

Special Report  
September 2012

# Security Provision and Small Arms in Karamoja

## A Survey of Perceptions

*Kees Kingma, Frank Muhereza, Ryan Murray, Matthias Nowak,  
and Lilu Thapa*

A study by the Small Arms Survey  
and the Danish Demining Group



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First published in September 2012

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Small Arms Survey

Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies  
47 Avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Copy-edited by Anthony Drummond

Proofread by Donald Strachan

Cartography by Jillian Luff, MAP*grafix*

Typeset by Frank Benno Junghanns, [raumfisch.de/sign](http://raumfisch.de/sign)

Printed in France by GPS

ISBN 978-2-9700816-3-0

ISSN 1661-4453

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Small Arms Survey

Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

47 Avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

**p** +41 22 908 5777

**f** +41 22 732 2738

**e** [sas@smallarmssurvey.org](mailto:sas@smallarmssurvey.org)

**w** [www.smallarmssurvey.org](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org)

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Danish Demining Group  
Borgergade 10, 3rd floor  
1300 Copenhagen, Denmark

**p** +45 3373 5000

**e** [ddg@drc.dk](mailto:ddg@drc.dk)

**w** [www.danishdemininggroup.dk](http://www.danishdemininggroup.dk)

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# Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks are due to Anders Andersen and the data collection and entry team for their work carried out under very difficult and often insecure conditions to gather the information required for this study.

We are grateful to Karina Lynge who not only conceived the research model, but also was key in developing the research methodology. Similarly, our gratitude goes to Bodil Jacobsen, Samuel Paunila, and Anna Alvazzi for their continued support throughout the research and drafting process. Thanks are also due to Sara Hylton for tirelessly going through the draft countless times, as well as to Danish Demining Group staff in Uganda and Small Arms Survey staff in Geneva, who provided all possible support to the research team.

We are also thankful to the security providers, particularly the Police and the Internal Security Organization, authorities, elders, and other prominent personalities that provided us with valuable information during the interviews. The survey also benefited greatly from a study conducted in Karamoja by Saferworld.

Most importantly, our gratitude goes to the people of Karamoja, particularly those in Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto who took part in the survey despite various difficulties. We hope that peace will prevail and development will reach Karamoja soon.

We also wish to express our deepest appreciation to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for funding, without which this study would not have been possible.

Finally, we wish to point out that the views expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect those of the Danish Demining Group, the Small Arms Survey, or the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Kees Kingma, Frank Muhereza, Ryan Murray, Matthias Nowak,  
and Lilu Thapa

Netherlands, Geneva, and Uganda

# Abbreviations

ASTU	Anti-Stock Theft Units
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DISO	District Internal Security Officer
GISO	Gombolola Internal Security Officer
JLOS	Justice, Law and Order Sector
KIDDP	Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme
LC	Local Council
LDU	Local Defence Unit
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
PISO	Parish Internal Security Officer
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
RELOKA	Restoration of Law and Order in Karamoja programme
RISO	Regional Internal Security Officer
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAS	Small Arms Survey
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Forces
UPF	Uganda Police Force, referred to as the police in the text
WFP	(United Nations) World Food Programme

# Terms and definitions<sup>1</sup>

## *Armed violence*

Armed violence is defined as the ‘use or threatened use of weapons to inflict injury, death or psychological harm, which undermines development’ (OECD, 2009, p. 28).

## *Cattle raids*

Cattle raiding or ‘cattle rustling’ is a customary activity of pastoral communities in the Rift Valley region in East Africa and is widely practised among the Karamojong and neighbouring pastoralist groups in Kenya and South Sudan. Traditionally, cattle raiding was often ‘an in-built cultural tendency and an economical coping strategy, usually regulated by the elders’ (Mkutu, 2007b, p. 35).

## *Conflict*

The DDG defines conflict as ‘a relationship between two or more parties who have, or think they have, incompatible goals, interests, values, needs and/or understandings’.<sup>2</sup> This study analyses the three types of conflict referred to in the Karamoja Conflict and Security Assessment (Saferworld, 2010, p. 3): inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, and between the state and Karamojong society.

## *Disarmament*

Disarmament refers to the steps taken by the government to disarm the communities in Karamoja. These include the deployment of state security organs such as the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF), the police, the Local Defence Unit (LDU), the Internal Security Organization, and the forceful ‘cordon, search and disarm’ operations conducted by the UPDF.

## *Ethnic groups*

Ethnic groups in Karamoja are groups of individuals, families, and family groups interlinked via kinship and close association living in particular ar-

eas. The political boundaries of districts in Karamoja roughly correspond to the geographical distribution of the ethnic groups. The groups are, however, very mobile and frequently occupy adjacent district areas. The dominant ethnic groups are the Matheniko in Moroto, the Dodoth in Kaabong, the Jie in Kotido, the Bokora in Napak, and the Pian in Nakapiripirit. The minority ethnic groups include the Tepeth in Moroto, the Ngiporein, the Mening, and the Ik in Kaabong, the Kadam in Nakapiripirit, and the Pokot in Amudat.

### *Household*

Survey interviewees were asked to reflect upon various events, phenomena, or characteristics related to the household. For the purposes of this study, the household is defined as any group of individuals living under the same roof who eat from the same kitchen at least five times per week. It should be noted, however, that respondents may have enlarged the definition of household to include extended family and friends outside the home. Hence, the survey results (figures and percentages) related to the 'household' may be inflated.

### *Karamoja and Karamojong*

For the purposes of this study, Karamoja refers to the north-eastern region of Uganda comprising the seven districts of Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Napak, and Nakapiripirit. The Karamojong refers to the tribes living within the Karamoja region. These include the major Bokora, Dodoth, Jie, Matheniko, Pian, and Pokot tribes, as well as minor tribes such as the Ik and the Tepeth.<sup>3</sup>

### *Kraals*

Kraals, also traditionally called *Bomas*, are non-permanent enclosures where the Karamojong keep their animals at night. They are often fortified with thorny fences and defended by warriors against possible raids. Those protected by the UPDF and LDUs are called Protected Kraals.

### *Manyattas*

*Manyattas* are Karamojong settlements consisting of semi-permanent grass-thatched houses built of mud and wattle. These settlements are often fenced with sticks and thorny bushes as a protective measure.

### *Security*

Security is understood as freedom from the fear of experiencing psychological or physical harm.

### *Security providers*

Security providers are defined as state or non-state institutions that contribute directly to the security of the population by working on immediate tasks such as crime prevention, combating violence and aggression against civilians, dispute mediation, and conflict resolution.

### *Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)*

There is no universally accepted definition of SALW. This report refers to the following definition used by the Small Arms Survey (SAS):

- *Small arms*: revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns.
- *Light weapons*: heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missiles, and rocket systems; portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems (MANPADS); and mortars of calibres of less than 100 mm.

The Survey has added to this list single-rail-launched rockets and 120 mm mortars that can be transported and operated as intended by a light vehicle. The term 'small arms' is used throughout this report to mean all arms falling within these two categories.

### *Urban*

For the purposes of this survey, urban is defined as the communities that make up three district centres, namely the towns of Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto. Rural is defined as all other communities sampled in this survey.

### *Violence*

Violence is defined as 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation' (Krug et al., 2002, p. 5).

Map 1 **The seven districts of Karamoja, Uganda**



# Executive summary

Karamoja is one of the most underdeveloped regions in Uganda. Located in the north-east of the country, it has for decades been plagued by inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic violence, exacerbated by the availability and use of small arms, generating a climate of insecurity and hindering development. Against this backdrop, various measures—notably peace and security initiatives—have been introduced to try to reduce the violence and improve security.

The purpose of this assessment is twofold: first, to provide a deeper understanding of security provision in Karamoja; and second, to analyse the patterns of small arms supply to the region. Although many studies have looked into security and small arms in Karamoja, gaps exist in these analyses in three particular areas: 1) the role of security and justice providers in community safety and armed violence; 2) the function of traditional security providers in security provision in Karamoja; and 3) current data on the small arms situation in Karamoja.

This study was guided by the objective to fill these gaps through a bottom-up approach. The findings are primarily based on the direct participation of the population in the household survey, complemented by qualitative data gathered from focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and structured interviews with security providers. The research was conducted in three districts: Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto.

The main findings of this study are as follows:

## 1. Improved security situation

- Karamoja has witnessed improved security in recent years, with state security agencies currently more visible. Nonetheless, although acts of violence such as cattle raids and killings involving firearms have decreased, the number of such incidents remains high. Furthermore, it is uncertain

whether the relative improvement in the security situation in Karamoja will last over the long term.

- The nature of cattle raiding has changed from being a large-scale and traditionally sanctioned activity to one that is carried out on a smaller scale as an independent undertaking. Moreover, livestock theft is becoming increasingly commercialized. Most warriors engaged in this activity are young children. It is not clear to what extent these changes will affect security and violence in Karamoja in the future.

## **2. Security providers and security provision**

- Karamoja has a strong presence of traditional security providers. The Local Councils (LCs) and traditional elders are generally seen as the main providers of security. For example, LCs are called upon to intervene in instances of inter-tribal, state, or intra-community violence. Communities also consider warriors important actors for protecting and recovering cattle stolen during raids.
- Communities recognize the importance of formal state security providers such as the UPDF and the police. They also rely on the UPDF and Local Defence Units (LDUs) to protect and recover livestock.
- Communities have a better relationship with LCs and traditional elders than with the UPDF, the LDUs, and the police. The presence of the UPDF is considered necessary, however, despite their violent behaviour towards communities, especially in providing security to kraals and recovering stolen livestock.
- The police are under-resourced, which undermines their ability to provide services to all the communities within their scope of responsibility.

## **3. Small arms**

- Small arms are still present and circulating in Karamoja despite the fact that access to these weapons in Uganda has become more difficult in recent years.
- Sources of small arms supply to Karamoja include Kenya and South Sudan, as well as pilferage from the armed forces and the remnants of weaponry



left over from past armed conflicts in Uganda. In view of the long, open, and unregulated borders with Kenya and South Sudan and the abundant availability of small arms in those countries, the Karamojong can easily access such weapons. Hence, it is likely that a number of uncontrolled small arms will remain in circulation in the region for an indeterminate length of time.

- Small arms are no longer as visible as they once were in Karamoja. This could be due to the fear of keeping weapons in the household, or to an overall decrease in weapons ownership as a result of disarmament measures, or both. Whatever the case, citizens may be tempted to reacquire weapons if the pressure to disarm eases.

### **Recommendations related to security provision and security providers:**

- Promote the peaceful coexistence of traditional and state security providers through clearer recognition and distribution of their respective roles.
- Strengthen the capacity of LCs to provide better governance, and give them more authority to influence interventions by state security providers such as the UPDF and the LDUs in their constituencies. Strengthen the capacities of both local community leaders and LCs to enable them to put in place specific measures to combat cattle raiding. As part of this overall process, provide LCs training in skills such as mediation to help them manage community security issues more effectively.
- Improve coordination by state security providers such as the UPDF, the LDUs, and the police with LCs. Strive to increase UPDF accountability to the elected authorities in local governments with a view to improving the way communities perceive state security providers, i.e. changing their image of them as unwelcome outsiders.
- Allocate additional manpower and material resources to police operations in Karamoja, which lack effectiveness despite increasing acceptance by the communities of the role of the police. Address the need to build trust between state security providers and communities. Facilitate increased interaction between communities and security providers, particularly the UPDF, the police, and the LDUs.

- Educate state security providers, including the UPDF, the police, and the LDUs, to improve their knowledge of people’s fundamental rights, communication techniques, and basic conflict management in order to enhance their effectiveness in dealing with local communities.
- Allocate adequate resources to armed violence reduction education programmes targeting those held responsible for the violence—especially warriors—to draw their attention to the damaging aspects of certain traditional practices. In parallel, promote cultural exchanges and educational visits to other parts of Uganda to broaden the outlook of certain groups in Karamoja and to bring the local population into the mainstream of Ugandan society.

#### **Recommendations related to small arms:**

- Take action against cross-border criminal groups from Kenya and South Sudan, and strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries to prevent both the flow of arms into Karamoja and cross-border raids.
- Tighten internal control measures to monitor the loss or disappearance of service weapons issued to members of security providers. Establish a system to collect weapons left over from past armed conflicts in districts neighbouring Karamoja.
- Develop specific programmes to raise public awareness of small arms issues and to change public attitudes towards small arms ownership. 📌

# Introduction

## Background

The Karamoja region in north-eastern Uganda is one of the poorest and least developed in the country with more than 80 per cent of the population living in poverty (UNOCHA, 2011, p. 6). For many decades, conflict and armed violence have undermined security and development in the region (Republic of Uganda, 2007). Studies have shown that both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic armed conflicts in Karamoja have hindered development and seriously jeopardized human development goals in the region (Republic of Uganda and UNDP, 2010; Muhereza, 2010a).

Insecurity in the region is compounded by a variety of factors including the lack of adequate resources and infrastructure, deeply rooted cultural practices such as cattle raiding, shifting alliances and rivalry between ethnic groups, and the availability of weapons. Livestock ownership represents an enormous value for the Karamojong and is at the heart of all cultural and social life. Cattle rustling is a cultural practice directly motivated by the desire to own and accumulate livestock. This practice, coupled with competition for vital resources such as water and grazing land, is the main factor fuelling intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflict in the region (Ocan, 1994). Insecurity is further heightened by the availability and use of small arms in the communities, resulting in one of the highest rates of firearms-induced casualties in the world (Bevan, 2008; Mkutu, 2008a).

Different measures have been introduced in recent years to try to reduce the violence and improve security in the region. They focus on increasing security and peace through a variety of development initiatives put in place by the government, civil society, and non-governmental organizations. These include programmes such as the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan (KIDDP), which was recently revised and now comprises the following components: the Karamoja Integrated Development

Plan (KIDP), the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP), and the Karamoja Productive Assets Programme (KPAP).<sup>4</sup>

Security and justice in Karamoja continue to be based on a combination of formal state security and justice providers and traditional leaders. The latter, such as elders and warriors (*Karacunas*), play a key role in defending communities against aggression by other tribes and in the accumulation and recovery of cattle.<sup>5</sup> The extent to which the traditional security system is active or incorporated in formal security and justice provision nevertheless remains unclear.

## Objective of the study

The aim of this study is twofold:

1. To provide a deeper level of understanding of security provision in Karamoja.
2. To determine the patterns and sources of small arms supply in and to the region.

The recommendations aim to influence governmental and non-governmental actors as well as Danish Demining Group (DDG) programming in the region.

## Rationale of the study

Although many studies have looked into security and small arms in Karamoja, gaps exist in these analyses in three particular areas that constitute the focus of this study:

1. Bottom-up focus: In its examination of the roles and practices of security providers the study widens its focus to seek an understanding of the needs, perceptions, and feelings and opinions of both community members and security and justice providers. The starting point is based on the premise that security provision, in addition to making people 'objectively' safer by reducing security incidents and increasing the success rate for case-solving, also entails improving their 'subjective' feeling of security. Whereas issues pertaining to the general security situation in Karamoja

are covered in various other studies, no study currently exists that extensively explores the relationship between the beneficiaries and providers of security services from a bottom-up perspective. This study seeks to do just that with a view to improving programming in the field of security in Karamoja.

2. **Interplay between formal and informal security systems:** There is a lack of literature on the respective roles and functions of the traditional and informal security providers in Karamoja. Although the traditional security system is firmly entrenched and perpetuated by elders and warriors in Karamoja, this aspect of security in the region had not been explored previously. This study examines the performance of tribal warriors and elders alongside that of the formal security providers, i.e. the police, the UPDF, the LDUs, and the LCs.
3. **Small arms supply:** Various studies (Bevan, 2008; Saferworld, 2010; Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007) have concluded that general insecurity in Karamoja, combined with the lack of sufficient and effective security provision, creates a continuous demand for small arms in the region. The first part of this study looks at how to address one aspect of the underlying reasons for small arms demand by improving security and justice provision. There is also, however, a need to address the issue of small arms supply sources. While recent studies such as the one conducted by Saferworld have researched this issue and made constructive recommendations for remedial action, the latest and most thorough studies on sources

### **Box 1** Research Questions

#### *In relation to security provision*

- Who are the security providers in Karamoja and what are their roles?
- What is the status of the population's access to security provision?
- What can be done to improve access to security for all population groups?

