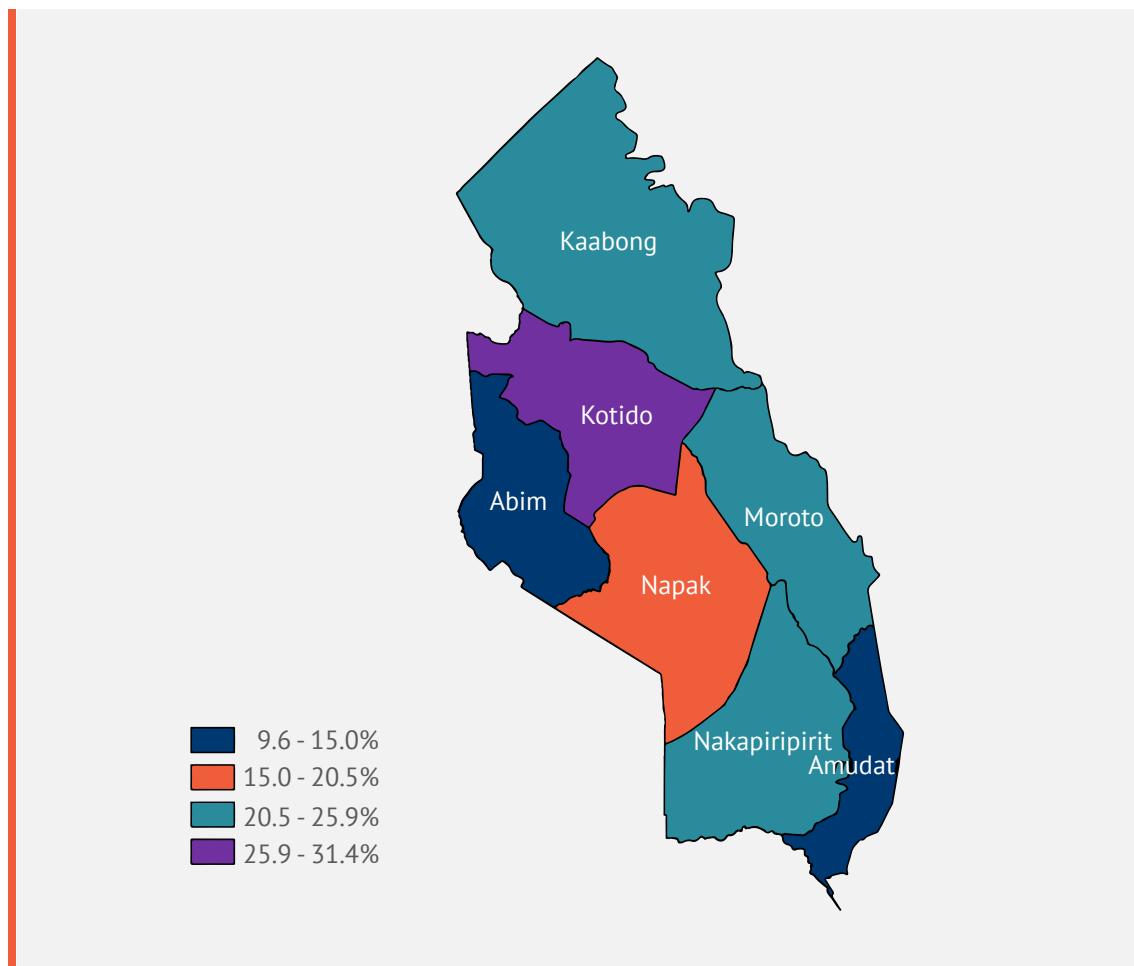
<sup>31</sup> Source: Own calculations using UNHS 2009/2010.

## 5.7 Migration

**Migration patterns have recently been characterised more by rural-urban migration trends of Karamojong in search of income and livelihood opportunities in urban centres outside of Karamoja.** This change in migratory patterns is thought to be caused by both environmental and political changes. As discussed earlier, environmentally, droughts and floods, as well as soil erosion, have made it more difficult for the Karamojong to perform their traditional livelihoods. Many Karamojong identify violence associated with disarmament operations as the primary motivation to flee Karamoja, either directly or as a consequence of unbalanced disarmament (Sundal, 2010). Uneven flows of migrants are thought to correspond to the history and uneven patterns of disarmament in Karamoja, which led to an increasing concentration of cattle raids in certain areas.

**For migrants, social networks – through friends or relatives – have played a significant factor in their ability to secure employment or be informed about activities available in urban areas** (Stites & Akabwai, 2012). Social networks are inherent in established theories on migratory movements, as migration flows arise from prior links which have been established between sending and receiving locations, which have gradually evolved into self-sustaining processes (Czuba, 2014). Most rural-urban migrants, moreover, retain strong linkages to their families left behind, indicating that migration is used as a way to diversify livelihoods rather than an abandonment of life in Karamoja (Mathys et al., 2017), or to find a job and provide remittances for the family still living in Karamoja (Caravani, 2017). Figure 5-3 shows the share of households that have received remittances (both in cash and in kind) by district in Karamoja, the highest percentage being for Kotido, followed by Nakapiripirit, Moroto and Kaabong.

**Figure 5-3: Share of households that received remittances (cash and in kind) by district, 2014**



Source: *Development Pathways* (calculations using 2014 Census, 10% sample).

**Understanding the characteristics of recent migration patterns in Karamoja is key in developing policy options.** The majority of the migrant population in Uganda’s urban centres comprise women and children (Czuba, 2014; Sundal, 2010). There is a statistically higher proportion of girls who migrated to urban destinations, whereas boys are more likely to migrate to other rural destinations (Lee, 2014). Where girls may be more likely to engage in casual labour in urban areas, boys may be more likely to continue work as livestock herders (ibid.).

### Box 5-7: A Case study of the Bokora in Napak: Adapting the pastoral strategy of migration

*“Most of the girls leave [school] after P7. After that we stay at home – or move to a different region such as Kampala, Busia, Malaba. Some even go up to Nairobi.” (Minor female, FGD).*

#### Who migrates?

Over the last 15 years, Napak has had a peculiar trend of child migration towards bigger towns and cities, which is considered to be the main driver of one of the highest prevalence rates of HIV/AIDs in Karamoja. Teenage girls are especially known to migrate to Mbale, Soroti, Kampala and even Nairobi to work as housemaids, petty traders, daily wage labourers but also engage in more risky activities such as scrounging, petty theft and sex workers. Young mothers are also known to migrate to big cities with their children to beg. Respondents reported risks of sexual abuse, trafficking, organ theft and even deaths in these cities. On the other hand, long established networks of migrants offer care and support to younger new arrivals in the cities, such as Kampala.

#### Why Napak?

There have been numerous studies attempting to explain the peculiarities of child migration from specific counties such as Napak and Moroto, especially from the Bokora area. One study suggested that, despite the apparent high prevalence of child outmigration from Napak and Moroto Districts, statistically fewer children were migrating for purposes other than school attendance, with an estimated 3 out of 100 migrating for work or unknown reasons (IOM, 2014). Another report by the International Organization for Migration (Lee, 2014) on child migration from Napak suggested this trend as an extension of their ancestral livelihood strategy of migration which emerged as the county was one of the first to be disarmed and hence vulnerable to cattle raids by others. Migration out of Karamoja was, therefore, perhaps also an escape from physical insecurity, especially for children. The fact that the sub-county was one of the first to be “exposed” to the outside world through Christian missionaries also may have attributed to the early establishment of migration networks.

#### Migration as an intuitive strategy

There is a marked shift in the patterns and factors for migration that needs to be addressed. Historical patterns of seasonal migration within the northern part of Uganda (Karamoja, Acholi, Lango and Teso region) were an integral part of their pastoral livelihood systems, which allowed boys to accompany men to maintain their herds and protect against natural shocks. Over time this has evolved to a trend of unaccompanied out migration of children, especially girls from rural to urban settings, primarily as a response to the decrease in access to resources.

*“In most cases, they move on their own – step by step. If you have the money, you can travel up to Olilim. There you can stay and make money to move further. Then you move to Soroti and gradually towards Busia. In Soroti, they can find other girls like them who will guide them to the bigger centres, even Kampala” (Minor female, FGD).*

The similarity is, however, that migration is circular in nature and so children return to their homes with their income and re-migrate when there is a need to earn more. There are conflicting accounts on whether decisions to migrate are self-initiated or encouraged and organised by parents. From our research, it emerged that it is most likely that earlier migrants return to encourage their peers to follow in the



footsteps, which either results in children leaving without parental consent or in fact involving their parents before taking a decision. Studies also show that many of the children remain in regular contact with their families back home. However, many have poor information on transportation back to Karamoja (therefore, they do not return often).

### **Government approach to child migration**

Government policies toward child migrants from Karamoja have been problematic, with accounts of children rounded up from Kampala and sent to rehabilitation centres closer to the Karamoja region. It was believed by local authorities that many of them were HIV-infected and the disease spread once they returned to the region. Therefore, extension workers are assigned to attempt to track these children. There are also accounts of the forcible “removal” of unaccompanied migrant children to unknown, remote locations which has actually made it more difficult for them to return to Karamoja, and instead they arrive once again on the streets in Kampala. In the end, there are still a number of question marks over the particular trend of the Bokora section in Napak and Moroto and the risks involved. It has been repeatedly established, however, that migration, within the region and beyond, still continues to an important livelihood strategy for the people of Karamoja.