#### *In relation to small arms*

- What access to small arms do civilians have in Karamoja?
- What are the sources of small arms (suppliers and routes)?
- What can be done to limit small arms supply to the region?

of small arms supply were carried out in 2006–07 by the Small Arms Survey and the Feinstein International Center. More recent information is thus needed to enable decision-makers to effectively address the weapons supply issue, especially in light of recent developments in the region such as the Lord's Resistance Army's departure from northern Uganda and South Sudan's accession to independence. The study utilizes the information collected by the Small Arms Survey and the Feinstein International Center as a baseline for comparison with recent developments.

## Approach and methodology

This study begins by analysing the three types of conflict outlined in the Karamoja Conflict and Security Assessment (Saferworld, 2010):

- Conflict and insecurity between ethnic groups
- Conflict between the state and Karamojong society
- Conflict and insecurity within ethnic groups.

The study is based on a household survey in the districts of Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto.<sup>6</sup> Due to limited time and resources it was not possible to survey all seven districts of Karamoja (see Map 1). These three districts were selected primarily because of their borders with Kenya and South Sudan, which appears to be relevant from the perspective of the inflow of small arms from neighbouring countries. Moreover, relatively little quantitative information on security-related matters in Amudat and Kaabong is available from other research.

It is important to recognize that the data collected from these three districts is not representative of the overall region of Karamoja due to significant heterogeneity between its districts. Thus, the findings presented in this report should not be projected as generalizations applicable to all Karamoja districts. Though the sampling did not aim specifically at proportional representation of tribes, members of all tribes residing within each surveyed district were interviewed. These included the Matheniko and the Tepeth in Moroto, the Dodoth and the Ik in Kaabong, and the Pokot in Amudat. Major

tribes residing in other districts, such as the Bokora in Napak, the Pian in Nakapiririt, and the Jie in Kotido, were not included in the sample.

This study utilizes a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. It bases its primary reporting on quantitative data collected by means of 2,368 valid household questionnaires. The interviews were conducted in the aforementioned three districts of Karamoja. Qualitative data was gathered through structured interviews and focus group discussions with security providers and communities in both rural and urban areas. The focus group discussions took place in both peri-urban and urban areas. Key informant interviews were also conducted with political leaders, government employees occupying key posts, security provider representatives, local councillors, NGO workers, prominent personalities, and community members. These various qualitative methods were used as a means of securing data triangulation. Extensive desk research was also conducted in support of this study.

Population data (size and number of households) forming the basis of sampling for the study was based on projected population estimates from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics and World Food Programme distribution lists, as well as from information obtained by the research team from local authorities.<sup>7</sup> The Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) method was used as the basis for district and sub-county level sampling.<sup>8</sup> Within each sub-county, villages were then selected based on their geo-demographic (i.e. rural versus peri-urban) proportions. Within each village, enumeration teams selected every *N*th household and males and females were alternately interviewed to ensure gender balance in the sampling.<sup>9</sup> Interviewees had to be at least 14 years old so as to include youths, who are often the perpetrators as well as the victims of violence, but also to exclude youngsters generally considered as children.

Data was entered on-site into a user-friendly database,<sup>10</sup> designed to minimize operator error. Prior to analyses, the data was validated and cleansed using stringent filtering criteria. Entries presenting more than a five per cent error count were invalidated and removed,<sup>11</sup> although none actually failed to meet the entry criteria.

## Challenges

The lack of up-to-date data on population size presented a challenge. As already mentioned, sampling was based on estimated projections, WFP food distribution lists, and, in Moroto, the DDG's own survey. In certain areas, household numbers changed compared to those indicated in the sampling design due to the movement of pastoralists.

Data on newly formed or restructured sub-counties and parishes was lacking, which presented a further challenge for the study. The research teams discovered that certain parishes that had previously existed in the sampling were no longer in the same sub-counties. In such cases, the research team had to follow the parishes rather than the sub-counties. This should not significantly affect the sample as the total number of parishes remains the same.

Gaining access to certain parishes posed further challenges due to insecurity and bad weather conditions. For these reasons sampling of all parishes in Kaapong, for example, had to be called off. Furthermore, the research team could not obtain permission to interview the UPDF as originally planned, meaning that this foreseen data source had to be dropped from the study.

## Layout of the study

The introduction focuses on general background information about the Karamoja region, the aim and rationale of the study, and the methodology used by the researchers. Subsequent sections deal with the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. More specifically, the second chapter analyses the context in which this research was conducted; the third chapter reports on security providers—both traditional and formal state organs; the fourth chapter looks at the current situation of small arms in Karamoja as seen by the communities; and the fifth chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations. 📄



# Context

Insecurity and weapons in Karamoja are topics that have been widely written about and commented on. This chapter provides a brief introduction to the context of violence and security provision, and disarmament and small arms in Karamoja, based largely on the findings of previous studies.

## Violence and security provision in Karamoja

Karamoja has continued to be affected by violence since the colonial period. During that period the Ugandan state paid virtually no attention to the region. At that time, its interest in Karamoja was limited to trade in ivory and slaves and to ensuring that raiding between local groups did not spill over into neighbouring regions (Mkutu, 2008c). Attention to Karamoja grew during Idi Amin's rule, but in a ruthless fashion. Amin's administration imposed a ban on wearing traditional sheets, and violently enforced it, killing 300 Bokora who were protesting the ban (Mkutu, 2008c, p. 103). In 1984, under the Obote II regime, government armed forces conducted a forceful disarmament operation in Karamoja as a preventive measure purportedly to protect neighbouring communities from attacks by the Karamojong (Mkutu, 2008c).

Various moves aimed at ending the conflict in Karamoja and integrating the region into mainstream national society were initiated by the Yoweri Museveni government and the National Resistance Movement. The Karamoja Development Agency was established and the 'Karamoja Problem' was outlined in a ten-point government manifesto in 1986. Owing to the central authorities' profound lack of understanding of the local dynamics of conflict and peace, however, stabilization efforts gave way to another forceful disarmament operation, which was characterized by grave human rights violations (Mkutu, 2008c, p. 104).

Security in Karamoja has long been elusive. Security provision has focused more on the establishment of the monopoly of the use of force than on

providing protection, security, and development to the population. Hence, security provision in Karamoja has military characteristics. In recent years, however, security provision has also been examined in the light of the security needs of the communities in the region, both by the state and by other development actors (UHCR, 2004).

Security provision in Karamoja today is based on a complex web of security providers representing the state as well as traditional and informal communities. The state security providers such as the UDPF, LDUs, the Anti Stock Theft Unit, and the police are relatively new to the Karamojong, whereas reliance on elders and warriors for security and protection is deeply rooted in their communities. It should be noted that relations are confrontational between some of the security actors listed above, as is the case between the Ugandan state security forces and the warriors (Bevan, 2008; Saferworld, 2010).

## **Disarmament operations: addressing insecurity or fuelling conflict?**

Past attempts to disarm the people of Karamoja were spread over a long period in what proved to be a daunting task. Nine disarmament operations have been conducted in Karamoja since 2001 (Mkutu, 2008c).<sup>12</sup> These can be divided into three distinct phases. The first, implemented between 2 December 2001 and 15 February 2002, was initiated following an escalation of inter-communal violence that caused the displacement of an estimated 10,000 Karamojong who fled to Acholi and Teso, and resulted in the recovery of 9,640 weapons (Mkutu, 2008c, pp. 104–05). The second phase was a military operation, and in the forceful recovery of 854 weapons, according to official figures (Mkutu, 2008c, pp. 106–07). Phase 3 lasted from September 2004 until 2007 and saw the deployment of heavy military weaponry. Cordon and search operations were initiated from that point onwards, leading to serious human rights abuses and deaths. The operations showed little success in terms of weapon recovery, with only between 1,064 and 2,300 weapons collected (Mkutu, 2008c, p. 108).<sup>13</sup>

These disarmament operations have arguably added fuel to the conflict between the state and the Karamojong (see pp. 31–61). Nonetheless, disarmament is generally perceived as a positive goal following years of armed violence that have left people convinced that firearms endanger their livelihoods (Stites and Akabwai, 2009, p. 14). On the other hand, there is widespread resentment towards the UPDF because of their brutality and indiscriminate killing of civilians. In a well-publicized incident in late October 2006, Jie warriors attacked and killed a number of soldiers, and ambushed government facilities in Kotido town, in retaliation for an alleged UPDF massacre at a dance festival in Kotido town (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007, p. 37).

## Types of conflict in Karamoja

The conflict in Karamoja is complex and it would be difficult to classify it under a specific typology. Nonetheless, even though Karamoja has suffered various kinds of conflict over the years, three particular types of conflict seem to have characterized its history: *conflict and insecurity between ethnic groups; conflict between the state and Karamojong society; and conflict and insecurity within ethnic groups.*

The traditional *conflict between tribes in Karamoja* stems from a pastoralist culture of survival and distribution of wealth (Mkutu, 2007a, 2007b; Saferworld, 2010). The traditional culture of cattle raiding and counter-raiding has existed in the communities for centuries; however, this practice has become more lethal due to the widespread availability of more powerful weapons. The tribes within Karamoja and across the border in Kenya and South Sudan have a complex shifting conflict dynamic dictated by the weather, the availability of pasture, and animal disease (Bevan, 2008b, p. 21).

The root cause of the *conflict between the Karamojong and the state* is linked to the pastoralist population's independent way of life and its non-acceptance of the notion of a modern sovereign state, with its monopoly on authority and on the use of force to safeguard that authority. The Karamojong have resisted the authority of external rulers since the colonial era. Post-independence rulers have found it difficult to impose their authority on the

Karamojong (Mkutu, 2008c). The deployment of the UPDF in 2001 to implement a government disarmament programme in Karamoja has yet to yield the desired results. Frequent clashes between the UPDF and warriors testify to the unwillingness of the Karamojong to cede to the demands of the central authorities (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007).

The conflict between the state and the Karamojong may also be attributed to a lack of understanding or integration between traditional and formal state security providers in the region, as well as to the difficulties involved in efforts to administer and overview justice and the rule of law in such a vast and isolated area:

*'Law enforcement by the government and the administration of justice in Karamoja by the Government is [sic] a source of conflict between the state machinery and the local people because two parallel systems of administration of justice are practiced alongside each other. In Karamoja the traditional justice system is based on the value system of the Karamojong and is different from the British system adopted in Uganda. The state system of administration and justice have [sic] failed to incorporate the traditional mechanism of detection and punishment of crime, which according to the local people works within the value system that is clearly understood by the communities' (UHRC, 2004, p. 19).*

The third type of conflict—*within the tribes*—is characterized by high levels of domestic violence, petty crimes, and murders. The mapping by Saferworld (2010, p. 72) provides evidence of high levels of domestic disputes that often result in deaths induced mostly by firearms.

## Small arms and armed violence

Many of the region's security problems are closely linked to the proliferation and misuse of small arms. The historical origin of small arms in the region dates back to the colonial era when firearms entered the Karamoja and Turkana districts in Kenya in exchange for ivory (Mkutu, 2007a, p. 51). It is widely acknowledged that the security situation in Karamoja has deteriorated over the past three decades commensurate with the proliferation of these weapons (Bevan, 2008; Mirzeler, 2000; Mkutu, 2007a; USAID, 2005). Notably,

the proliferation of firearms has made cattle raiding, conflicts over resources, and banditry more lethal and more protracted (Mkutu, 2008a, p. 44).

Most incidents of violence in Karamoja involve the use of firearms. Twenty-five per cent of respondents to the household survey declared that at least one member of their household had been killed or injured between 2005 and 2006, with firearms used in 88 per cent of these cases (Bevan, 2008, p. 37). Armed violence can be linked to raiding activities, assaults (e.g. road banditry), and sexual or gender-based violence. For example, 173 incidents of violence were reported between January and April 2007—most linked to cattle raiding—80 per cent of which occurred on the Ugandan side of the border (CEWARN, 2007, p. 3). It is important to consider the role played by small arms in violence in the region, as they are 'one of the key factors responsible for the continuation of the armed conflicts in Karamoja' (Muhereza, 2010, p. 38).

The deployment of the UPDF to disarm the communities seems to have had some impact on the general security situation. Stites and Akabwai (2009, p. 27) report that '*... while there were still occasional security incidents at the kraals at barracks, the threat of large raids had declined compared to when the animals were housed in the traditional kraals.*' In the same study, however, respondents complained about increased insecurity inside their *Manyattas*, citing '*the removal of guns as the direct cause of this development and they blame the "unevenness" of disarmament for the increased attacks on their homes*' (Stites and Akabwai, 2009, p. 30).

Fear of imbalanced disarmament appears to be fuelling a desire to retain possession of weapons in some communities. Disarmed communities feel threatened by communities that have not yet been disarmed (Bevan, 2008, p. 64). This was also confirmed in communities in Kaabong, where a member of a youth focus group interviewed by the research team said: '*The Jie are the main raiders, they still have guns. They loot our sorghum since the animals cannot be found in the homes as they have been taken to the protected kraals.*' Similarly, a focus group of women in Moroto said: '*Tepeth people raid our animals because they still have weapons.*'

Communities seem to have somewhat ambivalent views about the possession of weapons. While they generally considered that weapons create difficult situations and generate armed violence, they gave a negative reply

when asked if there were too many guns in their respective communities (Bevan, 2008, p.63).

Weapons in Karamoja would appear to originate both from within Uganda and from neighbouring countries (Bevan, 2008). Various indirect tracing methods were used to help identify the sources of the arms inflow into Karamoja. These included an examination of differential prices for weapons and ammunition types, factors that can indicate the most likely sources of origin, complemented by the results of the population-based survey conducted for this study. 📄

# Findings on Security Provision in Karamoja

This chapter first briefly deals with the current security situation in Karamoja, and then examines public perceptions of ‘who’ provides security and the roles that each security provider (both formal and non-formal) plays in the communities. It goes on to examine how people view the accessibility of these security providers as well as relations between them and the communities. The research team’s reflections on what might be done to improve access to security for all population groups are presented in the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

## Security in Karamoja

The security situation in Karamoja has improved in recent years. Most focus groups and key informants agreed that community safety and security has improved compared to three to five years ago, despite persistent violence and the significant presence of small arms. Respondents in Kaabong and Moroto observed that, compared to the period between 2006 and 2008,<sup>14</sup> the massive, culturally sanctioned raiding by the Jie in Kotido, the Dodoth in Kaabong, the Matheniko in Moroto, and the Pokot in Amudat had mostly stopped (HRW, 2007).

According to focus group respondents, many locations previously considered ‘no-go’ areas for security reasons are now accessible. These include places such as Loyoro in Kaabong, Katikekile and Nakonyen in Moroto, and Kaichom in Karita sub-county. The improved security has made communities feel safer in performing their daily activities. Focus groups reported that in Amudat and Moroto, for example, people now have less fear of coming under small arms fire when they go out to collect firewood and fruit. A key informant in Moroto said: *‘There are now more people on the road going about their own business... there is more walking on the road or riding a bicycle between Nadunget and Kangole.’*

Despite improvements in the security situation, however, certain areas remain volatile, limiting mobility in some cases. One circumspect key informant said: *'The government says community safety and security has changed in terms of degree, but for me, I think there is [only] a minimal change.'* Another respondent noted: *'The safety of the people in the villages had improved because they lost their livestock, and hence, became less vulnerable to raids.'* As mentioned earlier, armed violence is evident across all three types of conflict in Karamoja: inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, and between security providers and the Karamojong.

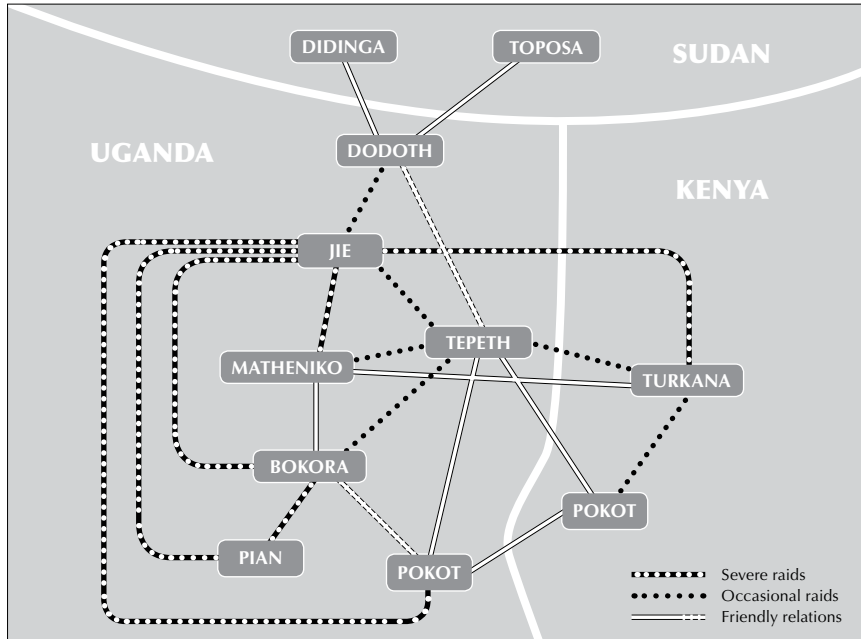
Small arms are used in raids and counter-raids between tribes, causing casualties. According to most key informants, small arms are still present in the communities—despite official claims that the Karamojong have effectively been disarmed—and are being used by warriors to steal livestock from other tribes. Figure 1 below gives an indication of the conflictual relationships between the different tribes. It should be said, however, that these relationships are constantly evolving, either for better or for worse. There is still a high level of insecurity in Karamoja, characterized by cattle raids, road ambushes, and killings (UNOCHA, 2011). Similarly, though clashes have become less frequent recently, key informants and focus groups pointed out that the number of clashes resulting in death or injury among soldiers and warriors remains significant.<sup>15</sup> In parallel, night raids and theft targeting livestock, food, and other household items within communities still persist at village level.

Another factor affecting the security situation is the changing dynamic of raids, which have become smaller in scale and more commercially oriented than in the past. The role of traditional leaders in these raids has become unclear, unlike in the past when they openly sanctioned the larger-scale, more traditional raids that used to be the norm. Focus groups confirmed that current raids are carried out by small groups of between five and twenty people, only a handful of whom usually carry small arms (interview with the Regional Internal Security Officer/RISO North).

The involvement of youngsters in raids and cattle rustling continues. In this regard, the RISO North-East said: *'There are fewer guns still in use, and the majority are in the hands of young boys.'* This view was echoed by a respondent in Kaabong district, who said: *'In June 2010, the Jie attempted to carry out a massive raid in Kalapata sub-county in Kaabong district. They were repulsed by the*



**Figure 1** General conflict patterns between ethnic groups in Karamoja



Note: Given the dynamic nature of these conflicts, the map may rapidly become outdated.

*UPDF and 46 of them were killed, and all of them were children.* It should be recalled, however, that young boys normally become warriors at the age of around 13, and have families by the time they are 15 or 16. Although the initiation of young children into warriorhood has long been rooted in society, their progressive involvement in raids may be a more recent phenomenon, according to the RISO North-East.

## Security provision

### *Security providers in Karamoja*

This section examines the specific responsibilities of security providers. Given the complexity of formal and informal security provision, the survey asked respondents to indicate which agencies or individuals actually provide them with security.

Communities do not make a big distinction between traditional and formal security providers in terms of law and order maintenance. They identified the following main security providers: (1) Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF); (2) Local Defence Unit (LDU); (3) police; (4) Local Councils (LCs); (5) elders; and (6) warriors. (see Box 2 for details of security providers present in Karamoja).

## **Box 2** Security Providers in Karamoja

### *Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF)*

The UPDF—the national armed forces of Uganda—are tasked with implementing a disarmament programme in Karamoja, and also fulfil judicial functions there through military courts where detained warriors are tried. Furthermore, the UPDF has deployed in Karamoja to protect and recover livestock.

The UPDF conducts forceful 'cordon, search and disarm' operations in Karamoja, often involving the encirclement of villages and searches for small arms in village homes. UPDF personnel have been accused of grave human rights abuses, including arbitrary killings and mistreatment of local people in Karamoja (Mkutu, 2008c, p.20).

### *Local Defence Unit (LDU)*

The LDUs are paramilitary units whose members are recruited from the local community. LDU activities focus on protection against cattle raids and armed banditry, and the recovery of stolen cattle. Administratively and operationally LDUs report to the UPDF and in most cases LDU and UPDF personnel co-habit. The LDUs accompany herders and their cattle during their searches for grazing land and water sources. The Karamojong apparent appreciation of LDUs appears to derive from

their effectiveness in countering cattle raids, a capability attributed to their knowledge of raiding practices and raider escape routes (UHRC, 2004).

### *Police*

The police are responsible for maintaining law and order. The role of the police in Karamoja is complicated by the region's chronic lawlessness and the presence of small arms, compounded by insufficient police personnel and transport to cover the entire area. A police Anti Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) trained to combat cattle rustling is also specifically tasked with addressing security issues involving criminals and people who still possess weapons or who have rearmed themselves. Despite being armed and specially trained to deal with raiding and cattle theft, the ASTU lacks the level of local public support and trust enjoyed by the LDUs.

### *Local Councils*

A Local Council (LC) is a form of elected local government within the districts of Uganda. There are five LC levels, each representing a specific administrative entity.<sup>16</sup> Local Councils have close contacts with the population and are in most cases responsible for addressing issues related to justice and security provision.

In the past some LC members have been accused of instigating and benefiting from cattle raids, although only a limited number of them have been apprehended by the UPDF.

#### Elders

Elders are initiated adult male members of Karamojong society who belong to specific age and generation sets, and who are repositories of indigenous knowledge. Elders are respected in the community and are effective in ensuring certain aspects of security in society. It is generally perceived that they had more authority in the past, when raids were culturally sanctioned. Despite the apparent recent decline in their authority, elders still have a significant say in matters pertaining to community security.

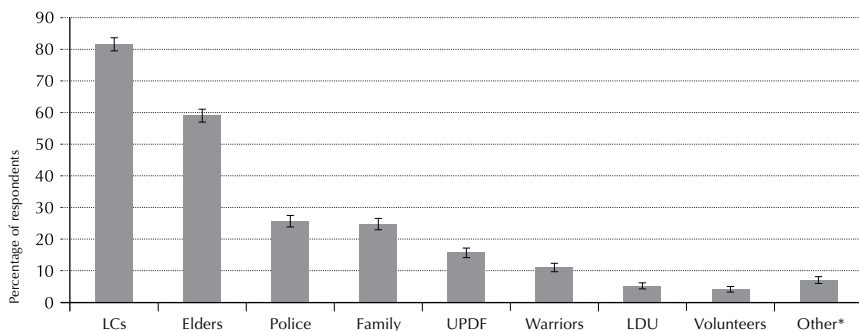
#### Warriors

The Karamojong warriors (*Karacuna*) have significant influence on security and conflict dynamics in Karamoja. *Karacuna* means both youth and warrior in the local language. Male youths are considered warriors by the time they reach the age of 13 or thereabouts. Warriors are responsible for protecting cattle from other raiding tribes, recovering lost or stolen cattle, and conducting raids against other tribes as instructed by the elders. Recently, the role of the *Karacuna* as security providers in the communities seems to have undergone a change; they are seen as increasingly disrespectful towards the elders, and no longer seek their permission to carry out traditional raids. Ownership of small arms would appear to have made youths more powerful than the elders and eroded their authority.

### Role of security providers across security functions

The security providers considered most responsible for maintaining law and order at community level are the LCs (82%), followed by the elders (59%), the police (26%), and the family (25%) (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2** Security providers responsible for maintaining law and order



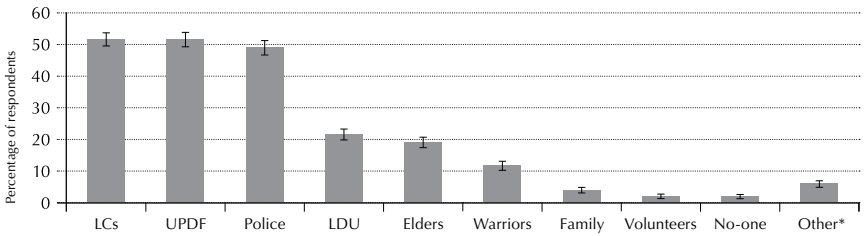
\*Includes youths, NGOs/CBO, don't knows, and government authorities, among others. Each of these groups represents less than 2% of all respondents.

**Notes:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

The LCs, the UPDF, and the police are considered to have primary responsibility for arresting and detaining wrongdoers, criminals, and cattle raiders. The findings suggest that LCs (52%), the UPDF (52%), and the police (49%) are seen as almost equally responsible for these tasks (see Figure 3). These almost equal percentages may be attributable to the survey questions that asked respondents to rate performance in arresting and detaining offenders in three different scenarios: 1) wrongdoing in the community, normally dealt with by the LCs; 2) criminal offences, normally dealt with by the police; and 3) cattle rustling, normally dealt with by the UPDF.

**Figure 3** Security providers responsible for arresting criminals and cattle raiders



\*Includes youths, don't knows, and government authorities, among others. Each of these groups represents less than 2% of all respondents.

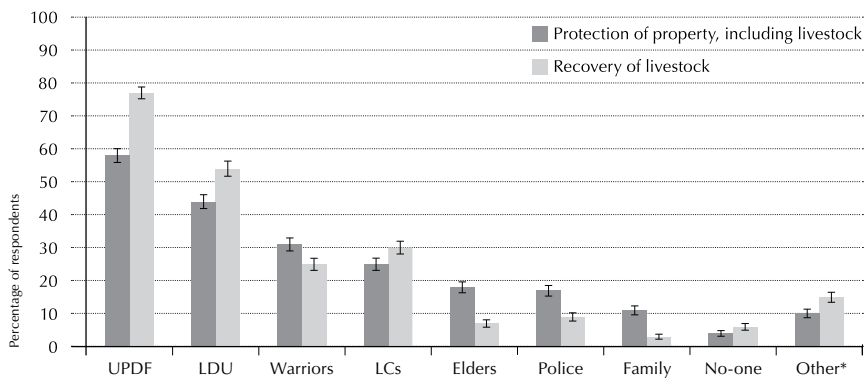
**Notes:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

Livestock protection and recovery as well as security against raids are mostly seen as the responsibility of the UPDF and the LDUs. For example, Figure 4 shows that 58 per cent of respondents consider the UPDF responsible for protecting property, including livestock, and 77 per cent for recovering stolen livestock.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Figure 4 also reveals that LDUs are viewed as responsible for protecting property, including livestock, and for recovering stolen livestock by 44 and 54 per cent of respondents, respectively. The fact that the UPDF and the LDU have been actively involved in the defence of protected Kraals (where cattle are kept at night), and accompany the herders and their cattle during their searches for grazing land, may have had a bearing on these findings. It should be noted, however, that, even though a sizeable portion of the population accepts that the UPDF is responsible for these tasks, many people feel they cannot be trusted in that role. Moreover, UPDF personnel have been accused of stealing property and livestock, and of not

returning livestock they recover to the owners.<sup>18</sup> Finally, Figure 4 also shows that a number of people believe that no-one in particular is responsible for the protection of property (4%) or the recovery of livestock (6%).

**Figure 4** Security providers responsible for the protection of property, including livestock, and the recovery of livestock



\*Includes volunteers, oneself (protection of livestock:1%), members of parliament, and NBO/CBO. Each group represents less than 2% of all respondents.

Notes: Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

Although the role of warriors in providing security in their communities is sometimes perceived to have diminished, the communities themselves consider that it remains significant.<sup>19</sup> Almost three out of ten people believe that the warriors are responsible for providing community security (see Figure 4). While this may seem modest compared to the UPDF percentage, it is nonetheless significant, and indicates that communities still rely on the warriors to protect their livestock. In most cases, warriors also assist the UPDF and the LDU in tracking down raiders and stolen livestock. This shows that, despite the increased presence of formal security providers, the traditional security system is still in place. It is also an indication that, even if young people have become more powerful than the elders and no longer heed their instructions as much as they did in the past, they still play a significant role in protecting and recovering cattle in a context of persistent inter-tribal raids.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that in Karamoja, as in most societies, inter-generational tensions have emerged. This does not however alter the

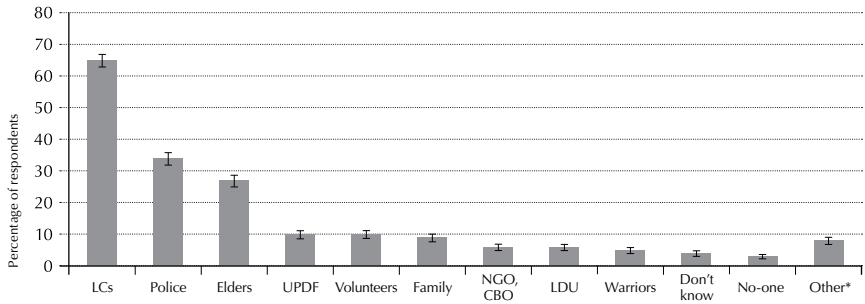
fact that, even though elders and others in the communities frequently complain about the warriors being undisciplined and unresponsive to their concerns, they are the ones whose assistance is solicited when security issues arise (focus group interviews).

A closer look at who is perceived to provide protection from state actors such as the UPDF, the LDU, and the police uncovers an interesting perspective on the security situation in Karamoja, as illustrated in Figure 5. Most respondents (65%) believe that LCs are the main and most suitable protectors in this regard, followed by the police (34%), even though they are both state bodies themselves. These findings may at least partially reflect the fact that LCs and the police are more permanent fixtures in society than the UPDF whose presence in Karamoja is in principle temporary. The perceived role of elders in providing such protection is also significant (27%).

Importantly, despite the high ranking of LCs with respect to protection against state actors, they are powerless to assume such responsibility. The UPDF are regarded as state perpetrators of violence against the population. This is clearly illustrated in a later section which reports that almost three-quarters of respondents stated they experienced physical violence inflicted by the UPDF (see Figure 21). The LCs are the only avenue of recourse available to victims of such abuse since the formal legal system that should normally address these cases is either inaccessible or unknown to them. Yet, as mentioned above, LCs are powerless to deal with the cases that are reported to them. Somewhat surprisingly, given the reputation of the UPDF for violence against civilians, ten per cent of respondents considered them responsible for providing communities with protection and security vis-à-vis state actors (see Figure 5).

The findings above suggest a conflictual relationship between communities and state entities. This may result in communities rejecting the latter, particularly the UPDF, as unwelcome outsiders. Communities distrust the UPDF, even though they appear to accept the UPDF role in protecting and retrieving raided cattle, albeit on a case-by-case basis. This distrust appears to be reflected in the tendency of communities to turn to LCs for protection against state violence and criminal behaviour, and their unfaltering reliance on the warriors as the primary defenders of their lives and assets.

**Figure 5** Security providers that protect communities from violent or criminal state actors



\*Includes the Internal Security Organization, members of parliament, and government authorities, among others. Each group represents less than 2% of all respondents.

**Notes:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

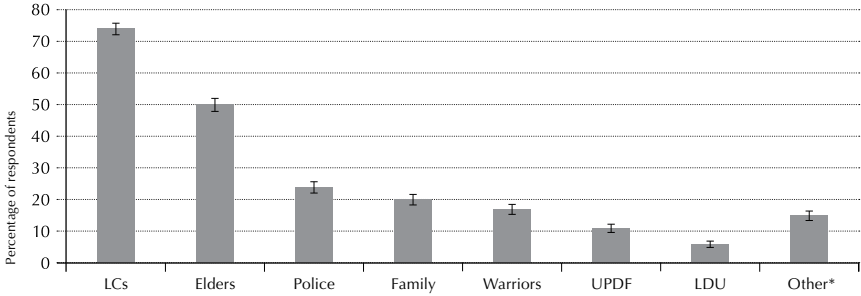
**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

These findings also speak to a number of residual issues within Karamojong society. Prominent among them are the hostility of the Karamojong towards state security forces, their fiercely independent nature, and their warrior traditions, which are evidently hard to reconcile with state-imposed law and order. This all means that the Karamojong appear to be trapped between a state-imposed formal security model and the traditional security system they have adhered to for centuries.

Intra-community conflict and dispute resolution, as highlighted in Figure 6, is seen as primarily the responsibility of LCs (74%) and elders (50%). The police, family, and warriors are also perceived as having this role, but to a lesser extent. The preponderant reliance on LCs and elders may be due to their availability and accessibility as well as their understanding of the context, in contrast to the police who have no fixed presence in communities. Most conflictual situations within communities are between families, husbands and wives, and individuals.<sup>21</sup> To address them, those involved generally seek the intervention of their LCs, especially in rural areas where the LC may be the only option available. LCs are also more often than not the preferred option in urban areas. This is because they are more easily accessible than other bodies. Moreover, recourse to LCs does not entail the same degree of complicated procedures—sometimes accompanied by demands

for bribes—reportedly experienced by people when they seek police intervention.