**Migration into more urban settings also brings additional challenges.** Stites and Akabwai (2012) found that the most challenging aspect to urban life for most migrants was the sudden reliance on cash that was required for all aspects of daily life, including food, water, housing, firewood and education. Rent was indicated to be the largest expense. On average, respondents pay approximately UGX 15,000 per month for accommodation although this was often in the form of a room shared with many other people. Due to the high cost of rent, jobs that included accommodation, such as a domestic cleaner or night guard, are more appealing. Such arrangements, however, rarely entailed a dedicated place to sleep, but rather simply the promise of a roof overhead for the night. As a result, those in these jobs were unable to bring their families with them to the urban areas (Stites & Akabwai, 2012).

**There are several security concerns around migration in Karamoja.** In the study of Stites and Akabwai (2012), many respondents cited an improved security situation in comparison to their lives in Karamoja as a key reason for not returning. However, this safety guarantee did not extend to all migrants, as cases of sexual exploitation, physical and verbal abuse were prevalent. Moreover, discrimination against the Karamojong was a significant factor influencing their safety.

**During recent years, there has been forced resettlement of Karamojong migrants.** Starting in 2007, the government began to evict Karamojong migrants from Kampala and return them to Karamoja. Sundal (2010) argues that these resettlement practices, by not addressing the needs of the impoverished communities, were an inappropriate policy for dealing with the issue, as the programme merely collected street beggars without considering the underlying causes for their presence in Kampala. The resettlement programme regarded the Karamojong found begging on the streets of Kampala as

economic migrants, instead of internally displaced persons (IDPs) that were forced to leave their homes for survival in response to armed conflict, violence and human rights abuses.

**As part of the government's resettlement policies, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) created a programme to remove children from the streets and rehabilitate and resettle them within their home communities.** Many Karamojong children found in the streets of Kampala were mainly placed in the Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre (KNRC) which is originally a detention centre intended for the rehabilitation of delinquent youths. A number of NGOs organised through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) argued that these centres were designed for young offenders, and not street children, which therefore made them unsuitable for resettling Karamojong children. There were multiple safety concerns as the Centre is located near a migration route that is often threatened by cattle raiders and living conditions within these settlements were poor as returnees only received one meal a day and there were outbreaks of scabies and influenza in the camp. Resettled migrants were promised food rations from WFP when returned. However, these promises were not kept (Sundal, 2010).

### 5.8 Land tenure

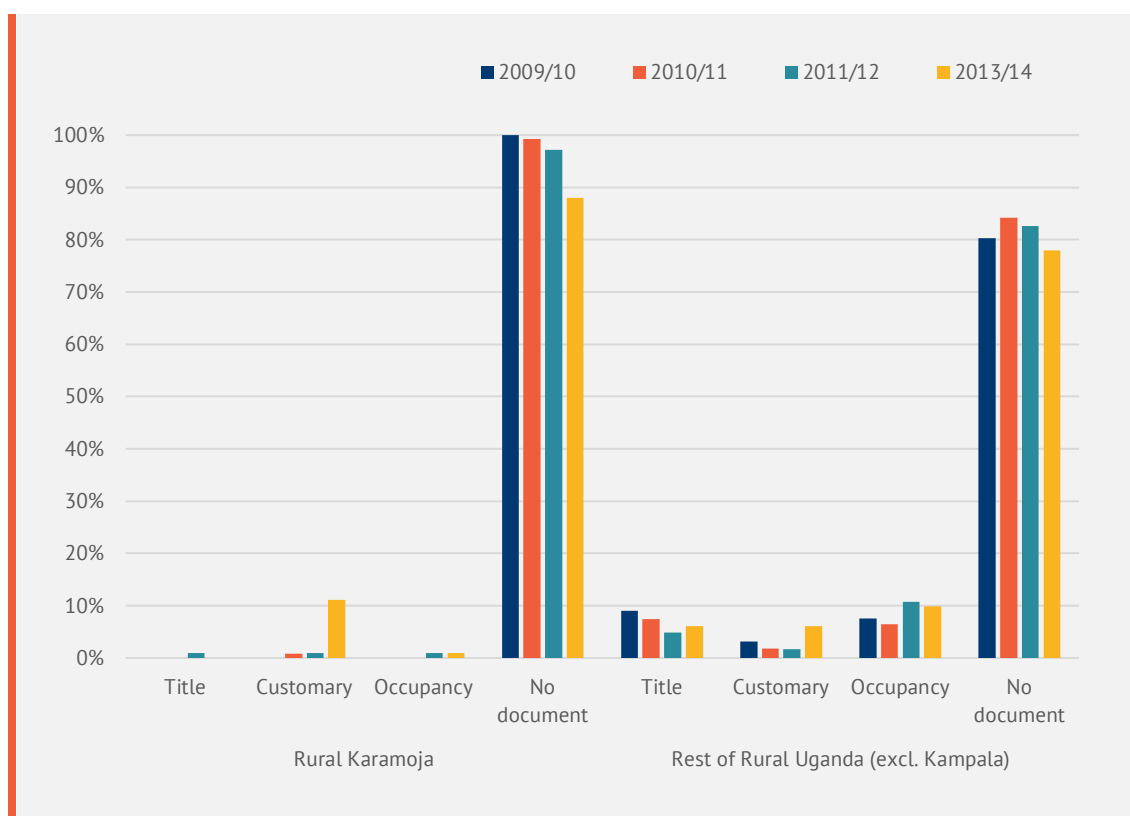
**Many of the structural issues faced by the Karamojong can be traced back to challenges with land tenure.** Hence, issues around food, nutrition and income insecurity need to be tackled within a context of addressing land tenure rights. In the case of Karamoja, over the years, several issues have had a clear-cut impact on land security: tensions around land tenure, land grabbing, fraudulent land sales, increase of natural and animal reserves (hence less access to grazing lands), and exploitation of natural resources.

**Land ownership has historically been communal.** As described above, the *Manyatta* (called *Ere* in *Nia'karimojong*) is a cluster of homesteads and clans where people are usually closely related. Families within the *Ere* inherit the customary land, which was demarcated using trees and stones. The land for agriculture was traditionally chosen in relatively fertile areas but, as insecurity increased in the denser, greener areas, clans resettled in places that are now distant from their agricultural lands. In order to equitably divide labour in polygynous families, plots were distributed between the wives, who are responsible for farming. However, the cumulative harvests were owned by the head of the household and shared by the entire family. Over the years, people have increasingly lost their customary land rights, given the ambiguities that arise with bringing these traditional systems under the legal framework of market economies that favour individual land tenure. Annex 4 describes the Ugandan legal framework on land rights.

The Karamojong believe that their land was given to them by God (*akuji*) so no one should take the land away from them, as the lands belonged to their ancestors. Many believe that peace is not sustainable unless justice is served and argue that, prior to disarmament “guns were protecting Karamoja from the looters”. Furthermore, even though Karamoja has more security after the disarmament process, it does not mean that there are no conflicts. The current conflicts over land have arisen as a result of land grabbing, mining, dual land management systems (formal and traditional) and issues with conservation areas.

**Formal ownership certificates for land are few in rural areas throughout Uganda.** As Figure 5-4 shows, in Karamoja by 2013/14 around 10 per cent have customary land ownership certificates, under 10 per cent have titles, and almost 90 per cent do not have ownership documents.

**Figure 5-4: Trend on the percentage of parcels owned with formal certificates by type of certificates in rural Karamoja and other rural parts of Uganda, 2013**



Source: *Development Pathways* (calculations using UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11 and UNPS 2009/10). These are unweighted estimates. The total number of observations (parcels) in rural Karamoja for each wave is 108, 129, 157 and 215 respectively for the UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11, UNPS 2009/10 waves; while the total number of observations for other rural parts of Uganda (excl. Kampala) is 3,572, 3,107, 3,005, and 3,692 respectively for the UNPS 2013/14, UNPS 2011/12, UNPS 2010/11, UNPS 2009/10 waves.

**In general terms, the Karamojong have lost ownership over key areas of land.** The first step towards state appropriation of pastoral rangelands and subversive restrictions on the practice of pastoralism happened during colonial times, as large portions of land for ranching and wildlife conservation were taken over. Even today, the State continues to designate land for game reserves and tourism, which restricts the movement of people into fertile areas such as Apeitolim in the green belt of Napak. The government has established grazing areas for reserves and national parks but there is no clear understanding within communities about the purpose of these parks, since they are unable to enter for hunting. It is estimated that around half of Karamoja's gazetted land is under the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the National Forestry Authority (KDF, 2015).

**Uganda's Land Act of 1998 and the National Environment Act of 1995 recognise customary land, although the government can acquire land in order to control environmentally fragile areas, thereby usurping the customary land rights of indigenous groups** (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The National Environment Act does highlight that environmental management should include maximum participation by the people, effectively requiring the consultation of indigenous peoples prior to the gazetting of their land. Box 5-8 offers a recent case from the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights on land rights of indigenous communities. In the case of Uganda, not all ethnic groups are recognised as indigenous, which hence limits their rights to use international indigenous law.

**Box 5-8: Case of Kenya on Land rights of indigenous communities**

In the context of land disputes, land grabbing and conflicts on the use of Africa's natural resources, a landmark case in the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights came through in May of 2017. The Court delivered a long-awaited judgment on the case of the Ogiek indigenous peoples against the Kenyan government for consistent violations and denial of their land rights.

The Ogiek are traditionally forest dwellers, and have depended on the Mau forest for food, home, cultural identity and way of life, as well as traditionally maintained balance with nature. Over the years, the Ogiek were subjected to forced evictions from their traditional lands, hence negatively impacting their way of life and consistently violating their rights.