**Figure 6** Security providers engaged in resolving community level conflicts and disputes



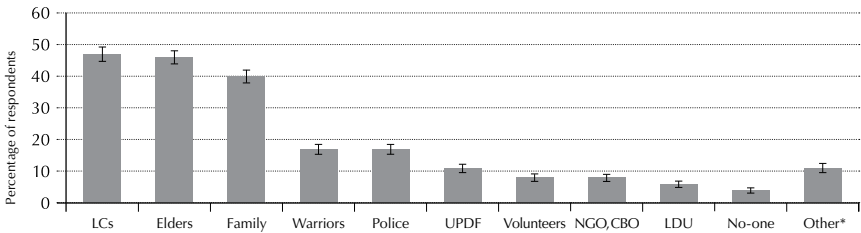
\* Includes volunteers, youths, and the Internal Security Organization, among others. Each group represents less than 5% of all respondents.

**Notes:** Respondents are permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

The protection of women and children is generally considered a traditional role, with LCs (47%), elders (46%), and the family (40%) seen as being mainly responsible for this task (see Figure 7). Both the police and warriors are seen as sharing this responsibility, each by 17 per cent of respondents. It should however be noted that women in Karamoja traditionally have less say than men, and their views may therefore reflect traditional choices that prioritize LCs, elders, and families (UNFPA, 2009, p. 52).

**Figure 7** Security providers protecting women and children



\* Includes men, women, don't know, and not applicable. Each group represents less than 3% of all respondents.

**Notes:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.



The role of the police is seen as preponderant in the arrest and detention of alleged criminals (see Figure 3). When disaggregated by rural and peri-urban areas, however, data shows that the police role in maintaining law and order is perceived as being far more important in peri-urban areas (70%) than in rural areas (19%). This is because there is a far greater police presence in peri-urban areas than in rural areas, where they are hardly present at all. This uneven police presence may also be due to rural pastoralist communities placing greater reliance on traditional mechanisms for their defence and dispute settlement than town dwellers, who may tend to look more to the police for such assistance.

When disaggregated by district, the study shows that the role of elders in law and order maintenance is regarded as much more important by respondents in Amudat (75%) than by those in Moroto (49%), with Kaabong in between (62%). More than half of respondents acknowledged the role of elders in providing protection from criminals and safety for women and children in their communities. The wide percentage spread between Amudat and Moroto may be due to the reported declining influence of elders in peri-urban regions compared to their more prominent role in rural areas, coupled with the fact that Amudat has more peri-urban neighbourhoods than other districts.

### *Provision of protection from violence related to three conflict types<sup>22</sup>*

The vast majority of respondents said they would seek active protection in the event of an outbreak of any of the three categories of conflict or violence mentioned earlier, namely: conflict and insecurity between ethnic groups; conflict between the state and Karamojong society; and conflict and insecurity within communities (Saferworld, 2010). The study shows that 93 per cent of respondents would seek protection in the first scenario, 90 per cent in the second, and 96 per cent in the third. Still, an important minority said they would not turn to anyone at all for protection in the event of inter-ethnic violence (7%, see Figure 8), threats of violence from the state (8%, see Figure 10), or violence within the community (4%, see Figure 11). These findings reflect high levels of distrust within communities regarding the capacities of their

local security providers to provide appropriate protection and assistance in a given emergency situation.

In situations of inter-ethnic violence, the findings suggest that 44 per cent of communities solicit the help of their LCs, 22 per cent would call in the police, and 17 per cent would seek UPDF intervention.

Responses differ considerably between districts (see Figure 9). For example, in Moroto, 13 per cent of respondents reported they would not turn to anyone if inter-ethnic violence erupted, while all respondents in Amudat said they would call in assistance if such violence broke out in their communities (see Figure 9). In Moroto, half of all respondents stated they would seek LC intervention, and 45 per cent of those surveyed in Kaabong said they would do likewise (see Figure 9). In Amudat, the number of people who said they would call in the police, the UPDF, or LCs were statistically almost equal (26, 29, and 30 per cent, respectively).

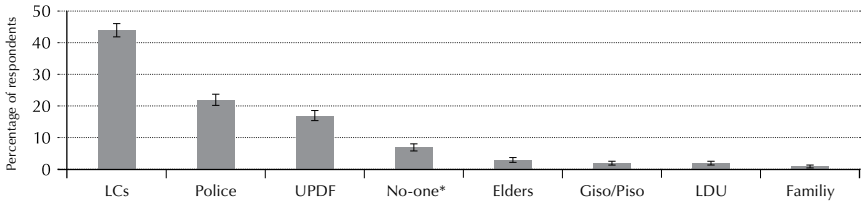
These results appear to show that Amudat has the greatest overall confidence of any district in security providers' capacities to respond to inter-ethnic violence. Furthermore, Amudat respondents expressed almost equal confidence in LCs, the police, and the UPDF in this respect. In Moroto, an important minority (13%) seems to have no confidence whatsoever in the capacity of any security entity to address situations of inter-ethnic violence (see Figure 9).

Communities generally feel that LCs have primary responsibility for protecting them against threats of state violence. In the event of such violence, as shown in Figure 10, the majority of respondents (47%) said they would seek assistance from LCs, again followed by the police (26%). The third biggest group of respondents (8%) said they would not seek assistance from anyone, suggesting that a significant number of community members have little confidence in any security organization. In effect, the findings observed in the previous section (community distrust towards state security providers) are replicated here.

Focus groups confirmed that most people would turn to the LC-V (district/city) chairperson if they were threatened by the UPDF or other state actors. This is because the LC-V, although part of government, is regarded as a body that is representative of the people that will listen to and act upon

community concerns over alleged or threatened state violence. If a LC-V is unable to resolve an issue, it has the power to refer it to a higher authority.

**Figure 8** Who would you turn to in case of inter-ethnic violence?

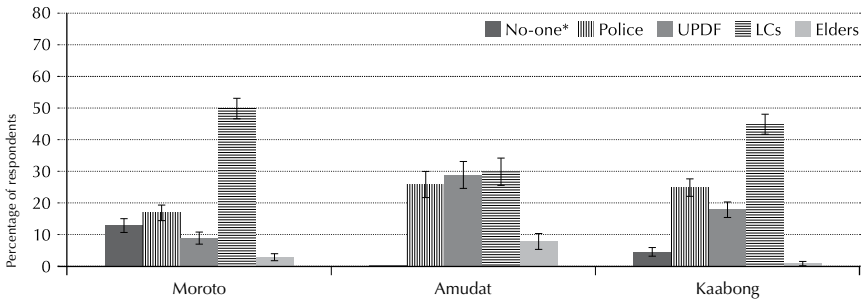


\*These respondents said they would not seek protection from anyone; an additional 2% said they did not know to whom they would turn.

Notes: Respondents were permitted one response. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

**Figure 9** Who would you turn to in case of inter-ethnic violence? By district

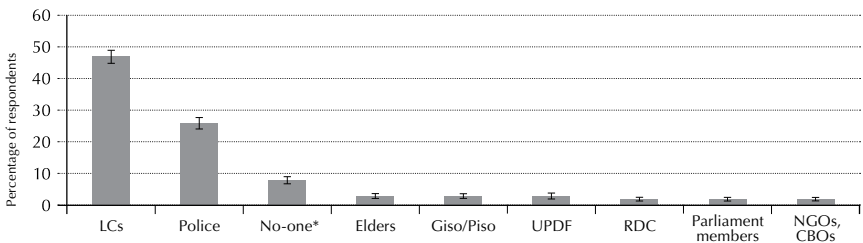


\* Respondents who said they would not turn to anyone.

Notes: Respondents were permitted one response. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

**Figure 10** Who would you turn to in case of threats of violence from the state?



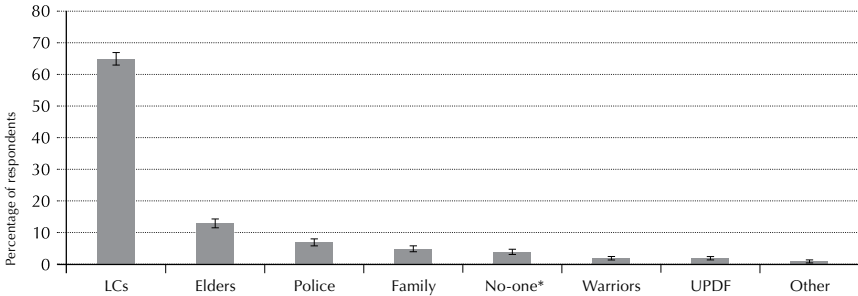
\* Respondents who said they would not turn to anyone. Two per cent of data represented 'other' and 'don't know' responses.

Notes: Respondents were allowed one response. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

Figure 11 shows that a majority of community inhabitants would call on the protection of LCs if they were threatened with state violence, or to counter intra-community crime and violence. In such cases, almost all respondents (96%) would seek protection from one source or another, the majority (65%) from LCs. The elders would be their second choice (13%), while the police and families were cited by only seven and five per cent of respondents, respectively. Other options received an even lower confidence rating (see Figure 11). As discussed in the previous section, the widespread trust in LCs and elders stems from their accessibility and understanding of local traditions, knowledge that helps them to solve problems affecting communities. Unlike LCs, the police are not present in the communities and are therefore less accessible. Focus groups of male youths in Amudat said that elders have the authority to order punishment for aggressive behaviour, including by youths, and thus contribute to stability—an indication that a strong traditional security system is still in place in Karamoja.

**Figure 11** Who would you turn to in case of violence within the community?



\* Respondents who said they would not turn to anyone.

**Notes:** Respondents are permitted one response. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

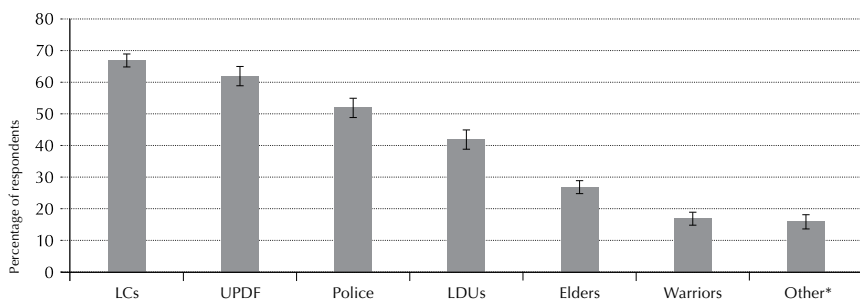
Significantly, findings showed that warriors were the least trusted of all state and non-state security providers, with the exception of the UPDF. Focus groups also confirmed a lack of positive feedback on the warriors from survey participants. A possible explanation is that the warriors do not always obey established authority (neither traditional nor state) and tend to be an isolated group. Furthermore, warriors usually resort to violence during their

raids and livestock recovery operations, reinforcing a commonly held view that they cannot be trusted to provide protection against violence.<sup>23</sup>

### *Ideal security providers*

LCs were the preferred security provider of a majority of respondents (67%), closely followed by the UPDF (62%), with the police in third place (52%) (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12** Ideal security provider



\*Includes volunteers (4%) and NGOs (3%), among others.

**Notes:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

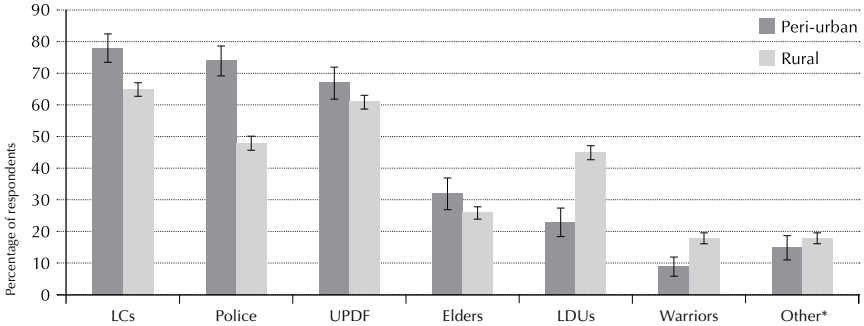
**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

A focus group of male youths in rural Kaabong noted that LC-1s are important as they communicate well both with formal security providers and sub-county authorities, and thus give voice to villagers. Respondents in peri-urban areas were more emphatic than their counterparts in rural areas in their choice of LCs (78%) and the police (74%) as their preferred security providers (see Figure 13).

Variations between regions in the choice of security providers may stem from the fact that rural areas face a greater threat from armed elements than peri-urban areas, and are thus more inclined than the latter to seek protection from armed security providers. Figure 13, for example, shows that rural areas see a larger role for LDUs (45%) than peri-urban areas. This is because pastoralists in rural areas are by the very nature of their lifestyles and livelihoods more exposed to cattle raiding than inhabitants of peri-urban areas who focus more on trade and other services. Moreover, the role of LDUs in

countering cattle raiders in rural areas is now perceived as a necessity given that the *Karacuna* lack weapons as a result of government disarmament operations. While communities still tend to rely on the elders and LCs to mediate conflict situations, they may at times find it necessary to call in the firepower of the LDUs or the UPDF to combat hardcore raiders.

**Figure 13** Ideal security provider, by peri-urban, rural regions



\*Includes volunteers, sub-county chiefs, community members, and NGOs/CBOs, among others. Each group represents less than 10% of all respondents of each geo-demographic region (i.e. peri-urban and rural regions).

Notes: Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

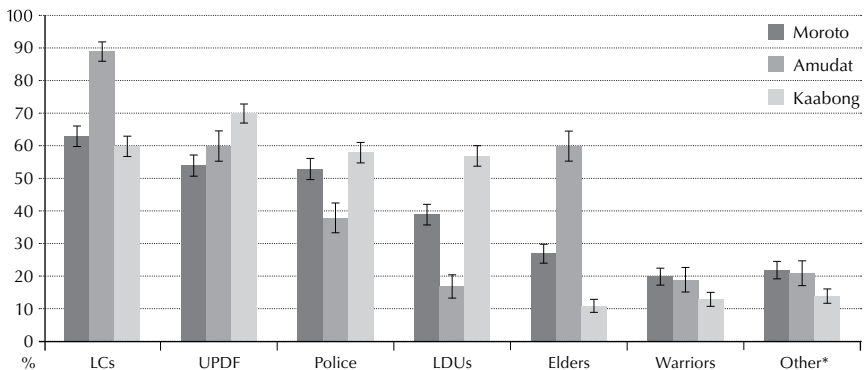
Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

Variations also exist between districts in the choice of security providers as well as in their general attitudes towards them individually. In Amudat and Moroto, for instance, LCs were the preferred choice (89% and 63%, respectively), whereas the UPDF was designated the ideal security provider by respondents in Kaabong (70%). In Amudat, LCs and elders were rated (89% and 60%, respectively) far higher than in both Moroto and Kaabong (Moroto: 63% and 27%, respectively; Kaabong: 60% and 11%, respectively). In Kaabong, the UPDF and the LDU came first (70% and 57%, respectively), in contrast to their far lower rating in Moroto and Amudat (Moroto: 54% and 60%, respectively; Amudat: 39% and 17%, respectively). These strong Kaabong ratings may be motivated by the fiercely conflictual relationship between the Do-doth of Kaabong and the Jie of Kotido that necessitates the intervention of armed LDUs to deal with frequent raiding and counter raiding. Finally, the police and LDUs fared only modestly in Amudat (38% and 17%, respectively)

compared to their higher rating in both Moroto and Kaabong (Moroto: 53% and 39%, respectively; Kaabong: 58% and 57%, respectively).

The UPDF and the police were rated almost equally in Moroto (54% versus 53%, respectively), while in both Amudat and Kaabong, the UPDF were favoured far more than the police (Amudat: 60% versus 38%, respectively; Kaabong: 70% versus 58%, respectively).

**Figure 14** Ideal security provider, by district



\* Includes volunteers, NGOs/CBOs, community members, don't knows, and the Internal Security Organization, among others. Each group represents less than 10% of all respondents of each district.

Notes: Respondents were permitted multiple responses. Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

An interesting finding is the significant portion of respondents who view the UPDF as the ideal security provider, given that the UPDF has been depicted as one of the most violent and least trustworthy security providers (see section below on the relationship between security providers and communities). This nevertheless also corresponds to the finding reported in the previous section, namely that communities would most likely call on the UPDF if they required protection against cattle raiders or assistance to retrieve stolen livestock. This apparent discrepancy may be due to the fact that LCs are unarmed and are therefore only geared to address security incidents that do not involve small arms. This incapacity to deal with situations of armed violence has undermined the authority of LCs, as well as that of the elders.

## Population's access to security provision

This section covers the findings of research that aimed to gain a more thorough understanding of the population's access to security provision in Karamoja in terms of three main parameters:

- Community assessment of the trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, and fairness of security providers
- Presence of formal security providers in communities
- Relationship between security providers and the communities

### *Community assessment of the trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, and fairness of security providers*

On a scale of 0 to 5, respondents rated the security providers in terms of their trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, and fairness in addressing security issues. The assessment aimed to find out how communities perceive both formal and traditional security providers within the framework of these criteria (see Figure 15).