The African Court Case can be considered a landmark land rights case and sets a strong precedent for other cases of the same nature in Africa. The ruling established that the protection of forests (Mau Forest in this case) cannot justify the eviction from ancestral lands of the Ogiek and that there was insufficient evidence that the evictions helped protect the forest. In addition, the judgement stated that the forests are the ancestral home of the Ogiek peoples, that they depend on them for their livelihoods, and that the government of Kenya had violated their right to their lands.

*Source: African Commission on Human Rights and Peoples' Rights versus Republic of Kenya, Application No. 006/2012 Judgement, 26 May 2017, African Union.*

**According to human rights reports many mining activities in Karamoja had begun without consulting the indigenous owners of the land and therefore compromising people's ownership of their land and soil.**

A study undertaken by Human Rights Watch (ibid.) indicated that none of the communities interviewed were opposed to exploration or mining activities on their lands. However, community members repeatedly stressed that there has been inadequate information and participation in decision making and confusion as to how the communities would benefit. They described not understanding private investors' intentions and long-term objectives and being unaware of the communities' rights or companies' obligations under national laws and international standards. Local governments were similarly uninformed. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch claims that international donors have played a prominent role in supporting Uganda's development of the mining sector, with projects largely paying no attention to indigenous rights.

**Land grabbing in Karamoja has created an environment of utter mistrust by communities.**

Some of the challenges regarding land grabbing are because there is not much that has been done to sensitise landowners and communities on their rights. Furthermore, in some instances, district land offices acting as custodians of community land on behalf of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and central government can be manipulated by land grabbers (KDF, 2015). In addition, during the field research, there did not seem to be any institutions providing support to Karamojong on their land rights.

## 5.9 Dissonance in development initiatives

**In Karamoja, the active involvement of donors and development partners and the wide array of issues on the agenda provide insights into the intricate development landscape for the region.** This in turn entails both positive and negative aspects to consider. On the one hand, several studies and reports have argued that many of the development interventions have had positive results and that the shift from humanitarian aid to development has been positive. Nonetheless, it is also true that the development agenda setting for Karamoja includes many actors, the need for coordinating mechanisms, as well as different priorities by development partners and government agencies depending on their scope of work.

**The mainstream narrative around Karamoja and its people also permeates the development sector.** Several studies and reports from different agencies and institutions, as well as development partners' country programmes, refer to the underdevelopment of Karamoja and provide several explanations that, to a certain extent, perpetuate the negative perceptions around the region. Some of these include highlighting negative social norms in Karamoja (of course, there are negative social norms, such as in any society), referring to damaging coping mechanisms of the Karamojong, as well as

portraying the isolation and instability of the region due, mostly, to cattle rustling and conflict among neighbouring ethnic groups. The blame around the underdevelopment of Karamoja seems to point mostly at the region, and hence the negative narrative set from outsiders is then reproduced internally.

**Currently, the development strategy for Uganda is envisioned within the framework of the Second National Development Plan (NDPII) and is in line with the Uganda Vision 2040.**

More specifically to Karamoja, in 2009, the GoU formulated the Karamoja Integrated Development Plan (KIDP). The Plan set out a strategy for the 2015-2020 period and is housed within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to contribute towards human security and promote conditions for recovery and development in Karamoja, as part of the broader second National Development Plan (NDP II) and the Peace, Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP) (Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, 2017). Although the reasons behind a separate development strategy for Karamoja can be seen as commendable, it does imply a standalone approach to the region. Once again, as pointed out throughout this report, it seems to give the idea of an “exceptionalism” in the development approach for Karamoja.

**There is a significant level of investment in Karamoja by international agencies.** In a Karamoja Donors Mapping Report published in 2016, it was estimated that the 10 major bilateral donors<sup>32</sup> will invest an estimate of €89 million in Karamoja in 2017 (USAID, 2016a). In total, there are 46 active projects funded by these donors, most of which are aligned with Objective 3 (basic social services) of the KIDP and Objective 6 (protection and improved food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable households and population groups). Funds for Karamoja from development partners are channelled through different actors including the local and central government, as well as several United Nations agencies and Civil Society Organisations (USAID, 2016a). An interesting exercise would be to translate the estimated €89 million invested into Karamoja and see how much it would represent in terms of individual monthly transfer. Based on the 2014 Census data, each person would receive €8 a month.<sup>33</sup>

**In addition to international donor investment, NGOs provide development programmes in Karamoja.** The plethora of non-governmental actors is an unmissable feature of the Karamoja development landscape. A Karamoja NGO Mapping Report identified 142 active

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<sup>32</sup> The 10 donors are: Department for International Development (UK), USAID, World Bank, Irish Aid, SIDA (Sweden), EU, Germany, Japan, KOICA (Korea) and Italy. Together they comprise a significant majority of the external funds provided to Karamoja.

<sup>33</sup> The calculations are based on €89 million, 1,016,130 Karamojongs for 12 months.

projects being implemented by 54 respondent NGOs (USAID, 2016b). The majority of those projects support livelihoods activities, followed by health, education, disaster risk reduction, crop production, livestock, nutrition, market systems, WASH, environment, governance and accountability, conflict migration, social protection, water for production, and food security.

**Some of the development interventions for Karamoja have been designed from a limited approach to poverty and mostly from the experts' technical perspective, leaving behind overall political and economic structural issues, as well as an understanding of the historical context and people's traditions.** Underlying conceptions around poverty and the causes of Karamoja's lagging behind have informed the design and implementation of many of the development interventions, that once again, were framed within a paradigm of "exceptionalism". A case in point was the establishment of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) – covering some regions in Karamoja - created to "increase the assets available to local people rather than addressing wider problems within the political economy" (Golooba-Mutebi & Hickey, 2009: 12-13). In an implementation report by the implementing institution, it is stated that "the Karamoja sub-region needs special or tailored implementation modalities (different from the other sub-regions) because of the very low capacities of CPMCs and Community Procurement Committees, the limited capacities of CSOs and district technical staff, and restricted enterprise options" (World Bank, 2009: 48). Furthermore, given its community participatory nature, this is an example of how "the task of tackling such deeply-entrenched problems of poverty and violence was left, under NUSAF, to local responses rather than wider interventions to resolve the underlying problems at the level of governance and the political economy" (Golooba-Mutebi & Hickey, 2009: 14).

**In general terms, given the perceptions and myths around Karamoja and why it is lagging**

*Indeed, the question isn't "what is wrong with Karamoja" but "what have we done in Karamoja that is wrong?" (KII).*

**behind the rest of the country, many development initiatives in the region were conceived within this paradigm.**

Governments have considered the

Karamojong pastoral system and way of life as chaotic, backward, economically irrational and environmentally destructive (Ssenkaaba, 2015). Thus, for a long period of time, development interventions have incorporated this thinking in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies for the region.

**Furthermore, the belief that priority should be given to a group of the “poor” in a context where everyone is living on low incomes is problematic.**

*“As a community, we attempt to ensure that the interventions reach the most vulnerable as we are not able to help directly. It’s hard to determine the most and least vulnerable since we are all struggling. But at least those who are physically fit are able to fend for themselves. But overall deprivation is so much that almost all are quite vulnerable.”* (Community Resource Mapping).

As described in the beginning of this report, three quarters of the population in Karamoja lives below the income poverty line of UGX 2,250<sup>34</sup> per capita per day and the incomes of almost all the population are highly insecure. During the research, it was

repeatedly mentioned that programmes are excluding vulnerable people across the region (as well as some of the issues mentioned above, with regards to dissonance between development strategies’ priorities and what people really need). Development interventions are, largely, being undertaken within a poverty paradigm, rather than one of citizenship. As pointed out earlier in the report, the social contract in Karamoja between the government and citizens appears to be dysfunctional. Like anywhere else, poverty-targeted interventions do not promote the social contract.

**Nevertheless, adult “able-bodied” men are presently excluded by most development**

*“Between men aged 31 – 59 years old, they are excluded from most all the programmes. Everyone is vulnerable to food insecurity, to hunger stress. It is believed they are “active poor” so they can engage in some activity to fend for themselves.”* (KII, sub-county).

*“Even the men are vulnerable – he is able to work but doesn’t have anything to do.”* (KII, sub-county).

**programmes as they do not qualify as per the conventional understanding of vulnerable people.** Local government officials emphasise that, in a context within which food and income insecurity affects everyone, working age adult men can – and should – be considered vulnerable. There is a

need to recognize their vulnerability to income shocks and to identify appropriate strategies. The question to ask would then be – in a context of high vulnerability - to what extent have these notions of vulnerability to food, nutrition and income insecurity (based on a central concept of “able-bodiedness”) been further perpetuated by development actors, whereby programmes reinforce the notion that the “active poor” are undeserving of “handouts” and, therefore, require a contractual exchange between the donor and recipient such as cash/food/inputs-for-work).

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<sup>34</sup> This is the weighted average of the official poverty lines in 2015 equivalent prices. The poverty lines vary by region and by urban and rural areas. They were first created using the 1993 household survey and have been adjusted to 2016 prices. The monthly adult equivalent poverty lines in 2005 prices ranged from UGX 28,165.4 to UGX 32,106.24.