LCs and the elders were considered the most trustworthy security providers overall. Interestingly, respondents expressed a low level of trust in all other security providers, especially in the UPDF, warriors, and LDUs. These findings were echoed by focus groups, including a group of mixed women in Amudat, who made a point of indicating that their LC-1 punishes criminals in most cases.

Respondents gave the trustworthiness of LC-1s a slightly higher rating than their efficiency (for example, the group of mixed women referred to above indicated that LCs are sometimes slow in addressing security cases). Similarly, elders also rated the trustworthiness of LCs higher than their efficiency. LC-1s and elders were seen as the most accessible security providers, followed by the warriors.

The accessibility of state security providers such as the UPDF, the LDU, and the police received low ratings. For the police this was understandable given their lack of presence in most places, but was less so as regards the UPDF who are present in communities. Focus groups signalled that the



UPDF were sometimes late in taking action on security issues, and were difficult to reach, especially at night; most focus groups in Kaabong and Moroto stated that the UPDF either did not patrol at night or did not respond to emergencies when they were out on patrol.

State security providers were perceived as the least consultative in their approach to security provision. The UPDF, followed by the LDU and the police, were considered the worst offenders in this respect. The non-consultative approach of the UPDF is clearly displayed in the manner they conduct disarmament operations. Focus groups said that during these operations the UPDF encircle their villages, beat and torture the men, and refuse to listen to them.

The perceived lack of consultation by the UPDF with communities, as well as with other local security providers such as LCs, may be attributable to the attitude of UPDF personnel, most of whom appear to view Karamoja society as largely alien. This can make dispute settlement or physical intervention problematic, as UPDF commanders may tend to regard all parties as complicit, particularly in raiding and counter-raiding incidents. It may also indicate why the UPDF reportedly severely mistreats people in Karamoja, irrespective of whether or not they have committed an offence.

In ratings for even-handedness in the conduct of their work to settle security-related issues, LCs and elders were considered the fairest, whereas the police and the UPDF were rated the least fair. Focus groups claimed the police are often corrupt and ask for bribes before accepting to deal with cases or to free detainees.<sup>24</sup> The UPDF have also been known to detain people and to force them to surrender small arms. It was mentioned that in certain instances, if the captives did not possess small arms, their relatives were coerced into buying weapons in order to use them as ransom for their release. A group of mixed women in Kaabong said the UPDF falsely accused them of hiding weapons and insisted that they hand them over although they had none.

The study showed that women and men have slightly different perceptions of security provision. Overall, men rated elders and LC-1s more favourably than women. A possible explanation for this variance is that most LCs and elders are men and traditionally women are not treated equally or well

by men in Karamoja. It could also reflect the fact that women's security concerns may be different from those of men (UNFPA, 2009, p. 47).<sup>25</sup> The gender aspect of security in Karamoja merits more thorough and targeted research.

Figure 19 shows that levels of trust in security providers vary significantly between districts. For example: the police in Amudat have a far lower overall rating than their counterparts in Kaabong and Moroto; the UPDF are rated higher in Kaabong than in Amudat and Moroto; LDUs are favoured much less in Amudat than in Maroto and Kaabong; the rating for warriors in Kaabong is significantly higher than in Amudat and Moroto; elders fare much better in Amudat than in either Kaabong or Moroto; and LCs are rated almost equally by the three districts. All three districts rate LCs and elders higher than the other four security providers (see Figure 16).

The favourable ratings for LCs again points to the importance of their presence in communities in all three districts. As mentioned earlier, the high rating of the UPDF in Kaabong is linked to the difficult security situation there stemming from the fierce raiding and counter-raiding between the Dodoth in Kaabong and the Jie in Kotido; the firepower of the UPDF was widely perceived as the only viable option to counter these violent inter-tribal clashes. The volatile security situation in Kaabong also explains the higher rating of warriors in Kaabong than in the other two districts.

Important differences also exist in the overall ratings of security and justice providers between peri-urban and rural regions (see Figure 13). For example, the UPDF is favoured more in peri-urban regions than in rural regions. This is because UPDF cordon and search operations are mainly conducted in rural areas, meaning that rural populations suffer most from UPDF abuse. On the other hand, LDUs, warriors, and elders are rated more highly in rural regions than in peri-urban regions because, unlike the UPDF, they are part of the local community and are perceived to be considerate towards their 'own' people. As stated previously, peri-urban communities across all three districts have much better access to the police than populations in rural areas due to the lack of police presence beyond district and trading centres.

These variations signify different levels of insecurity and engagement by security providers between the three districts, suggesting the need for a more

thorough analysis of security actors at district, urban, and peri-urban levels before initiating programmes aimed at improving security in the region.

**Figure 15** Assessment of security and justice providers (average ratings on a scale of 0 to 5)

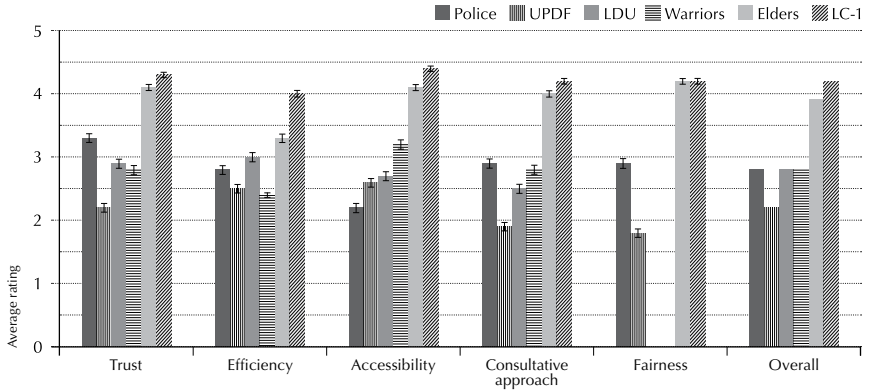


Figure 15 shows respondents' average ratings for each individual security provider in terms of their trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, consultative approach, and fairness. The final category "overall" represents the overall mean for each security provider across these five categories.

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

**Figure 16** Overall perception of security providers, by district

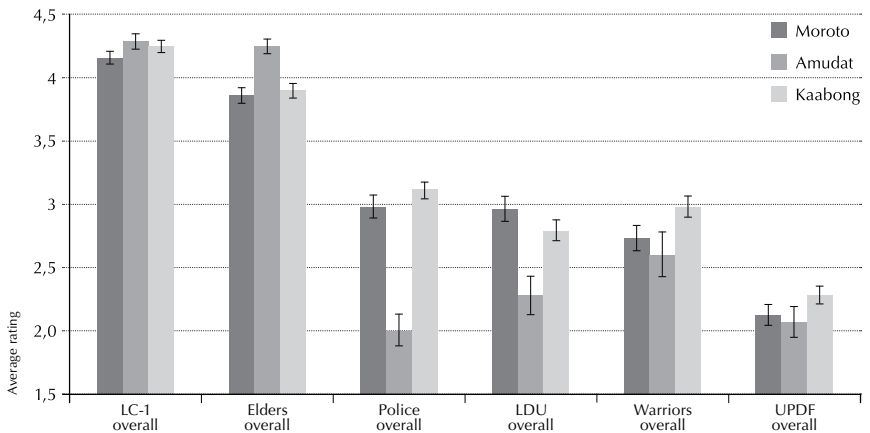


Figure 16 shows respondents' average ratings for each individual security provider which includes trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, consultative approach, and fairness.

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

## *Presence of formal security providers in the community*

Interaction between communities and the police and UPDF is not regular. Even though more than half of community members see UPDF soldiers every day only 19 per cent of them converse with the soldiers at such times. Two factors may explain why this occurs. First, there is a language barrier as most soldiers come from outside of Karamoja and do not speak the local language. Second, UPDF personnel are not geared towards internal security work, and lack training in dealing with the communities.

Only 18 per cent of respondents said they come across the police on a daily basis, nearly half of whom (i.e. 9 per cent overall) confirmed that they speak with the police when their paths cross. Figure 17 gives the average frequency of these sightings and verbal exchanges between community members and police or UPDF personnel. It shows that in both cases they occur far more frequently between UPDF soldiers and community members than between the latter and the police. This is understandable given that the UPDF, contrary to the police, are present in almost all sub-counties.

It is evident from the data in Figure 17 that verbal exchanges between community members and UPDF and police personnel occur far less frequently than would theoretically be possible given how often they see each other. In the case of the UPDF, this lack of verbal contact may be attributed to several factors: 1) the UPDF considers all locals complicit in raiding and counter-raiding; 2) as already mentioned, UPDF soldiers are from outside Karamoja and do not speak the local language; and 3) the UPDF appear to consider the Karamojong alien or even inferior people.<sup>26</sup>

Survey results were further disaggregated by rural and peri-rural regions. Data indicates significant differences in police presence across geo-demographic regions. The police are seen more often in peri-urban regions than in rural regions (4.5 versus 2.7 frequency, respectively), while the UPDF is equally present in peri-urban and rural regions (4.6 frequency for both regions).

Notwithstanding this uneven police presence across Karamoja, the police are seen to interact with community members with almost equal frequency in peri-urban and rural areas where they are stationed (2.7 versus 2.1,

respectively). Police deployment, however, is sparse and even non-existent in some sub-counties.<sup>27</sup> The police are mostly concentrated in district centres. The lowest level of police presence is at sub-county level where it is restricted to sub-county headquarters. Although most sub-counties cover vast geographical areas, they are each assigned only one or two policemen. As stated previously, the police lack transport, manpower, and other resources and are therefore unable to serve the whole population.

**Figure 17** Interaction with police and UPDF

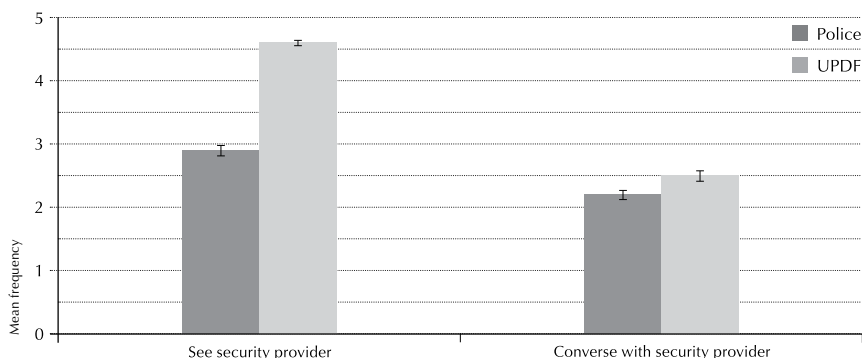


Figure 17 is based on a mounting scale of frequency from 1 to 6. Bars represent the overall mean frequency rating across all respondents.

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval. **Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012

### *Relationship between security providers and the communities*

Relations between security providers—especially state security organs—and communities are strained in Karamoja. There have been well documented cases of gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the UPDF against communities (HRW, 2007). Despite attempts to curb these abuses, there are indications that they are continuing (HRW, 2011). This subsection seeks to give readers a better understanding of how communities view their relationships with security providers in the framework of the following parameters:

- Community perceptions of their relationships with security providers
- Violence against communities perpetrated by security providers
- Violence against security providers perpetrated by communities
- Community openness and assistance to security providers

The three main formal security providers—the police, the UPDF, and the LDU—are the focus of this section. Primary security entities are assessed here in light of previous studies that point to the existence of conflictual relations between the Karamojong and these state organs (Saferworld, 2010; Bevan, 2008).

*a. Community perceptions of relationships with security providers*

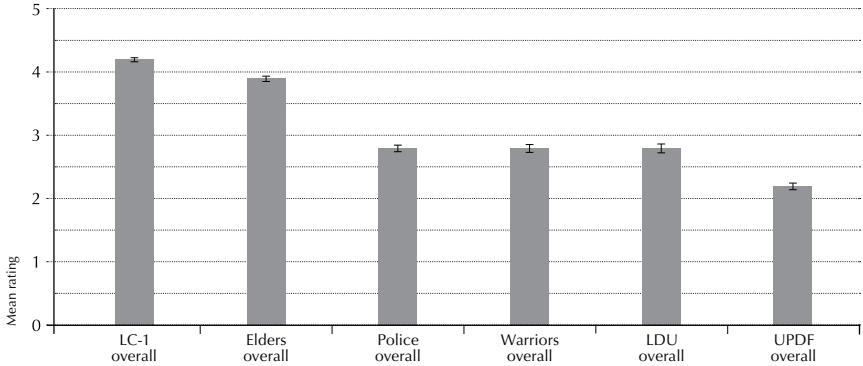
According to the survey results (see Figure 18), communities have a better overall relationship with the police than with the UPDF; their best overall relationships are with the LC-1s, and their worst is with the UPDF.

At district level, however, Amudat respondents gave the police and the UPDF equal overall ratings, but considered the police more favourably than respondents in Kaabong and Moroto (see Figure 19).

Community relationships with security providers vary between peri-urban and urban settings, except for their respective relationships with the police, which are similar. For example, community relations with the UPDF are significantly worse in rural regions than in peri-urban regions. This is because most UPDF are deployed in rural areas where they combat frequent cattle raiding in operations that reportedly sometimes lead to violence including torture against civilians—incidents that occur more frequently in rural areas than elsewhere. In addition, relations between LDUs and communities are seen as significantly worse in peri-urban settings than in other areas. This finding was surprising since LDUs are mostly based in rural areas and do not often come into contact with people in urban areas.

The survey also shows that men report significantly better relations between communities and the police than their female counterparts. Furthermore, men are much more likely to converse with both the police and the UPDF than women. A possible explanation for this finding is that women have been targeted in incidents of rape and violence perpetrated by state security providers.<sup>28</sup>

**Figure 18** Overall ratings for security providers

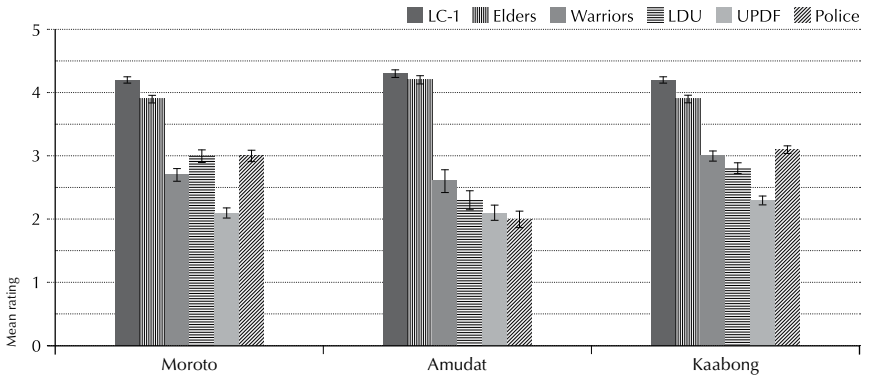


The mean average ratings given in Figure 18 correspond to respondents' perceptions of the trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, consultative approach, and fairness of security providers on a progressive scale of 0 to 4.5.

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

**Figure 19** Mean overall rating for security providers, by district



The mean average ratings given in Figure 19 correspond to respondents' perceptions of the trustworthiness, efficiency, accessibility, consultative approach, and fairness of security providers on a progressive scale of 0 to 4.5.

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

*b. Violence against communities perpetrated by security providers*

Security providers in the region are perceived as a threat by some community members. Well over half of respondents expressed concern that someone in their household may become a victim of violence committed by the UPDF. Moreover, in almost all focus group discussions the UPDF was seen as the most violent of all state security providers. This finding is in line with previous disclosures by Bevan (2008) and Human Rights Watch (2007), which also indicate that the UPDF is violent and a violator of human rights. In one focus group in Kaabong it was said: *'UPDF have poor attitude to people, no respect for rights, they beat, and torture people. No trust for them. They rape, loot and they do not cooperate with people easily. They are rude.'*

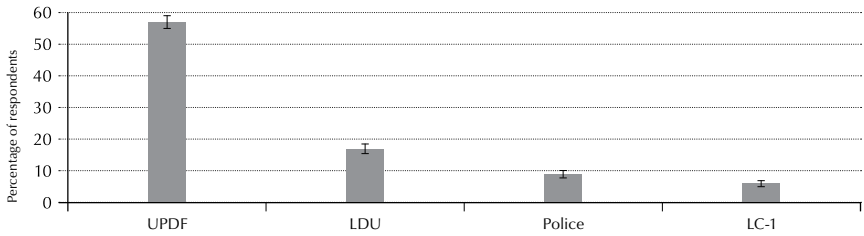
Other security providers are perceived to be a much lower threat, although 17 per cent of respondents consider LDUs a threat, claiming that LDU personnel sometimes get drunk and run away, still holding their weapons. Despite their relatively positive public image, LDU personnel are not well trained and, most importantly, they face an uncertain future because they are recruited on short-term contracts. Another finding showed that the police are considered a greater threat by men (10.4%) than by women (7.9%). This was also the case with regard to the other security providers.