**Targeting the most vulnerable in an extremely vulnerable population is not perceived by communities as fair or as being conducive to inclusive and lasting development.**

The experience of the vulnerability ranking exercise (carried out as part of the qualitative field research work) raised concerns around the relevance for targeting the most vulnerable in an extremely deprived population, with programmes adhering to artificially imposed categories that exclude people based on problematic notions of the “active poor” and “able-bodied-ness”. During our research, one government official was candid in his view on the relevance of household level targeting for development programmes in Karamoja and the need for a focus on regional development and building public goods. A recent study on targeting effectiveness and available options for Uganda points out to the challenges of identifying a fixed group called “the poor” and discusses issues around the effectiveness of targeting mechanisms for the case of Uganda (Kidd & Bailey-Athias, 2016).

**The overzealous focus on poverty targeting also proves to be counterproductive in creating transparency regarding programme implementation.**

The information gaps (regarding programme implementers, duration/time frame, benefits and most importantly criteria for targeting and selection), as well as the lack of understanding among respondents on targeting processes stems from deficient community engagement by development actors, in part due to high illiteracy rates (and the fact that communication strategies might not address these challenges in communication products regarding programmes implemented) and ambiguities around the assessments of “extreme vulnerability” in this region. The information gaps, in turn, lead to an absence of entitlements over benefits which continue to be viewed as charitable hand-outs.

**There is a need for a shift of focus from targeting charity to individuals and communities to building services for citizens of Karamoja across the lifecycle.**

*“My view is somewhat contradictory of some of the efforts. I have done quite a few studies in this area of poverty, I specialised in poverty and policy analysis. There is a relationship between policy and poverty eradication. To me, a more mixed approach, my approach would be a hybrid of interventions to create public assets, not necessarily targeting individuals. If we continue targeting individuals, we are missing the point. There will always be vulnerable people in the communities.” (Local Administrative Officer, KII).*

More investment is needed in public services, skills and employment, as well as financial services. To this end, it is important to recognise that it is beyond the remit of targeted programmes – which are based on the rationing of limited, time-bound external funds – to address the underlying development

challenges of the region. According to local representatives, ownership over interventions could only be developed when they are viewed as consistent and systematic and there are visible, sustained benefits for the community. Until then, talk about the ownership of poor quality or dysfunctional communal assets will remain as “development rhetoric.”

**The Extremely Vulnerable Households (EVH) framework, employed by WFP to identify households for priority assistance, presents many challenges for achieving social inclusion.** The EVH framework includes categories of unaccompanied or separated children; people with disabilities; older persons at risk; people suffering from important medical conditions; and single parents. However, the infrequency of (re)verification of households' EVH status may lead to a high risk of exclusions. Moreover, inclusion of vulnerable households requires the use of transparent criteria to ensure the accuracy of the assessment procedures. Yet, the categories of the EVH are complex and contain ambiguous guidelines which may present challenges during the assessment procedures. This presents problems for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in particular as the criteria may not accurately identify the labour capacity of households which requires a high level of medical expertise. Furthermore, the assumption that people with disabilities should automatically be defined as "labour constrained" may be problematic in any context, including that of Karamoja, as an inability to access employment could be the result of barriers linked to the environment which interacts with impairments and discriminations. In some cases, household members may be physically able to work but need to care for a sick or disabled household member which is not taken into consideration when assessing the EVH status.

**Another example of a disconnect between the implementers of development**

*"You are never clear on who is benefitting. There are many programmes – distribution of seeds, pigs, VSLAs – but it stops at the sub-counties. We hear of them like stories." (Adult female).*

**interventions, local governments and communities are some programmes that provide assets for beneficiaries.** In many cases the assets brought into Karamoja are not appropriate for the existing

resources and/or climatic conditions. The issue of programmes bringing in off-season seeds, or seeds that do not grow properly in conditions such as in Karamoja can lead to failure. Moreover, in some communities, due to issues around seasonality and timing, sometimes families have eaten the seeds, although they are clearly not for human consumption.

**In some instances, development interventions aiming to "modernise" pastoralist societies have applied narratives of land degradation and the tragedy of the commons** (African Union, 2010). This notion of external pushes (from out of Karamoja, not necessarily foreign) wanting to modernise pastoralist communities in the region is prevalent in Karamoja. The tragedy of the commons logic (see Annex 5 for more on this concept) applied to pastoralism stresses that a shared-resource system where individual users acting independently according to their own self-interest becomes contrary to the common good of all users by draining, depleting or spoiling these resources. This has led to development partners and governments in many African countries to try and

“modernise” pastoralist societies by changing communal land tenure, promoting sedentary crop production, appropriating pastoral lands, and establishing wildlife conservation areas. Although this notion has been disproved by evidence, it is still the case that some development partners and governments have led initiatives that promote these principles.

**Karamoja seems to have an overarching donor and government sectoral focus on agricultural activities (instead of livestock).** While there have been erratic attempts to restock livestock, including goats and cattle, there are shortcomings that make these initiatives unsustainable, such as bringing foreign breeds that are unable to survive the harsher weather conditions and the lack of government veterinary services to ensure timely vaccinations and arrest livestock disease epidemics. Local government officials observed that NGOs were doing marginally better at promoting livestock rearing as they have larger budgets than local governments. While they also alluded to the regional level discussions on promoting policies to rejuvenate pastoralism, it was highlighted that the government is yet to formulate a policy and most official guidelines coming from the centre continued to promote agriculture. Local representatives insisted on the need for advocating frameworks and strategies to revive their pastoral livelihoods which were more suited to the region and would build on the skills and knowledge of the communities.

**The aforementioned paradox of Karamoja’s “exceptionalism” could be explained, in part, by what has been called the “strangeness of improvement” (Li, 2007).** This concept conveys the idea that technical solutions and linear thinking applied to complex realities tend to place the blame for failure on those at the receiving end of the solution when in fact the fault lies with those who provided the solution, because it was not fit for purpose in the first place (ibid.). Karamoja, it may be argued, is a laboratory of well-meant social engineering meant to resolve critical problems, but the design of which has been erroneously conceived by both the government and its development partners.

**The problem, however, might be better located in how the designing of solutions is approached.** Li (2007) argues that: “*A central feature of programming is the requirement to frame problems in terms amenable to technical solutions. Programmers must screen out the refractory processes to circumscribe an arena of intervention in which calculations can be applied. They address some problems, and necessarily not others*” (ibid.). The livelihood zones are just one example of such improvements whereby the problem identified is that people living in the area do not know the climatic conditions and productive capacities - even potential - of where they live. Hence, and in order to improve their livelihood (i.e., ability to survive), it is necessary to properly demarcate the livelihood zone and educate them to plan production accordingly. Inadvertently, this perpetuates the narrative of natural resources overuse by the Karamojong, a history/culture of raiding so they can

overstock, and their inability to go into settled farming because they are lazy. In short, this contributes to creating an image of Karamoja as an unsolvable puzzle, which is a fairly powerful tool for disempowering the Karamojong. A recent report, from March 2017, included the following lament: *“Often left behind throughout its history, Karamoja’s pastoralists have been a problem for modern theories of development. Their attachment to cattle and unwillingness to fully participate in capitalist markets and the constraints of the nation-state has meant they have often been left behind by developments in the rest of the country”* (IRIS and Action Against Hunger, 2017). This, once again, reminds us of the need to critically examine the proposed solutions for Karamoja, over the years, and not just the region and its people.

**There are issues around top-down livelihoods mapping by development partners.** In recent times, Karamoja has been considered by the development industry to have three main livelihood systems: agricultural, agro-pastoral, and pastoral. This was officially designated by the OPM in the Karamoja Action Plan for Food Security, 2009 whereby the three livelihood zones in Karamoja were: i) the Wet-Agricultural Zone in the west, ii) the Agro-Pastoral Zone in the centre of the region, and iii) the Arid-Pastoral zone on the far eastern border of Karamoja. The livelihood zones represent the main food sources that maintain household food intake. An underlying assumption has been that investing in the livelihood identified for the zone would make the population food secure.

**Moreover, it has been stressed that promoting interventions focused on crop farming, at the expense of livestock production, is not only contrary to the Karamojong preferred livelihood, but also undermines people’s capacity to cope with climate adversity given the particular ecological conditions in the region.** As mentioned earlier, development interventions have not been well adapted to the critical survival needs of the majority of the Karamojong and to the conditions in the region, thus undermining their capacity to survive prolonged periods of scarcity.

**Livelihoods zones for Karamoja have been widely used by government institutions, donors and development partners to plan for interventions in Karamoja.** Nonetheless, given that these zones do not necessarily capture the nuances and shifts in the region, they might not be that accurate for this purpose (Caravani, 2017). An instance of this are members belonging to the same extended households residing in different livelihoods zones and undertaking several activities in a form of family division of labour (ibid.). In addition, district level development planning considers political-administrative boundaries thus ignoring the livelihood zone. In other words, a development plan considers each district as the unit not a livelihood zone. Furthermore, the livelihood zones approach does not consider the optimum balance of a semi-arid environment that these transhumant cattle herders overcame through mobility and reserving some areas specifically for grazing during the dry season.

**As such, pastoralist communities and individuals, as any capable agents of change, should participate in the design of development interventions and have their voices on needs, priorities and stories heard.** Yet, this has often not been the case in Karamoja (see Box 5-9 for some examples and perceptions around this issue). Some arguments have been made that the development industry has become, in itself, a factor in the destruction of not only the pastoral mode but also of the local capacity to survive or prepare for any disaster (Kagan, Pedersen, Ollech, & Knaute, 2009). Moreover, during discussions throughout the research it was made clear that many development strategies could also have integrated many of the creative survival and traditional coping strategies the Karamojong have been practicing for centuries in balance with nature.

### Box 5-9: The creativity of the people in Karamoja

*“When we were cattle herders, we had milk and meat, and there was enough to eat.”* (Youth male, Amudat sub-county).