Communities still experience extremely high levels of violence perpetrated by security providers. In particular, community members accuse the UPDF of various serious abuses (see Figure 21). Forty per cent of respondents reported that the UPDF had killed one of their household members in the past year, representing an approximate average of three killings per day among the sampled households. Due to the varying definitions given to a *household*, however (see Methodology Annexe, p. 57),<sup>29</sup> this data may be inflated.

Still, more than three-quarters of household respondents reported having suffered physical violence inflicted by the UPDF, including torture and beatings in some cases. Approximately half the households surveyed said they had been subjected to psychological violence by the UPDF, such as threats and public humiliation. One-third of households alleged that they had committed sexual violence in their homes, while 63 per cent said the UPDF had violated their property, for example through theft or robbery.



**Figure 20** Percentage of respondents who express concern about security provider violence

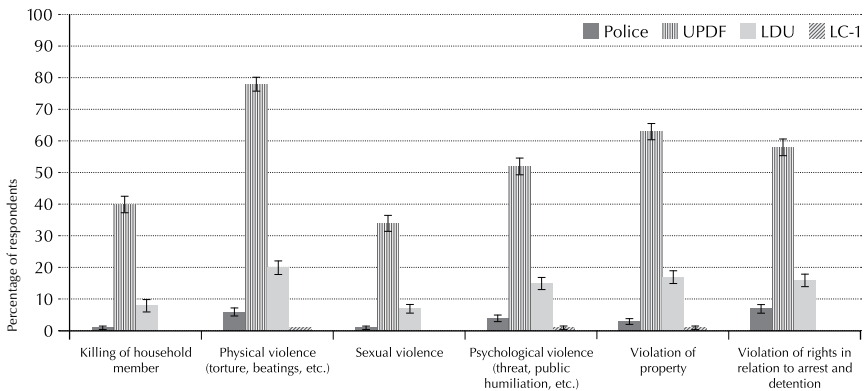


Percentages in Figure 20 represent respondents who said ‘yes’ to the question: ‘Are you concerned that you or someone in your household may become the victim of violence committed by any of the following security providers?’

Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDC/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

**Figure 21** Violence perpetrated by security providers



Percentages represent respondents who answered ‘yes’ to the question: ‘Have you or anyone in your household experienced any of the following violations from a security provider in the last year?’

Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: DDC/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

These statistics present a grim picture of abuses perpetrated by the UPDF in Karamoja. Rights violations, killings, and torture by the UPDF in Karamoja are well documented (HRW, 2007). During law and order campaigns such as the ‘cordon and search’ disarmament operation throughout Karamoja nearly all villages were probably cordoned off and searched by the UPDF at one time or another. People in these villages were subjected to the indiscriminate use of force and violence by the UPDF, including intimidation, beatings, and rape, and, in most cases, property theft (Bevan, 2008, pp. 55–57). Culturally, in

Karamoja, all members of the same village are considered family and mistreatment of one among them is perceived as mistreatment of all families in the village. This may have contributed to the high numbers reflected in the survey findings. In apparent confirmation of these findings, however, almost all focus groups accused the UPDF of beatings, torture, killings, rape, and property theft in Karamoja villages. Few indications have emerged to indicate that the UPDF have renounced their indiscriminate use of violence and intimidation against the Karamojong, despite the outcry from civil society, local leaders, and rights-based organizations over their brutal conduct of cordon and search operations. This has further tarnished the image of the UPDF in the eyes of Karamoja communities.

A key informant in Moroto said: *'To boost the image of the UPDF in [the] eyes of the local communities, the army intensified intelligence gathering to generate information on [the] acquisition, possession, and use of illegal firearms in the communities using security structures at village, parish and sub-county levels. Nowadays, villages are cordoned and searched for disarmament after intelligence has detected the existence of illegal firearms.'* It will take time for the impact—if indeed there is one—of this change in the behaviour of the UPDF to be felt by the population and reflected in its perception of the UPDF.

The findings in Figure 21 suggest that LDUs have also committed violent crimes against many households. Twenty per cent of the households surveyed said they had suffered torture and beatings by LDU personnel. Respondents said the latter were also frequently involved in petty incidents of violence and beatings after getting drunk. Moreover, they were said to use the power attributed to their position to settle scores with people they had experienced problems with in the past.<sup>30</sup>

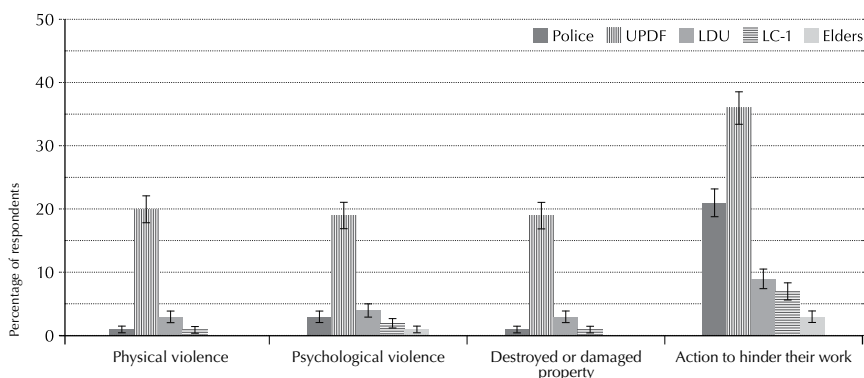
In general, men reported only slightly higher levels of security provider violence against their households than women, but significantly higher levels (physical, sexual, psychological) of violence suffered specifically at the hands of the UPDF than women. This reflects men's involvement in cattle raids, which exposes them to counter-attacks by the UPDF. As regards sexual violence, respectively 38 and 31 per cent of male and female respondents reported that a member of their household had suffered such abuse perpetrated by the UPDF, reflecting women's reluctance to report such cases due to the social stigma attached to them.

A majority of people surveyed considered they had been affected by various forms of corruption by security providers, such as favouritism, demands for bribes, or deliberate delays in dealing with cases. Yet again, the UPDF were seen as the worst offenders, with 68 per cent of respondents reporting that they, or someone in their household, had experienced corrupt conduct by these forces. These respondents may have been referring to past incidents involving bribes demanded by the UPDF in return for the recovery of stolen livestock or the release of detained *Karacuna*. The percentage was lower but still significant for other entities such as the police (45%), LDUs (20%), and LC-1s (16%). Notably, just over five per cent of respondents reported corruption by elders.

*c. Violence against security providers perpetrated by community members*

Violence is also committed by community members against security providers. As shown in Figure 22 below, such violence primarily targets the UPDF. Approximately 20% of respondents stated they were aware of some form of violence (physical, psychological, or destruction of property) committed by community members against the UPDF. Communities have also been involved in action to hinder the work of security and justice providers.

**Figure 22** Violations by community members against security/justice providers



Percentages represent respondents who answered ‘yes’ to the question: ‘To the best of your knowledge, have any of the following violations against a security/justice provider been committed by any member of your community in the last year?’

**Note:** Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012

More than a third of respondents said the UPDF had been targeted in this respect, while 21 per cent indicated that the police had also been hindered considerably in their work by community members. This corroborates the previous finding that the Karamojong people distrust the UPDF because of their abuses, and reject them as unwelcome intruders.

Security providers also reported that their relationships with communities were difficult. When asked if they were worried about being targeted by community violence, all police focus group discussion participants replied affirmatively. Most police units claimed that communities often hide criminals and give them false information, which hinders their work. This suggests that the police also consider the Karamojong alien and not part of Uganda's mainstream society.

*d. Community openness and assistance to security providers*

Despite the strained and occasionally violent rapports between formal security providers and communities, there are also some positive aspects to their relationships. For example, a considerable number of community members reported having provided some kind of assistance to security providers over the past year (see Table 1). This mainly entailed providing information to the UPDF, LDUs, and the police to help them in their investigation of certain cases, but also included the provision of shelter or materials for their barracks, as well as food for all three entities. Overall, during the year prior to the survey, 41 per cent of respondents assisted the LDUs, 32 per cent the UPDF, and 18 per cent the police, suggesting a certain level of cooperation between communities and security providers. It should be noted however that survey participants were not asked whether this assistance was offered spontaneously or procured under duress.

Police groups in all three districts said the communities provide them with information upon request. Both rural and urban police groups acknowledged that communities provide them with food, shelter, and information. While the provision of this assistance may indicate a change of attitude by the Karamojong toward state security providers, it may alternatively be a sign of recognition that the police, unlike the UPDF, do not usually intervene in inter-ethnic conflict between the tribes.

**Table 1** Provision of assistance<sup>31</sup> by community members to security providers (%)

	<b>Police</b>	<b>UPDF</b>	<b>LDU</b>
Information for investigations	18	26	23
Shelter or help/materials for barracks	6	21	21
Food	18	32	41

Note: Figures represent percentage of respondents.

## Chapter summary

This chapter gives an account of the answers in response to the research questions: Who provides security in Karamoja? What are their roles? What is the status of the population's access to security provision?

Both formal actors such as the UPDF, the police, and the LDU, as well as informal traditional actors such as the elders and warriors, were recognized as security providers in Karamoja, while LCs were acknowledged as playing an important role in many aspects of security provision in the region. Generally speaking, however, the various security providers were each seen as dealing with specific security-related issues and threats. For instance, LCs were clearly identified as the main actors in addressing most types of intra-community violence and conflict, and for protecting communities from abuse by state actors. In parallel, the UPDF and LDUs were considered responsible for curbing inter-tribal violence, and especially for countering cattle raiding and recovering stolen livestock.

Survey participants considered LCs, elders, and warriors the most accessible security providers, while the police were rated the least accessible. Importantly, the UPDF were widely viewed as perpetrators of various forms of abuse rather than security providers.

Respondents showed trust in LCs to protect them against all three types of violence – i.e. inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, and violence between state actors and communities. In addition to being considered the most accessible, LCs were also regarded the most trustworthy, visible, and fair security providers. Both warriors and elders were also acknowledged as playing a role in ensuring community security. Warriors were considered especially important in ensuring the protection and recovery of livestock, whereas elders were

primarily seen as responsible for intra-community dispute resolution and protection for women and children, among other functions. Other actors were less trusted. In particular, state security providers were considered inaccessible, untrustworthy, and invisible, with the police regarded as the least present on the ground and unfair in their handling of security and other issues within their terms of reference. Respondents also reported a high rate of acts of violence and other abuses against members of their communities by state security providers. The UPDF were singled out as being particularly violent against communities, as were LDUs, but to a far lesser extent. Conversely, acts of violence against security providers by community members were also reported.

Despite the strained and occasionally violent rapports between communities and formal security providers, there are signs that they may be moving towards some semblance of cooperation. This has taken the form of community material support as well as the passing of information to security providers to help them resolve security issues. As mentioned above, however, survey participants were not asked whether this assistance was offered spontaneously or procured under duress. Whatever the case, respondents indicated they would like the UPDF to assume certain roles to protect their communities. 📄

# Small Arms in Karamoja

The presence of small arms in Karamoja and the resulting impact on security and development there has been well documented. In light of claims of successful disarmament and an improvement in the security situation in Karamoja (New Vision, May 17, 2010), the Small Arms Survey considered it important to gauge the current accessibility and supply of small arms in the region.

Estimates of illegal firearms in civilian hands in Karamoja range from 15,000 to as many as 200,000 (HRW, 2007, p. 3; Mkutu, 2008a, p. 51). Government estimates in the 2007 KIDDP report cited between 40,000 and 50,000 small arms (Republic of Uganda, 2007, p. 8). The army claimed in 2010 that 29,923 guns had been recovered since 2002 and that almost 1,077 guns remained in the communities (New Vision, Feb 8, 2010).

These variations show a clear lack of credible statistics on the number of weapons in circulation in Karamoja. The reluctance of communities to discuss or display small arms for fear of reprisal from the UPDF, coupled with easy access to small arms smuggled through porous borders with Kenya and South Sudan, make it difficult to evaluate the number of weapons that have been imported to Karamoja.

This chapter examines whether Karamoja's access to weapons and the supply dynamics have changed since the most recent study by Bevan (2008). It builds on that study and analyses the current perceptions of communities in the wake of government disarmament operations. It does not deal with the demand for weapons in the region, as that issue has been extensively covered in studies by, for example, Mkutu (2007), Bevan (2008), and more recently by Saferworld (2010). This section is based on the perceptions of survey participants and does not represent hard statistics.

## Access to small arms in Karamoja

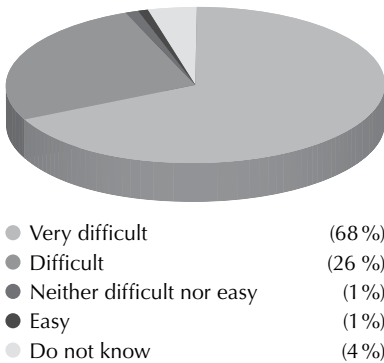
The results confirm that access to small arms in Karamoja has become more difficult in recent years. The deployment of the UPDF and the forceful dis-

armament operation carried out by these armed forces have made small arms less accessible. Most focus groups and key informants indicate that the number of small arms in circulation has decreased significantly. Despite the lack of confirmed statistics, focus groups consider that this has led to fewer lethal raids and incidents resulting in weapons-induced casualties. Key informants also assert that whatever small arms still remain in the communities are hidden by their owners, who fear prosecution for illegal possession of weapons if they are found out.

As illustrated in Figure 23, respondents also perceive that access to small arms in Karamoja is difficult.

Figure 23 shows that 94 per cent of questionnaire respondents found it either difficult or very difficult to acquire a firearm. The perceived levels

**Figure 23** How easy is it to obtain a firearm in relevant district?



Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012

of difficulty could partly relate to the high cost of weapons, which are the most prized—albeit expensive—items that young warriors yearn after. It could also partly be explained by the effectiveness of the disarmament programme implemented either by force or by persuasion. Forceful disarmament has instilled a fear of persecution by the UPDF among the Karamojong. In response to all questions in the survey section on small arms, a large percentage of respondents ticked the ‘don’t know’ box (14–23%). This indicates that

individuals are very afraid to discuss the issue as the government has been extremely aggressive in dealing with people found to be in unlawful possession of arms.

Softer measures employed by the government might also have contributed to the reduced availability of small arms. The army has deployed intelligence-gathering teams in areas of South Sudan bordering Kaabong, and in the Turkana border region of Kenya, to curb international trafficking of firearms into Karamoja. A government official in Karamoja claimed that border



security in South Sudan had improved and that there was now an increased intelligence monitoring presence in Toposa border areas of that country working with the UPDF. Most government officials interviewed said the trafficking of guns from neighbouring countries into Karamoja had declined and that security agencies are closely monitoring the flow of firearms from South Sudan into Kaabong. According to the RISO North-East, *'Our intelligence network had not detected any inflow of firearms from the North. We are closely monitoring the interaction between the cross-border communities, especially the Matheniko and the Turkana, which have been in the past the main conduit for trafficking arms and ammunition into Karamoja.'*

Despite more difficult access to small arms the number of incidents involving these weapons remains significant, suggesting that people still find ways to acquire them. Gunshots are often heard even close to large town centres like Kaabong and Moroto, and armed clashes between cattle raiders and the UPDF still take place.<sup>32</sup> Raids also still occur frequently and usually involve the use of small arms, while illegal armed groups remain a big security concern, with road ambushes reported (UNOCHA, 2011).<sup>33</sup> A few new methods also seem to be developing to access small arms such as the growing practice of hiring or borrowing them from pastoralists abroad. A key informant reported that, because of the risks associated with possessing arms in Karamoja, *Karacunas* are increasingly borrowing weapons from pastoralists on the Kenyan side of the border and returning them once they have served their purpose.

Small arms are also taken across the border for safekeeping. This is common practice among Karamojong ethnic groups with blood relatives among pastoral groups in Kenya (e.g. the Jie, Matheniko, Pokot, and Tepeth tribes) and in South Sudan (the Didinga and Toposa tribes). Another key informant reported that this occurred especially at times when weapon owners in Karamoja felt in danger of being caught during disarmament operations. In such cases those involved waited until these operations were over before recovering their weapons.