Amudat district is a relatively recent district in the semi-arid region of Karamoja with a population of approximately 112,000. The population is largely made up of the Pokot ethnic group that also inhabit the regions on the other side of the border with Kenya. The Pokot on both sides are dual nationals and do not consider movement between the countries as “cross-border” migration. The Pokot, nonetheless, benefitted from being disarmed towards the end, so the elderly or head of families continue to be relatively rich with livestock, including cattle, camels and goats. They still proudly identify themselves as pastoralists and have not taken to agriculture which has increasingly failed with consecutive years of drought.

*“Earlier there was no practice of taking children to school. Now you have to sell your cows and pay for school – it makes you poor (and brings more hassle). Earlier they would stay at home and there was enough to eat. They would not turn to crime or become pregnant”* (Adult female, FGD).

#### **Holding on to tradition**

The field research experience with pastoral communities such as the Pokot uncovered a subtle defiance over and rejection of ways that are considered foreign. At the heart of the problem is the prevailing misconception that pastoralists suffer because of their self-induced traditional ways that limit their ability to adapt and thrive in newer systems. Yet history clearly shows that pastoralists adapted to change over centuries. So, their current predicament is more of a rejection of policies that ignore their knowledge and aspirations. Instead, they would naturally support systems and services that validate their way of life (African Union, 2010). This argument can be used to explain their constant attempt to resist overpowering socio-economic transformation of the region that renders their traditions and cultural identities invisible. With pastoral communities pushed to a corner to relinquish their history for a modern future, people have found innovative ways to cling to their knowledge of their ancestors – survival strategies that proved successful for centuries.

#### **Mobility**

Even today, while leading relatively sedentary lifestyles, clans are known to move every 10 years, once a certain number of deaths have occurred in that spot. It is believed that that soil has turned bad and so they must move, alluding perhaps to the depletion of resources or a change in conducive conditions for habitation, which signals the need for communal migration. As described throughout the report,

governments and organisations are unfortunately taking steps to stop the last vestiges of nomadism. There are efforts to push people to move away from grass huts and fences and move towards more permanent structures – concrete cottages, and permanent fencing – that will act as a disincentive for movement. Cattle owners also continue to practice herd splitting and sending animals to different kraals. It is a mechanism to protect against loss of livestock due to drought, disease epidemics and theft.

### **Traditional food and nutrition**

Trees are an integral part of the pastoral system, not just with the Pokot but across all the different ethnic groups living in Karamoja. During the community resource mappings, trees were the first to be drawn. Trees were key landmarks across the vast landscape that provided protection, firewood and food. Even today wild greens and fruits are an important part of their diet. Pastoral communities like the Pokot also have a rich protein diet where milk is their main staple, and children are breastfed for 2 years. It is also common to consume the blood of cows, which is their main source of iron.

There are preservation techniques that are still prevalent today; milk is locally preserved through a natural preservative that is taken from specific tree species. The milk is preserved in order to sustain children's feeding, as the milk can last for several months. The milk is harvested from goats and cows and the moisture is drained from it through a fermentation process. Tree trunks are cut and left out to dry, after which they are burnt. The charcoal of the trees is then mixed with the milk to keep it preserved. Meat is preserved by drying it out completely and lathering it in ghee, which allows it to stay for up to a year.

### **Climate change mitigation**

*"The sun has changed."* (Elderly female, FGD).

Pastoralists have long established early warning systems and coping strategies based on their natural surroundings. We found that people are keenly aware of the seemingly irreversible changes in the climate and environment and also the part they may have played in its deterioration as they attempt to survive in new, unfamiliar lifestyles. Traditional early warning systems, for example, depended on astrology and the behaviour of animals, birds, even insects to predict the time and intensity of rainfall, and prepare for any potential disaster.

**There are some issues around how representative of Karamoja existing quantitative data (both surveys and census) is.** In gathering data on households in Karamoja, a household is usually defined as a set of parents and up to six children, thus not properly capturing larger households, especially in polygynous contexts such as Karamoja (Caravani, 2017). Usually, these surveys "[...] split large compounds into small constituent nuclear families or husband–wife units, thus losing sight of collective responsibilities" and kinship-based solidarities among the individuals (Randall and Coast, 2014: 3-4). In fact, household definitions from national representative surveys "[...] preclude individuals belonging to two or more households" (ibid.). As a result, "Individuals who might be recorded as being household members have some rights and obligations in that domestic unit, but many have rights and obligations (often rather different ones) in a number of other households too" (ibid: 6). Government and development partners should adopt a more open definition of households in Karamoja in order to capture the economic advantage of larger

households in terms of access to free family labour for production of food and wealth especially in stressful economic contexts (Caravani, 2017).

**Furthermore, larger households are usually portrayed by national representative surveys as more vulnerable.** Essentially these surveys are very standard and simple, and they often miss the interdependencies between individuals belonging to the same polygynous household e.g., co-wife labour cooperation and resource sharing. Again, in Karamoja – the only place in Uganda where the majority of families are polygynous – the definition of households is “top down” (made by the UN or UBOS) thus disregarding local definitions and understanding and leading to poor representative surveys/census (Caravani, 2017). In the usual WFP household food security and nutrition assessment, large co-resident extended families are typically separated into smaller nuclei because household definitions depend on who is eating around the same cooking pot. The consequence is that, in Karamoja, where, for example, a polygynous household of 30 people (made of one man, three wives and many children) would become three UBOS/WFP households of which two households would be defined as female headed.

**A disconnect between community needs and development plans and interventions was also stressed as a key issue during the research.** Even in some circumstances in which participatory appraisals had been carried out at the community level, government agencies, NGOs and/or development partners did not include the results or activities that go beyond their institutional scope or mandate. In trying to exemplify this notion, one local government official mentioned that this also resulted in a lack of ownership of development initiatives and that it was up to the local government authorities to then “*force them (the communities) to ownership*”, as they are not given a menu of choices. This, of course, also relates to the aforementioned issue of the dysfunctional social contract, as people see the support provided as a favour, and hence whatever comes into Karamoja and their communities or households is beyond questioning.

**There are several other key concerns regarding development interventions in this region.** These include but are not limited to short-term planning; the need for better planning and coordination; remoteness of implementers due to perceived insecurity and limited local agency staff; and insecurity across borders (Papabero et al., 2015). Others have also mentioned issues around coordination challenges, and the risks of duplication of efforts as more donor funding and implementing agencies come into the picture; as well as the potential overlap of Karamoja-specific interventions and national policies (FAO, UNICEF, & WFP, 2015).

## 6 Conclusions

**There is a clear need for development strategies to take into account all of the underlying causes explaining vulnerability and poverty in the region.** Government and donor funded development interventions in Karamoja need to take into consideration the structural political and economic factors that hamper progress in the region and which have resulted in the adverse incorporation of Karamoja into national development strategies. Any successful development intervention or initiative should take into account the political and economic restrictions, as well as some of the key structural and governance obstacles mentioned in this report.

**Figure 6-1: Insecurities, vulnerabilities and determinant factors hindering socio-economic development in Karamoja**



Source: *Development Pathways*

**Transformative change requires a shift in the paradigm of social and economic policy for Karamoja.** As a 2016 UNRISD flagship report indicates: “breaking the vicious circle that produces poverty, inequality and environmental destruction requires transformative change that directly attacks the root causes of these problems instead of the symptoms” (UNRISD, 2016: 2). As such, the structural factors underpinning the “failing development” of Karamoja require an approach that is able to transform and promote progressive



change. This transformative approach entails overcoming silo and palliative approaches to develop initiatives informed by evidence and based on normative values (UNRISD, 2016). To initiate transformative change, there is an overarching need to dispel the negative image and assumptions regarding Karamoja. Karamoja deserves to be treated as any other region in the country and parties involved in regional development should focus on addressing the structural issues around Karamoja's challenges. Furthermore, there is a need to invest in core public services such as healthcare, universal education and social security. Too often, investment is channelled through parallel structures without an adequate long-term vision.

**Social and economic policy interventions should encourage sustainable transformation and structural change.** Residual or palliative policies (such as targeting the poor or siloed approaches) will not deliver long-lasting results. The GoU, international donors and development partners will need to invest in policies that promote sustainable development in a number of areas, shifting from humanitarian actions to long-term development initiatives. Investment in universal and quality education and health services; equal access to infrastructure and markets; universal social security; a decent work framework and a governance structure that fosters social justice are crucial interventions. Moreover, there is also the need to develop policies that strengthen governance and adopt policies popular with citizens in the region.

**To address issues around vulnerability as well as food, nutrition and income insecurities, a multi-sectoral scope is of key importance.** A single sectoral focus is incapable of independently addressing vulnerabilities, or income, food and nutrition insecurities. Hence, the importance of simultaneously addressing varying determinants of food, nutrition and income insecurities, multiple stresses<sup>35</sup> and covariate and/or idiosyncratic shocks.<sup>36</sup> A silo approach to development in Karamoja will only result in fragmented development results. Likewise, given the vast array of interventions in the region, it is of key importance to increase coherence among interventions.

**In addition, governance needs to be enhanced.** This report alluded to several challenges in terms of the governance structure and power distribution in the region, that negatively affect development in the region as well as the social contract.

**Policy interventions should enhance the social contract in Karamoja between the government and citizens.** As repeatedly stated, throughout the report, government services are to be seen as entitlements, not a favour. The same applies to development

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<sup>35</sup> Including, but not limited to youth and women's disempowerment, prejudicial social norms, land degradation, social tensions, weak community leadership, inadequate access to services, violence, and low productivity.