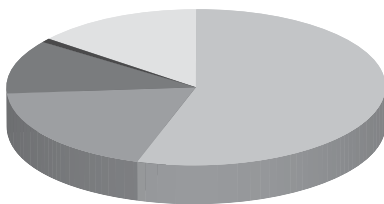
# Supply of small arms in Karamoja

## Supply routes

One of the main complications in controlling small arms supply in Karamoja is the availability of these weapons from Kenya and South Sudan, and the lack of effective border controls between Karamoja and these countries. The tribes in both Kenya and South Sudan are well armed and often cross into Uganda in search of better grazing land, and there have been no effective efforts to control arms inside the border areas of Kenya and South Sudan.

More than half of respondents said that South Sudan was the main small arms source (see Figure 24). This corroborates Bevan's finding arrived at by

**Figure 24** Perceived origin of small arms in Karamoja



● South Sudan	(55 %)
● Uganda	(19 %)
● Kenya	(11 %)
● Other	(1 %)
● Do not know	(14 %)

Source: DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012

analysing weapon price differences in South Sudan and Karamoja and the involvement of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in arms smuggling (Bevan, 2008, pp. 48–49). The mountainous terrain on the borders between Karamoja and South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria region could also explain the ease with which these weapons can be smuggled into Karamoja.

A significant number of respondents (11%) also pointed to Kenya as the source of small arms largely, because of the availability of such weapons in the Pokot and Turkana regions of that country. As with South Sudan, the long border with Kenya is open and unpatrolled. Pastoralists on either side of the border can easily smuggle small arms without being controlled. Kenya is seen as a major weapons supplier to Karamoja by Bevan (2008). On the other hand, the arms smuggling pipeline from South Sudan may have faltered since its accession to independence in July 2011 and the SPLA's newly assumed political role in the country. This may in turn have shifted the main source of small arms supply to Karamoja from South Sudan to Kenya.

It should be noted that survey replies to questions on the source of small arms supply were influenced by the geographical location of respondents. Predictably, those in Kaabong bordering South Sudan said small arms originated from that country, while those in Amudat and Moroto bordering Kenya pointed to both that country and Uganda itself as the main supply sources.

Key informants who participated in the survey said they believed northern Uganda was the main source of small arms supply to Karamoja. A fairly large number of respondents (19%) also designated Uganda as a source of small arms supply (see Figure 24). This may reflect small arms supply from former Lord's Resistance Army rebels in the Acholi region or the sale of weapons by the UPDF and LDUs (see further details below), or both, as described by Bevan (2008).

To summarize, these findings appear to indicate that weapons are more difficult to access now than in the past, when research was conducted by Bevan (2008) and Mkutu (2007). They also suggest that weapon sources and supply routes have not changed since the publication of those two bodies of research.

### *Suppliers/small arms traders*

The findings indicate the emergence of an increasing trade in small arms in Karamoja. When asked 'Who supplies small arms to your district?', 43 per cent of those surveyed pointed to small arms traders (see Figure 26). Focus groups believe that, even though access to buy small arms has become more difficult, it is still possible to purchase them illegally on the black market. This growing illicit trade was confirmed by 63 per cent of respondents who said the easiest way to procure a weapon was through local arms traders (see Figure 25 below).

The survey did not look deeper into what is understood by weapons traders. It may be that anyone who sells a weapon could be considered an arms dealer, irrespective of whether that person is making a one-off sale or is running an unlawful commercial business in the arms trade. For instance, a destitute pastoralist possessing a weapon that he seeks to barter against livestock may be considered a 'trader', as might the Karamojong who exchange

cows for weapons with other local tribes such as the Bugisu, Langi, and Teso (Bevan, 2008, p. 51).

**Figure 25** Perceived main providers of small arms in Karamoja

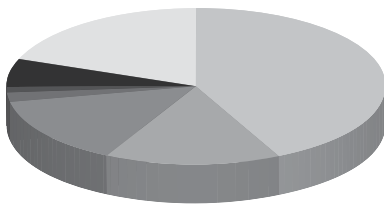


**Note:** Respondents were permitted multiple responses.

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

As suggested by these examples, the survey findings do not necessarily mean that unlawful arms dealers are omnipresent in Karamoja. They do, however, appear to indicate an increased commercialization of weapons in the region. Other findings that seem to support this premise are that 54 per

**Figure 26** Perceived easiest ways of procuring firearms (percentages of multiple answers)



- Weapons traders (43 %)
- People from other tribes (15 %)
- UPDF (14 %)
- Warriors from own tribe (2 %)
- LDU (1 %)
- Other (6 %)
- Do not know (19 %)

**Source:** DDG/SAS Household Survey, 2012.

cent of respondents perceive other tribes as the main providers of weapons in Karamoja, while 15 per cent identify the UPDF as the biggest arms supplier in the region (see Figure 25). Focus groups also signalled that the UPDF may sell ammunition. This corresponds to research findings by Bevan (2008) arrived at by analysing ammunition types and weapon prices and pointing to the existence of rogue elements within the UPDF that sell weapons, as well as a lack of proper accountability and safekeeping of weapons within the UPDF.

The question regarding the involvement of tribes in firearms trading adds another interesting perspective to the issue of small arms and conflict in Karamoja. Across sampling groups, results indicate that the tribes perceived to be most frequently involved in firearms trading are the Jie (74%), followed by the Turkana (43%), the Dodoth (34%), the Toposa (28%), and the Didinga (25%). These figures might be taken as evidence of the central role of the Jie in inter-ethnic conflict in Karamoja. The findings also point to mistrustful relationships between tribes. For instance, Kaabong is predominantly Dodoth, and given their border and continuing enmity with the Jie, it is not surprising that they see the Jie as the major arms traders. Conversely, the Pokot tribe in Amudat would never accuse the Pokot tribe in Kenya of unlawful small arms trading since its members normally enjoy good relations with their kin in that country.

## Chapter summary

This chapter briefly examines the current situation of small arms in Karamoja with a view to shedding light on any potential new developments regarding their accessibility and supply resulting from the government disarmament programme and since publication of the Bevan (2008) and Mkutu (2007) studies. The chapter reflects the views of communities in Karamoja on these issues.

Regardless of the actual number of weapons that remain in Karamoja, it is clear that they have become less accessible, partly because there appear to be fewer in circulation due to disarmament, but also because weapons not handed over to the UPDF are being kept hidden by their owners who fear prosecution if they are caught.

Despite the fact that weapons are now more difficult to obtain in Karamoja, violent incidents involving firearms still occur frequently in the region. According to various survey interviewees, the weapons used are entering Karamoja from other regions within Uganda as well as from neighbouring countries. The in-country suppliers are identified as the UPDF, LDUs, and arms traders, while Kenya and South Sudan are seen as the foreign sources of supply. Although this information has already been published in previous

studies, the situation may now have changed following South Sudan's accession to independence. Notably, with the formation of the new government there and the new political role of the SPLA, weapons from South Sudan may have become less easily available than in the past.

As mentioned earlier, either to escape disarmament or sanctions for unlawful possession of arms, a number of new trends appear to have emerged whereby pastoralists borrow weapons from across the border, or transfer them to Kenya or South Sudan for temporary safekeeping while disarmament operations are in progress.

The survey further notes the growing commercialization and trade of small arms in Karamoja, as highlighted in previous studies. A limited number of weapons seem to be available through arms 'traders', although the study did not explore in any detail who they are or how they acquire and sell weapons. This could be an area for further research.

One of the main difficulties in controlling small arms in Karamoja stems from the region's unregulated borders with Kenya and South Sudan; the tribes in those countries are well armed and there have been no effective efforts to control their weapons. 📌

# Conclusions and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to gain a more thorough understanding of security and justice provision and access to small arms in Karamoja. Input came from communities affected by insecurity in Karamoja. This chapter summarizes the study findings based on the answers to questions posed by the research team on the ground, and includes recommendations to both policymakers and practitioners concerned with peace and stability in Karamoja.

## Security providers in Karamoja and their role

The study confirmed that there is still a strong presence of traditional security providers in Karamoja. For example, the elders are widely acknowledged and trusted as key security providers. In most cases the elders are also local councillors, thus part of the formal security set-up.

Warriors are still regarded as important security providers by their communities, particularly for protecting and recovering livestock from raiders, although the UPDF are seen as playing the prominent role in this respect. Increasingly, however, warriors have become involved in non-traditionally sanctioned raids themselves. Despite acknowledging their protective role, communities bear major grudges against the warriors for their alleged lack of sensitivity to their concerns, which has led for example to growing friction in their relations with elders.

Communities recognize the importance of formal state security providers, with the UPDF, the LDU, and the police ranked as playing major security-related roles. More specifically, communities rely on the UPDF and LDUs to protect and recover raided livestock. Similarly, the role of the police in dealing with crime is widely acknowledged.

The different security providers are categorized by the communities as having specific tasks, according to the nature of the security problem at

hand. For example, LCs are considered the main actors in response to inter-ethnic violence, state violence, or intra-community conflict or disputes. Elders are also regarded as playing a key role in resolving such cases and are trusted in their communities.

## Population's access to security

Communities appear to have better relations with LCs and elders than with formal security providers such as the UPDF, LDUs, and the police. They consider that their worst relationship is with the UPDF, whom they reproach for acts of violence and disregard for their rights.

Tensions and a certain degree of ambiguity continue to surround the perceived role of the UPDF in Karamoja. On the one hand the UPDF evoke bad memories of the way they conducted forceful disarmament operations in Karamoja, and are rated negatively by communities for their continuing brutality, non-consultative approach, and inaccessibility. On the other hand, their contribution to improving security is recognized. In particular, the UPDF are the communities' preferred recourse for protecting and recovering livestock stolen by raiders.

Communities nonetheless tend to view state security providers as 'external occupying forces'. This appears evident from the large proportion of people who distrust the UPDF and by the acts of violence committed by some among them against the UPDF. At the same time, there are indications that the UPDF view Karamoja as an alien land that arouses a vengeful reaction, compelling them to commit alarmingly high rates of violent acts against the population.

The non-consultative approach of the UPDF suggests lack of coordination between the LCs —i.e. the elected representatives of the people—and the armed security providers. The UPDF in Karamoja act unilaterally and do not consult with other security providers such as LCs and the police, resulting in uncoordinated action that primarily targets the communities.

The future role of the UPDF in Karamoja could be an area for further research. The UPDF are certainly effective in dealing with weapons control and cattle rustling, the latter being one of the main sources of insecurity in



the region. As mentioned earlier, however, communities still report suffering alarmingly high levels of violence perpetrated by these forces. It remains unclear whether other security providers would be able to handle security issues currently dealt with by the UPDF. LCs and elders are considered effective, but do not have the capacity to cope with armed groups, while the police still lack the manpower and other resources to deal with the scale of the security problems in Karamoja.

## **Access to small arms**

Access to small arms in Karamoja has become increasingly difficult in recent years as a result of the government disarmament programme enforced by the UPDF and the threat of prosecution for unlawful possession of weapons. Yet, the study findings confirm that an undetermined number of small arms are still in circulation in Karamoja. In general, however, people fear keeping weapons in their households. Those that still possess weapons run a strong risk of being detected and forced to hand them over to the police or the UPDF. Despite the risks associated with acquiring, owning, keeping, and using arms, most respondents believe that numerous weapons are still present in communities. It remains difficult, however, to ascertain whether the attitude of people towards small arms ownership has changed.

Although the majority of people interviewed for the study agreed that most people in Karamoja fear owning weapons, it nevertheless seems likely that a number of uncontrolled small arms will remain in circulation in the region for an unforeseeable period. This may well lead to further intensive disarmament operations conducted by the UPDF. While that would undoubtedly result in more loss of life, it might also herald a shift of emphasis towards more law and order, conflict prevention, and mediation in the Karamoja context.

## **Sources of small arms (supply routes and suppliers)**

Karamoja's long, open, and unregulated borders with Kenya and South Sudan, along with the abundant availability of small arms in the border

regions of these countries, would theoretically make it easy for the Karamoja to access these weapons. In reality, however, the pressure of the government disarmament programme has discouraged people from keeping small arms in the household. Instead, new trends seem to be emerging, such as the temporary hiring of arms.

The main sources of small arms supply to Karamoja are in neighbouring Kenya and South Sudan as well as in other regions of Uganda. Border controls need to be reinforced to curb small arms trafficking. Furthermore, there is a need to monitor and regulate small arms circulation by curtailing the activities of in-country arms traders, as well as the alleged illicit sale of weapons by the UDPF and LDUs.

## **Recommendations to improve access to security for all population groups**

Given the complexity and dynamics of security-related issues in Karamoja there are no easy answers or simple recommendations. Conflict and violence in Karamoja require a wide range of solutions, beyond the mere maintenance of law and order and justice, and the disarmament of communities. In fact, measures should be based on a broader perception of community security that encompasses the development of viable livelihoods and improved physical, social, and economic infrastructure. To improve security in Karamoja this study makes the following recommendations:

- a) Recognize and accommodate the role of traditional security actors alongside state security providers in order to ease friction between the formal and traditional security systems.
- b) Utilize the positive image of LCs to further strengthen security provision in Karamoja by giving them—particularly LC-1s—more power to lead security interventions in the constituencies they represent. Enhance the conflict mediation and general advocacy skills of LCs to enable them to draw youths away from harmful cultural practices.
- c) Improve coordination between security providers throughout Karamoja in order to boost the effectiveness of security provision in the region. In

particular, improve coordination between state security providers and elected local government representatives such as LCs in order to: improve communities' acceptance of the UPDF; help integrate the 'soft' security approach of LCs and the 'hard' power of armed security providers such as the UPDF and LDUs; and place ownership of local security and safety with the communities concerned by involving LCs in the planning of interventions to resolve security issues.

- d) Build trust between state security providers and communities in Karamoja as a means of reversing the growing deterioration in relations between the central state authorities and the Karamojong. To this end, ensure the active interaction of state security providers, particularly the UPDF, the police, and LDUs, with the communities, facilitated by LCs and local civil society organizations.
- e) In view of the alarming level of abuses and violence perpetrated by the UPDF, as reported by communities, advocate for a change in the approach of the UPDF to security provision in Karamoja with a view to ending these alleged practices. Draw the attention of the UPDF to the basic rights of the people in the communities they serve and the norms applicable to internal security duties; punish UPDF personnel responsible for arbitrary killings or mistreatment and inform the communities concerned of related judicial decisions; given the persistent fears of violence associated with UPDF disarmament operations, restrict the role of the UPDF in this regard and encourage security agencies used to dealing with civilians, such as the police and LCs, to play a more active role in disarmament.
- f) Strengthen police operations and improve access to police services throughout Karamoja. As a minimum, ensure that each sub-county has a police station. Consider allocating more material and financial resources to the police to extend their outreach in rural areas. Increase police personnel, particularly through local recruitment and postings in Karamoja, to help the police gain the trust of communities in the region. Encourage the police to adopt a more service-oriented and community-based approach less focused on the use of force.
- g) Draw warriors' attention to the damaging aspects of certain cultural practices that often involve them in violent incidents. Since warriors are

still relied upon by communities for certain security tasks, despite their isolation from and strained relations with communities, endeavour to integrate them into mainstream community life. To this end, warriors should benefit from cultural exchanges and educational visits to other parts of Uganda to broaden their views.