<sup>36</sup> E.g., climatic, economic, conflict related, and health.

interventions, as they are, largely, being undertaken within a poverty paradigm, rather than one of citizenship.

**For equity purposes, it is key that there is available data disaggregated by gender/sex, age, ethnicity, location, disability, etc.** Disaggregated data becomes essential in visualising specific groups that are being left behind, in order to address these problems with proper programming, planning, and implementation. This also holds true for the monitoring of progress on the SDGs.

**Beyond the usual pastoralist *vis à vis* agriculture debate and the incorporation of other “alternative livelihoods”, people in Karamoja should be supported to diversify their income sources according to their preferences.** In that regard, there is a need to take advantage of some of the creative ways in which the Karamojong have been able to generate income, promote job opportunities, and put in place legal disincentives for labour exploitation of casual labourers.

**Furthermore, decent labour standards and markets for local products need to be further developed.** To this end, it becomes crucial to tackle the overarching lack of clarity in existing value chains (e.g., aloe vera and *ekorete*), properly incorporating producers into market systems, and promoting decent labour standards (in particular, issues around collective bargaining and non-exploitative practices).

**If the legal and regulatory framework allows for it, land could be seen as an equaliser.** However, given the circumstances described in previous sections around land grabbing, corruption and the changes from customary communal land tenancy to individual land tenancy, land has further marginalised communities that have not been empowered to navigate the formal land tenure in place. Issues around land are critical for an inclusive development of Karamoja (and any other region). The GoU should establish proper mechanisms to enforce the land rights framework and undertake further sensitisation on land rights in Karamoja. Although the legal land rights framework has set out specific considerations for communal lands, ethnic minorities and pastoral communities, the enforcement of these norms needs significant improvement. In addition, government and civil society efforts to sensitise Karamoja citizens on their land rights and to protect their rights are essential to improve the land grabbing situation as well as the confusions regarding land tenancy and natural resources exploitation. In addition, it should be noted that there is a need to facilitate access to lawyers, so that individuals and communities can better navigate the changes within the land tenure system and then exercise their rights.

**The mining sector is in need of an improved normative and policy framework.** There is both the need to improve (and provide) a normative environment that promotes decent work and wages for mining workers and that mining companies abide by these

regulations. There also needs to be an increase of royalties for local government and, in particular, for the communal landowner, and payments for the resources themselves to the landowners.

**Migration patterns of the Karamojong into other regions and within Karamoja needs to be addressed.** Given that the Karamojong are migrating within the region and elsewhere within Uganda to overcome food and income insecurity and given their background as transhumant people, it might prove useful to put in place policies that facilitate and promote safe and effective migration, and focus on the positive aspects, such as remittances and employment opportunities. Nevertheless, it also noted that actions in this regard need to be complemented with policies that seek to address the structural reasons – regarded as the push factors – determining the Karamojong’s need to migrate. Strategies would need to address delaying migration for young children, incorporating child protection issues, and keeping them in quality schools back home. Once again, migration is a global trend, and hence it would make sense to address it in Karamoja as well.

**There is the need to strengthen the role of the private sector within Karamoja.** Incentives could be created so that the private sector, with proper regulations, has a positive impact in the local economy in further investing in infrastructure, market development as well as job creation. A specific example would be the mining industry, and using land to better integrate Karamoja, with a proper tax scheme in place and a tonnage system for lorries that carry the limestone and marble extracted from the region. These incentives also need to be framed within a decent work agenda that considers the best interest of labourers.

**It is necessary to move towards strengthening a cash-based market economy in the region.** The circulation of cash among consumers is an essential pre-requisite for the success of the private sector, including small entrepreneurs. An easy means of increasing the circulation of cash would be through an expansion of social security schemes, following the model of the SCG. There is significant evidence worldwide that policies aimed at increasing people’s purchasing power increase the dynamism of markets and provide opportunities for both entrepreneurs and labour.

**Food, nutrition and income insecurities are linked to livelihood instability or uncertainty.** This is the reason why a majority of government and non-government interventions now focus on livelihoods, mainly agro-inputs, creating household productive assets and market linkages. However, major criticisms of these household livelihood interventions include the lack of a lifecycle approach to assessing household vulnerability to food, nutrition and income insecurity, which requires consideration of fundamental community level challenges such as the loss of livestock, lack of water and veterinary services, weak

markets, unemployment, high incidence of drop-out from primary schools and child migration to big, often, unsafe cities.

**As stressed throughout the report, the Karamojong face vulnerabilities across the lifecycle, like any other society.** In their own words, the Karamojong identify vulnerabilities as a lack of care networks and social networks, lack of food, lack of livestock, inability to support others, as well as lack of physical strength and inability to work. As such, policies need to address these concerns beyond an overzealous focus on poverty targeting.

**Uganda, and Karamoja, need inclusive social protection policies that address vulnerabilities and stresses across the lifecycle.** As uncovered through the participatory approach of the research for this situation analysis, people in Karamoja (like in any other place in the world) suffer from shocks, stresses and face vulnerabilities throughout their lives. Targeted and siloed policies cannot address these vulnerabilities and do not foster social cohesion by targeting the “most vulnerable” or “deserving poor” in societies where most people suffer from vulnerabilities. And of course, from a rights-based approach, all citizens are entitled to social security and an adequate standard of living. As such, there is an argument to advance towards an inclusive lifecycle system for all of Uganda (including Karamoja), and the SCG can be seen as the first step (Kidd & Gelders, 2016).

**In addition, disability needs to be addressed by public policies and development strategies.** As pointed out consistently in the report: poverty and disability are strongly correlated and can be mutually reinforcing. As such, inclusive social policies need to be put in place, including access to quality education and health services.

**An agenda for future research has been identified, as there are several issues that were explored throughout the research that would require further in-depth analysis and inquiry.** Some of these issues include the following: migration patterns for Karamojong and impact of financial remittances in local communities; a better understanding of the labour market; and understanding of the challenges facing persons with disabilities; a comprehensive value chain and market analysis for products such as aloe vera, charcoal, indigenous trees and honey, local beers, among others. Another area of investigation that could be pursued to enhance the understanding of labour dynamics is to trace the Karamoja labour hubs across Uganda and in neighbouring countries, specifically Kenya, South Sudan and even Ethiopia. This will give a more complete picture of where Karamoja stands in the government’s bid at “Skilling Uganda”. Moreover, tracing these labour networks would, also, develop a skills map, a skills gap analysis for the potential for investment and the potential for skills development, respectively, in Karamoja.

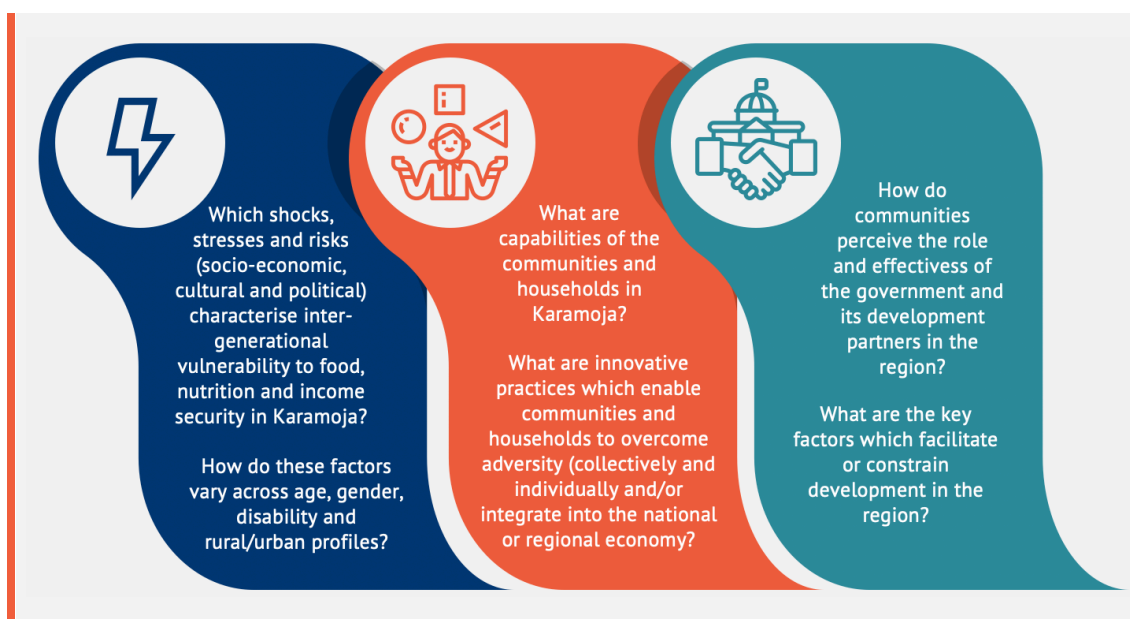
## Annex 1 Research methodology

**The situation analysis builds on national level consultations, analysis of existing quantitative data sets, an extensive literature review, and qualitative field research to explore not only symptomatic concerns, but also the underlying and fundamental causes of food, nutrition and income insecurity in Karamoja.** Furthermore, the methodology has incorporated a vulnerabilities assessment from a lifecycle approach and included encountered perceptions regarding said vulnerabilities as well as the situations of stress faced by people in Karamoja. A single sectoral focus is incapable of independently addressing vulnerabilities or income, food and nutrition insecurities. Recognising this, Development Pathways incorporated a multi-sectoral perspective into the current research. The following sections will describe in more detail the research methodology.

**To do so, the current report captures the issues of Karamoja using the lens of several stories from within the region.** The qualitative field research thus incorporated a set of participatory tools (described in section 1.1) in order to gain insight into the perceptions, needs assessments and priorities of the people of Karamoja with regard to their situation and the vulnerabilities and insecurities they face. The possibility of hearing their own version of the story was a key aspect of the field research.

**The methodology was initially designed to conduct an in-depth exploration of the underlying causes of three insecurities that WFP's programmes in Karamoja seek to address: food, nutrition and income insecurity.** To this end, the research objectives were to define these three insecurities using a lifecycle approach; dispel negative stereotyping of the people of Karamoja; and determine community needs. In accordance with these research objectives, the research questions were thus 3 – fold (see figure A1-1).

Figure A1-1: Research questions



Source: *Development Pathways*

**The chosen research methodology also examined vulnerabilities and challenges from a lifecycle approach.** Given that very little literature was found covering this perspective, we used an intergenerational/lifecycle and equity approach for this research. The idea behind this approach was to be able to address some of the vulnerabilities across the lifecycle to identify the inter-generational perpetuation/transmission of income, food and nutrition insecurities. Consultations and data collected for the qualitative research was gathered during an initial inception mission and a qualitative field work mission.

## Annex 1.1 Literature review

**Addressing the main concerns for the situation analysis required having recourse to a wide array of literature sources relating to the following topics on Karamoja: food, nutrition and income insecurity; social protection; development interventions in Karamoja; labour and income generation sources, adverse incorporation; pastoralism; mining; migration; and resilience.** In total, 290 documents have been reviewed for this study. In the first instance, the team endeavoured to incorporate the vast body of already existing literature and evidence on Karamoja, covering academic research, grey literature (including reports from international agencies), as well as magazine articles. A wide selection of literature databases has been consulted for the search of relevant literature. Google Scholar, ScienceDirect and JSTOR were included as some of the main sources to identify relevant academic research papers and grey literature. Resources from Tufts University, WFP, FAO and USAID, among others, were also widely used in this literature review.

## Annex 1.2 Qualitative research methodology

**The methodology incorporated tools to identify community and individual perceptions and needs.** The incorporation of community and individual perceptions was instrumental in exploring a variety of assumptions on Karamoja, developing insights into the challenges faced by the Karamojong and the concomitant strategies they use to address their livelihoods needs. Embedded within the methodology, the research was able to further expand on the current understanding of the specific shocks and risks faced in the region at both micro (individual) and macro (community) levels.

**Equity was incorporated into the qualitative field work.** In keeping with a view to maximise inclusion and reduce *bias* within the current research, we mainstreamed an equity approach to incorporate inclusion and equity concerns into the research and analysis. This approach aimed to ensure that we adequately addressed issues related to social exclusion, gender and the challenges faced by specific categories of the population, such as persons with disabilities.

**The qualitative research tools covered both the scope of the original research questions as well as issues and themes that arose during the research.** The qualitative field research tools were designed to explore these questions within the given time frame, which was limited. During the fieldwork in Karamoja, the research teams undertook 6 historical timelines, 24 focus group discussions (FDGs), 5 community resource mapping (CRM) exercises, 32 in-depth interviews (IDIs), and 39 key informant interviews (KIIs).

**Over the course of the field research, certain themes emerged that were beyond the remit of the research questions but were critical in explaining the challenges faced by the Karamojong.** These included: land tenure, labour market engagement, the role of the private sector, governance and the overall role of development partners. While we obtained information on these issues, they would merit further exploration and analysis. However, following the qualitative research, we undertook a further in-depth literature review to understand better these issues.

**Perceptions and opinions of the Karamojong and locals were a key aspect of the approach undertaken in the qualitative field research, as a means of reaching beyond the negative stereotyping of communities in Karamoja.** In addition, the qualitative field research methodology included tools to assess how various categories of the population – for example, those differentiated by age, gender, disability and location (rural/urban) – at the community and household aggravate or moderate people's experiences on food, nutrition and income insecurity.

**Although much was achieved in terms of the number of interviews and data collection during the qualitative research, numerous logistical challenges were faced.** These challenges somewhat limited the depth and quality of the collected data and included:

- **Human resources:** There were several changes to the research team composition which affected the level of research preparation. One of the researchers unexpectedly left over the course of the field research, a setback which was resolved by assigning senior staff from Development Pathways to complete the remaining interviews.
- **Translation:** Further complications arose due to language barriers – 3 out of 4 interpreters were *Karamojong* translators (spoken in 3 of the 4 research sites; Moroto, Napak and Kaabong) and one was a *Pokot* translator (spoken in Amudat district). Therefore, one of the research teams only had one interpreter on hand each week to facilitate the field work. The issue was partially resolved in Amudat by hiring an additional local translator.
- **Mobilisation:** Firstly, mobilising sub-groups defined along criteria of age, gender and disability proved to be challenging as were the multiple changes to the time frame and logistics of the field research. The field research was finally conducted at the start of the rainy season, when villagers were fully engaged in agricultural activities. The potential time taken away from those activities meant that respondents were often unable or unwilling to devote adequate time to the interviews and discussions. Given the scope of research and a strict 2-week time frame for field work, it was not an option to divide in-depth interviews over multiple days.
- **Transparency:** Despite maintaining transparency regarding our research ethics, there were cases of consenting FGD respondents insisting on monetary compensation in addition to refreshments. One group of elderly respondents declined to participate in the research due to the absence of financial compensation.

### Annex 1.3 Quantitative research methodology

**As part of the situation analysis, this study reviewed a range of datasets and statistical reports pertaining to Karamoja including:**

**The 2014 National Population and Housing Census reports.** The 2014 Census is the latest population census in Uganda. From the Census report, the research gathered information on the current demographics in Karamoja.



**The Food Security Nutrition Assessment - Karamoja reports.** The FSNA reports is an analysis of food insecurity and nutritional issues in the region of Karamoja, which is conducted bi-annually by the WFP. The assessment includes a Food Security module and a Nutrition module. The latest survey (mid-2016) had a total sample of 4,329 households, covering all seven districts in Karamoja. The sampling methodology used is a two-stage cross-sectional cluster sampling method, with the village as the geographical unit. The sample is based on the “Standardised Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions” (SMART) methodology and guidelines. The survey includes key indicators on household demographics, food security, nutrition, household health and WASH. The food security indicators used in this study are from the FSNA reports.

**The Uganda Demographic Health Surveys.** The 2016 Uganda Demographic Survey will not be available for secondary analysis. Only the Key Indicators Report with selected findings from the survey had been released. Many of the indicators released have been disaggregated at sub-region levels, including Karamoja. Key information on nutrition (stunting and wasting), sexual violence on women and teenage pregnancy used in this study are from the 2016 Key Indicators Report. In order to observe possible trends on different indicators in Karamoja, this study also conducted secondary analysis of the 2011 and 2006 UDHS, comparing key variables in rural Karamoja with other rural parts of Uganda after controlling for household and individual characteristics. The variables analysed in this report included disabilities, asset index, stunting, wasting and anaemia.

**Uganda National Household Surveys.** The UNHS is the most complete household survey in Uganda conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). The latest survey was in 2012/13 and is representative of households at the national, regional, sub-regional – including Karamoja – and urban and rural area settings. The total sample included in the UNHS 2012/13 is close to 6,900 households, of which 677 are in Karamoja. The variables of interest in the dataset include household expenditure information on food and non-food items, which we used to assess, among other aspects, poverty levels, school outcomes, marital status and labour outcomes. A limitation of the UNHS is that it uses a standard definition of a household, which might not be applicable to the context of Karamoja, where differently families live in the same dwelling and the prevalence of polygynous marriages is higher than the rest of the country. Another limitation is that it did not include a module on disability with the Washington Group set of questions on functional limitation. For this reason, analysis on persons with disability is drawn from the 2009/10 UNHS, which included the Washington Group questions.

**Uganda National Panel Surveys.** The UNPS conducted by UBOS is a long-lasting household panel survey which started in 2005 and there have been 5 waves. The survey provides key indicators that are representative at the national, regional, and urban and rural area levels. In contrast to other household surveys, UNPS includes modules on

agriculture for households engaged in agricultural activity, which have key indicators on agriculture key that have been used for this study. The total sample included in the UNPS is over 3,100 households but only 103 are in Karamoja. There are at least two limitations in using this dataset. As in the UNHS, the standard definition of a household used in the UNPS might not be correctly applied to the context of Karamoja (see section 5.9). Secondly, unlike the National Household survey, the UNPS is not representative of Karamoja.

**In general terms, there are several other limitations to undertaking a quantitative analysis of household surveys in Karamoja.** These include: issues with gathering data in a pastoralist setting; missing questions in the UBOS questionnaire to address some of the main underlying structural factors; issues with data gathering/enumerators; as well as issues around literacy and difficulties to calculate land/harvests, etc.), among others.

## **Annex 2 Informal support and sharing mechanisms**

When formal social protection mechanisms are deficient or non-existent, many people tend to resort to informal support and sharing mechanisms, or what some authors call informal social protection. Informal social protection, provided mostly through social and family networks, entails arrangements and actions taken by an individual or groups of individuals that are not guided by formal legal regulations but are not necessarily contravening legal frameworks (Oduro, 2010). It has been argued that informal safety nets “are a bedrock of absorptive capacity in the face of shock” (Papabero et al., 2015).