## Recommendations to limit the supply of small arms to the region

- h) Strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries and action against cross-border criminal groups to prevent the flow of arms from abroad and cross-border raids through intelligence gathering and information-sharing on arms trafficking. Consider deploying the UPDF along known arms trafficking corridors from neighbouring countries. All such action should take into account the findings of this study, which suggest that in-country private arms traders and the trafficking of small arms from South Sudan should constitute the main focus of attention.
- i) As a means of curbing the inflow of weapons across porous borders and enhancing the long-term effectiveness of the disarmament programme in Karamoja, urge the international community to encourage Kenya and South Sudan to implement controls of small arms in areas bordering Karamoja.
- j) To help prevent the illicit supply of arms from sources within Uganda, tighten measures to prevent the loss of service weapons issued to members of security provider entities. To this end, urge the authorities concerned to build secure armouries, to maintain a proper weapons registry, and to mark weapons.
- k) Develop programmes designed to change peoples' attitudes towards small arms ownership and to raise their awareness to the dangers of these weapons, for example through radio broadcasts and interactive events. Urge communities to consider alternatives to violence through livelihood development training and other development interventions. 📌

# Endnotes

- 1 For further statistical definitions, see Annexe.
- 2 DDG adapted this definition from Mitchel (1981, pp. 15–25).
- 3 The term Karamojong embraces all 11 ethnic groups in the geographical region called Karamoja, while the term Karimojong refers exclusively to the dominant ethnic groups in Karamoja, namely the Bokora, the Dodoth, the Jie, the Matheniko, and the Pian tribes.
- 4 For instance, the KIDDP programme integrates government and NGO activities in Karamoja aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of development. Available at <<http://www.ugandaclusters.org/downloads/0204Karamoja/KIDDP.pdf>>.
- 5 Traditional leaders (elders) negotiate peace with other tribes and lead village ceremonies, and traditional fortune tellers direct many activities such as raids in all districts. This was witnessed by the research team in many villages and also confirmed during interviews with key informants.
- 6 The survey covered all prevalent forms of serious crime and violence in communities, including rape, robbery, domestic violence, fighting, killings, and theft.
- 7 There is currently no accurate census data available for Karamoja. The most recent census took place in 2002. Since then, no intermediate censuses have been conducted. Additionally, it should be noted that Karamoja's population is mainly nomadic, thus making it even more difficult to measure the exact population size and its demographic characteristics.
- 8 It is important to highlight that certain areas were off-limits for security reasons; our presence there could have jeopardized the safety of the research team or members of the communities participating in the survey, or both. Due to the high level of volatility in certain areas, the researchers were compelled to restructure the sampling footprint at very short notice, excluding important sub-counties in the process.
- 9 Every Nth household was determined by dividing the total population size of the village (*Manyatta*) by the number of questionnaires to be utilized in that village. The population size was an estimate, while the number of questionnaires was based on the sample size.
- 10 The database was developed by using LimeSurvey, an open-source software programme ([www.limesurvey.com](http://www.limesurvey.com)).
- 11 Error was defined as a missing or invalid response (i.e. a response that was either illegible, incoherent, or did not adhere to the response option limitations applicable to a particular question).
- 12 Possibly more if operations after 2008 are included.
- 13 According to the UPDF, an estimated 6,000 guns were recovered over this period (Mkutu, 2008c, p.109).
- 14 This period was very insecure and witnessed violent clashes between warriors and the UPDF. The UPDF allegedly committed frequent human rights abuses and maltreated the population. See also HRW (2007).

- 15 For instance, the media reported that a warrior raid in January 2012 on a protected kraal in Loyoero sub-county in Kaabong resulted in many deaths on both sides. See <<http://ugandaradionetwork.com/a/story.php?s=39551>>.
- 16 LC-I (village); LC-II (parish/ward); LC-III (sub-county); LC-IV (county/town council); and LC-V (district). In practice, only the LC-1, LC-III, and LC-V levels are active throughout Karamoja, while a LC-IV is functional in some areas such as Moroto. Information accessed from the Ministry of Local Government, Republic of Uganda website (<<http://www.molg.go.ug/index.php/local-governments>>), and from interviews with local councillors in Moroto in February 2011.
- 17 Respondents pointed to more than one security provider as being responsible for a particular task.
- 18 A number of youths in Amudat alleged that UPDF personnel routinely beat and torture them, and loot their property.
- 19 Most key informants, including the RISO and prominent leaders, claimed during the interviews that the role of warriors in the community had become less significant.
- 20 Most focus groups across the three surveyed districts said the warriors provide security for their cattle and homes.
- 21 Karamoja, like all other regions in Uganda, faces the problem of alcohol abuse. Alcohol is part of the staple diet and culture. It fuels conflict in communities that often results in fatalities from the use of small arms or bladed weapons such as machetes (*pangas*) or knives. Focus groups indicate that both the general population and security providers, including the UPDF, the LDU, warriors, elders, and the LCs, are affected by alcohol abuse.
- 22 Saferworld typology described earlier.
- 23 An elder in a focus group in Kamuria, Kaabong said: 'Warriors are culprits... they ambush, raid, loot homes. They are petty thieves. They are friends during the day and enemies at night. They like fighting.'
- 24 Direct interviews indicated that many people have lost faith in the police because of police corruption. For example, the research team learned that when rape cases are reported to the police the latter expect to receive money before agreeing to deal with them. As a result, people resort to finding their own solutions for dispute settlement. A woman in Kaabong whose daughter was raped preferred to report the incident to the parish priest rather than to the police.
- 25 This report shows that the types of abuse faced by women in Karamoja are mainly gender-related (e.g. forced marriage 28.7% and forced sex 27.4%).
- 26 Almost all focus groups confirm that the UPDF torture or mistreat local Karamojong for no apparent reason, suggesting a general attitude of disdain for the Karamojong people.
- 27 Some sub-counties such as Tapac in Moroto have no police presence whatsoever.
- 28 The UPDF has been accused of being involved in rapes in Karamoja. For instance, a woman was gang-raped in Tapac sub-county recently in a case now being investigated by the UPDF. See <<http://pressrelease.co.ug/pressuganda/?p=3225>>.
- 29 Furthermore, respondents may have inadvertently recalled incidents of abuse that occurred before the period covered by the survey—i.e. the year before it was conducted—thereby increasing the number of such incidents captured by the survey.

- 30 Most focus groups accuse LDU personnel of being drunk most of the time and beating  
people they dislike.
- 31 This applies to assistance provided spontaneously by the respondent or someone in her/  
his household (as reported by the respondent).
- 32 The research team heard frequent gunshots in both Moroto and Kaabong towns during  
the night and had to abandon data collection in at-least one sub-county in Kaabong after  
seeing armed warriors in the vicinity.
- 33 UNDSS daily security updates circulated to development partners also show incidents of  
raids on a fairly regular basis.
- 34 No accurate census data is currently available for Karamoja. The most recent census took  
place in 2002. Since then, no intermediate census has been conducted. Additionally, it is  
important to note that Karamoja's population is primarily nomadic, thus increasing the  
difficulty of measuring the exact population size and its demographic characteristics.
- 35 Certain areas were designated off-limits for security reasons. Entering these areas could  
have jeopardized the safety of the research team or the participating community, or both.  
Due to the significant level of volatility in certain areas, the researchers had to modify the  
sampling footprint at the last minute, excluding some key sub-counties from the survey.
- 36 Sometimes referred to as peri-rural, peri-urban areas are defined as 'areas outside of formal  
urban boundaries/jurisdictions which are in the process of light or moderate urbanisation  
and which therefore progressively assume many of the characteristics of urban areas'. See  
<[http://www.ecs.co.sz/periurban/pup\\_periurban\\_policy.htm](http://www.ecs.co.sz/periurban/pup_periurban_policy.htm)>.
- 37 Every Nth household was determined by dividing the total population size of the village  
(*Manyatta*) by the number of questionnaires to be used in the village concerned. The  
former figure was based on an estimated population size, and the latter number was cal-  
culated according to the projected sample size in the village.
- 38 See <[www.limesurvey.com](http://www.limesurvey.com)>.
- 39 Error was defined as a missing or invalid response (i.e. a response that was either illegible,  
incoherent or did not adhere to the response option limitations of the particular question).

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# Annexe

## Methodology

### *Geographical coverage*

The study concentrates on three districts in Karamoja, namely Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto. They were selected primarily because of their borders with Kenya and South Sudan, which appears to be relevant from the perspective of the inflow of small arms from these countries. Moreover, relatively little quantitative information on security-related matters in Amudat and Kaabong is available from other research. Amudat is a relatively new district created in 2009 and was formerly part of Nakapiripirit district.

### *Limitations*

It is important to recognize that, while this survey was designed to gather a representative sample of the three districts of Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto, the data collected is not expressly representative of the overall region of Karamoja, due to the marked heterogeneity between districts. District demarcations in Karamoja roughly correspond to the distribution of tribes that reside within the political boundaries they designate. For instance, Moroto is mainly inhabited by the Matheniko and the Tepeth, Kaabong by the Dodoth together with the Ik, while Amudat is mostly Pokot; however, the major tribes residing in other districts, such as the Bokora in Napak, the Pian in Nakapiripirit, and the Jie in Kotido, are not included in the sample. Thus, the findings presented in this report should not be projected to districts in Karamoja not covered by this survey.

Districts were the basic geographical parameters for data analysis in the survey. Tribal boundaries were not taken into consideration. The survey nevertheless reflects the views of the different tribes resident in the three surveyed districts by sampling communities in all of their sub-counties. In most cases, the different tribes are each concentrated in specific sub-counties. For

instance, Moroto's two mountainous sub-counties of Katekekile and Tapac are inhabited by the Tepeth while the Matheniko live in sub-counties located in the district's plains.

### *Data collection methods*

This survey utilized a combination of different methods that aimed to determine how communities perceive security provision and small arms supply in the region. The following four specific methods were used:

1. *Household questionnaires*: The household questionnaire aimed to quantitatively gather information on local perceptions. Extensive data was collected in the three Karamoja districts surveyed. Overall, 2,377 household interviews were conducted, 23 less than initially planned due to unforeseen challenges; 2,368 of these interviews were validated and 9 discarded due to irreversible input errors. Among the valid responses, 444 were collected in Amudat, 981 in Kaabong, and 943 in Moroto. The data verification process was conducted in the field and at Small Arms Survey headquarters in Geneva.

Surveyors—all native Karamojong with a high proficiency in the local languages (Karamojong and Pokot)—collected the household questionnaires between February and April 2011 after participating in a ten-day extensive training session conducted by the DDG researcher and a Small Arms Survey expert.

2. *Structured interviews/focus group discussions with security providers and communities*: Extensive focus group discussions were held in the three surveyed districts. The communities in both rural and urban areas were organized into focus groups of male youths, mature men, and mixed women. A total of 18 focus groups presented their views.

Similarly, the assessment aimed to hold focus group discussions with all security providers including the UPDF, the police, LDUs, elders, and the LC1s. Two focus group discussions with each of these entities were organized in all three districts (one each in rural and urban areas). A total of 18 structured interviews were conducted; however, despite concerted efforts by the research team, interviews with UPDF army units and LDUs did not materialize.

3. *Key informant interviews*: Key informant interviews were conducted with political leaders, government employees working in key positions, representatives of security providers such as the police, the Internal Security Organization, local councillors, NGO workers, and prominent community members. A total of 13 key informant interviews were conducted across the three districts. The aim was to triangulate the findings of the household survey and the focus group interviews. To ensure the broadest input possible and to avoid reflecting more the views of the government over those of the communities or vice-versa, for example, the interviews were conducted with a mix of official and civilian personalities from government, civil society, and the communities, among others.
4. *Desk research*: The study also entailed extensive desk research conducted at Small Arms Survey headquarters in Geneva that included a bibliographical literature review. Previous publications and research reports were also consulted (see bibliography).

### *Sampling and characteristics of respondents*

1. *Sampling area*

Due to the large geographical area and the limited time and resources available, sampling within all counties of Karamoja was not logistically possible. Therefore, the three districts of Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto were chosen for the reasons mentioned earlier.

The survey sample was stratified according to politically recognized district boundaries for Amudat, Kaabong, and Moroto. The research team chose political rather than tribal boundaries with a view to informing local programming and interventions that operate based on a geopolitical framework (district boundaries defined by the government are relevant for programming and intervention needs).

Tribal boundaries exist within the districts as people tend to reside in geographical areas where members of their own tribes are concentrated. For instance, the Tepeth live in the mountains of Moroto and were sampled alongside the majority Matheniko tribe members concentrated in the plains of the same district. Similarly, the Dodoth constitute the majority in Kaabong, though members of other tribes such as the Ik are

concentrated in certain areas of the district. In some places, however, especially those close to district borders, these boundaries are blurred. In most districts, particularly in urban areas, minority tribes cohabit with major tribes. It should also be noted that the three-district sample was not representative of Karamoja as a whole. Hence, any analysis based on tribes would have presented an incomplete picture.

Population data (size and number of households) for the three surveyed districts was based on estimates provided by WFP distribution lists and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, as well as from local authorities contacted by the research team.<sup>34</sup> This input indicated that the three districts had a combined population of 586,366, or 117,055 households, each comprising roughly 7.1 persons. As the unit of measurement selected for this survey was the household, a sampling strategy was calculated around the number of estimated households in the three aforementioned districts (N=117,055). Using a confidence level of 95 per cent and a confidence interval of 2, two-stage sample size calculations produced a sample size of 2,400 (rounded up from 2,356) households.

Drawing further on district population statistics, figures showed that Amudat district had 15,029 households (i.e. 12.8 per cent of the entire sample population), Kaabong district had 48,114 households (41.1%), and Moroto district had 53,912 households (46.1%).

## 2. *Probability proportional to size sampling*

Given the relative homogeneity between the three districts, it was not relevant to treat each of them as a separate cluster, and a two-stage stratified random sampling strategy was implemented. The first stratum was at district level and the second at sub-county level. Within each sub-county, villages were then selected based on geo-demographic (i.e. rural vs peri-urban) proportions. Overall, within 19 sub-counties, 35 villages were selected and an average of 70 households were interviewed in each village.

Each village was represented by its respective number of households. Villages were thus selected according to the probability of selection relative to their overall number of households; the larger the village, the

greater probability of selection. This specific method is called Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling whereby the chances of a village being selected in a certain sub-county are commensurate with its population size.<sup>35</sup>

3. *Rural vs peri-urban sampling*<sup>36</sup>

Each village usually has a peri-urban centre, with several hundred households amassed around a central market area, and an extensive rural periphery. The latter generally comprises less than 200 households per square kilometre, scattered along a main road or access artery. Based on a combination of population estimates, the proportion of peri-urban to rural households was 14.75% to 85.25%, or 1:2.4.

4. *Participant recruitment*

Before arriving in a selected village, the survey programme manager and the enumeration supervisor, who oversaw a group of ten enumerators, personally contacted the village chief to obtain permission to conduct the interviews. Once permission was granted, the entire team of enumerators travelled to the village (*Manyatta*) to meet with the village chief and subsequently to begin sampling.

The enumeration team started its work in the putative village centre. It then conducted random interviews in every *N*th household.<sup>37</sup> To ensure a gender balance in the sampling, male and female respondents were interviewed alternately. The sample was not, however, stratified into age sets. The tribe of the respondent was not an issue because most villages were exclusively inhabited by members of the same tribe. Even in urban areas residents were settled in homogenous groups based on their tribal origin. In Moroto town, for instance, the Tepeth were mostly confined to the Singla area (a settlement within Moroto municipality). The age of interviewees was restricted to 14 years and above; however, determining the age of potential interviewees was difficult because people in Karamoja do not follow a calendar year to keep track of their age. A section was therefore added to the household questionnaire for the interviewer to judge the age of the interviewee for data validation purposes.

## *Data handling and analysis*

### *1. Data entry and data validation*

A team of two data operators entered the Karamoja survey data on-site into a 'LimeSurvey'<sup>38</sup> database designed to minimize operator error. Prior to analyses, the data was validated and cleansed using stringent filtering criteria. All entries with an error count of more than five per cent were to be invalidated and removed,<sup>39</sup> but none surpassed that mark.

### *2. Weighting and confidence intervals*

Data analysis was conducted via strategic use of weighting, complemented by statistically determined confidence intervals. One set of weights was applied to the data. To maintain district-level proportions commensurate with the above-mentioned census data on district household proportions, the sample was weighted to take into account the following three factors: 1) sub-county population proportions, 2) geo-demographic characteristics (peri-urban rural), and 3) gender of respondent.

### *3. Confidence intervals in the presented figures*

In order to demonstrate visually the significant differences between groups, most bar charts are provided with confidence intervals. These lines, which hover above and below the reported percentage, represent the area within which the true percentage (i.e. the percentage that would apply to the actual population) would lie within 95 per cent confidence. This means that, if a confidence interval of one bar intersects that of another bar, these two bars are not statistically different from one another. Conversely, if the confidence intervals of one bar are exclusive of the confidence intervals of another bar (i.e. there is no overlap between the two), then a statistical difference can be inferred between the two respective bars.

## *Conduct*

The survey carried out data collection district by district. The survey team conducted household interviews and focus group discussions in Moroto,



Kaabong, and Amudat, in that order. The team was based in the respective district headquarters for the duration of the data collection process.

The interviews in the communities were conducted in the local languages: Karamojong was used in Moroto and Kaabong, and Pokot was used in Amudat. The questionnaires were translated into these two local languages. Accuracy of translation was confirmed through back translation.

### *Significance*

Significance is used as a term to underline important and meaningful findings. Some of these 'significant' findings are also 'statistically significant', in that they identify findings that are unlikely to have been uncovered by chance. Such cases of statistical significance will only be explicitly identified as such if they add to the explanation or understanding of the related findings.