Some examples of support and sharing mechanisms and/or informal social protection mechanisms include: mutual assistance among fellow ethnic group members; burial or funeral services; shared child care; formal or informal child fostering; the sharing of meals, regular remittances from labour migration; exchange of services; sharing of food; loaning of assets; sharing of information (including indigenous knowledge systems) and resources; and borrowing and pooling of resources, among others (Oduro, 2010; Watson, 2016).

Although informal sharing systems are very much relied on in many instances, they are, by nature, less reliable than formal social protection structures (that is if they are implemented appropriately of course); and should not replace the responsibility of the State to provide social security across the lifecycle to entitled citizens.

## Annex 3 The local government system<sup>37</sup>

The 1997 Local Governments Act consolidates the constitutional provisions regarding local government. The Ministry of Local Government (MLG) – empowered through the Local Governments Act 1997 (Cap. 243) – is responsible for formulating and supervising national policy and legislation on local government. In urban settings, the local government structures are city, municipal, division/town, ward and cell councils. In rural areas, there are district councils, counties (which are administrative units without a council), sub-county councils, parish councils and village councils.

### Annex 3.1 Tiers and functions

The District or City Council is headed, politically, by the District Chairperson (LC V), elected for a term of five years. A senior bureaucrat, the chief administrative officer (CAO) is the administrative head of the council. In Urban settings, a city council requires a mayor and a deputy mayor. The District or city council is the planning authority in each district.

At the County or Municipal level there is only the civil administration structure, as counties do not have elected local councils. Monitoring implementation of programmes is within their purview. Counties, however, also serve as the constituency for the election to the Parliament. In other words, a Member Parliament (MP) represents each county. For urban counties, there is an LCIV consisting of the executive committees of all LCIII i.e., sub-county councils.

A sub-county or division/town chief with runs a sub-county on the technical side whereas the political leadership lies with the elected local council III (LCIII) chairperson. Sub-county councils are responsible for service delivery and local economic development within their areas.

Each parish or ward has a local council II (LCII) committee, made up of the entire chairman from the village LCIs in the parish. Each LCII will elect, from among themselves, an executive committee. Executive committees comprising a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a general secretary and secretaries for information, education, security, finance, production and environmental protection. LCII are largely involved in settling land disputes and mobilising the community for various activities.

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<sup>37</sup> Source: Commonwealth Local Government Forum.

There is also a disabled persons' council, a youth council and a women's council whose respective chairs are appointed as secretaries for their representative group to the main council. Parishes are responsible for monitoring service delivery at that level.

A government employed Parish chief runs the day to day affairs of the Parish and is the leadership from the technical side. Parish councils and chiefs are responsible for monitoring service delivery at that level.

At the village or cell level local council I (LCI) is governed by a chairman (LCI chairman) and nine other executive committee members. The lowest tier, at the village level all citizens 18 years and over are members of the council.

## Annex 4 Uganda’s legal frame on land rights<sup>38</sup>

### Uganda Constitution (1995) – Chapter Fifteen on Land and Environment

#### Land ownership

(1) Land in Uganda belongs to the citizens of Uganda and shall vest in them in accordance with the land tenure systems provided for in this Constitution.

(2) Notwithstanding clause (1) of this article—the government or a local government may, subject to article 26 of this Constitution, acquire land in the public interest; and the conditions governing such acquisition shall be as prescribed by Parliament; the government or a local government as determined by Parliament by law shall hold in trust for the people and protect natural lakes, rivers, wetlands, forest reserves, game reserves, national parks and any land to be reserved for ecological and touristic purposes for the common good of all citizens; noncitizens may acquire leases in land in accordance with the laws prescribed by Parliament, and the laws so prescribed shall define a noncitizen for the purposes of this paragraph.

(3) Land in Uganda shall be owned in accordance with the following land tenure systems—customary; freehold; mailo; and leasehold.

(4) On the coming into force of this Constitution—all Uganda citizens owning land under customary tenure may acquire certificates of ownership in a manner prescribed by Parliament; and land under customary tenure may be converted to freehold land ownership by registration.

(5) Any lease which was granted to a Uganda citizen out of public land may be converted into freehold in accordance with a law which shall be made by Parliament.

(6) For the purposes of clause (5) of this article, “public land” includes statutory leases to urban authorities.

(7) Parliament shall make laws to enable urban authorities to enforce and to implement planning and development.

(8) Upon the coming into force of this Constitution and until Parliament enacts an appropriate law under clause (9) of this article, the lawful or bonafide occupants of mailo land, freehold or leasehold land shall enjoy security of occupancy on the land.

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<sup>38</sup> Source: Original documents.

(9) Within two years after the first sitting of Parliament elected under this Constitution, Parliament shall enact a law—regulating the relationship between the lawful or bonafide occupants of land referred to in clause (8) of this article and the registered owners of that land; providing for the acquisition of registrable interest in the land by the occupant.

### **Land Act (1998) – Land Ownership**

Subject to article 237 of the Constitution, all land in Uganda shall vest in the citizens of Uganda and shall be owned in accordance with the following land tenure systems: customary; freehold; mailo; and leasehold.

### **The Uganda National Land Policy (2013)**

#### Customary Tenure

(a) The State shall recognize customary tenure in its own form to be at par (same level) with other tenure systems.

(b) The State shall establish a land registry system for the registration of land rights under customary tenure.

#### Land rights of ethnic minorities

(a) Government shall, in its use and management of natural resources, recognize and protect the right to ancestral lands of ethnic minority groups.

(b) Government shall pay prompt, adequate and fair compensation to ethnic minority groups that are displaced from their ancestral land by government action.

#### Land rights of pastoral communities

Land rights of pastoral communities will be guaranteed and protected by the State.

### **Mining Regulations (2004) and Mining Act (2003)**

The Mining Regulations, 2004 & Mining Act, 2003 (section 3) hold that the entire ownership and "control of all minerals in, on or under any land or waters in Uganda are the exclusive right of government, notwithstanding any right of ownership of or by any person in relation to any land in, on or under which any such minerals are found" (KDF, 2015).

According to Human Rights Watch, Mining activities in Uganda are controlled under the 2003 Mining Act and the 2004 Mining Regulations. The 2003 Mining Act does not currently require any form of consent or consultation with local communities prior to the application or acquisition of an exploration license, which therefor impedes the protection of informed and consent rights of Karamojong land owners (Human Rights

Watch, 2014). Moreover, mining legislation is unfavourable to pastoralist communities. The Mining Act, 2003, section 80(1), indicates that pastoralists can retain grazing rights in mining areas provided that grazing does not interfere with prospecting, exploration or mining (KDF, 2015).



## Annex 5 Tragedy of the Commons and the tragedy of enclosure

An interpretation of the “tragedy of the commons” can be found in an article by Garret Harding. He describes it as:

*“The tragedy of the commons develops in this way. Picture a pasture open to all. It is to be expected that each herd- man will try to keep as many cattle as possible on the commons. Such an arrangement may work reasonably satisfactorily for centuries because tribal wars, poaching, and disease keep the numbers of both man and beast well below the carrying capacity of the land. Finally, however, comes the day of reckoning, that is, the day when the long-desired goal of social stability be- comes a reality. At this point, the inherent logic of the commons remorselessly generates tragedy. As a rational being, each herdsman seeks to maximize his gain. Explicitly or implicitly, more or less consciously, he asks, “What is the utility to me of adding one more animal to my herd?” This utility has one negative and one positive component.*

*1) The positive component is a function of the increment of one animal. Since the herdsman receives all the proceeds from the sale of the additional animal, the positive utility is nearly +1.*

*2) The negative component is a function of the additional overgrazing created by one more animal. Since, however, the effects of overgrazing are shared by all the herdsman, the negative utility for any particular decision- making herdsman is only a fraction of -1.*

*Adding together the component partial utilities, the rational herdsman concludes that the only sensible course for him to pursue is to add another animal to his herd. And another; and another.... But this is the conclusion reached by each and every rational herdsman sharing a commons. Therein is the tragedy. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit-in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination to- ward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the com- mons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all.” (p. 1244).*

Quite some years later, George Monbiot revisits this interpretation within the context of the movement towards land privatization. In of the examples provided, he brings the case of the acacia woods (the common resource) owned by the Turkana in the north west of Kenya (Monbiot, 1994). The article describes that the authorities blamed the lack of regulation in the access to their commons for the disappearance of vegetation.

Nevertheless, the common resources system that worked for the Turkana (and did include, of course, a closely regulated system by communities) was lost in translation, as the real reason for the disappearance in the vegetation was drought. Hence, the authorities decided that the solution was to settle down communities, disincentive animal ownership

and promote farming (Monbiot, 1994). This, according to the author, is just another example of how this trend of thought regarding the tragedy of the commons provided Western Governments and multilateral bank organizations further justification for land privatization and shifting communal ownership by communities to privately owned lands. This phenomenon is called “the enclosure of the commons” (Monbiot, 1994). Finally, the article also mentions the environmental crisis the land ownership changes brought about; and the significant shifts in power: *“When communities own the land they make the laws, and develop them to suit their own needs. Everyone is responsible for ensuring that everyone else obeys them. As landlords take over, it is their law that prevails, whether or not it leads to the protection of local resources”* (Monbiot, 1994: 4).

In addition, Elinor Ostrom, an Economics Nobel Prize winner, also debunked the idea of the tragedy of the commons with her work on how communities manage common resources. In particular, she put forward the idea that the access and use of community owned resources can be organized in a way that it protects said resources from excessive consumption or overexploitation (Ostrom, 1990). In addition, she provides evidence of alternative solutions and examples of stable institutions of self-government.

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