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THE VOICES OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND CHILD TRAFFICKING IN KARAMOJA REGION DISSEMINATION AND CO-CREATION REPORT FOR KARAMOJA REGION

SUPPLEMENT TO AGREEMENT NO. AID-7200AA18CA00009

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November 2022

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was produced for the LASER PULSE Project, managed by Purdue University. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



ABOUT LASER PULSE

LASER (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research) PULSE (Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) is a five-year, that delivers research-driven solutions to field-sourced development challenges in USAID partner countries.

The \$70M program is funded through USAID's Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub, and is implemented by a consortium led by Purdue University. Core partners include Catholic Relief Services, Indiana University, Makerere University, and the University of Notre Dame. A growing network of 2,700+ researchers and development practitioners in 61 countries are involved in various aspects of the program.

LASER PULSE collaborates with USAID missions, bureaus, independent offices, and other local stakeholders to identify research needs for critical development challenges, provides funds, and strengthens the capacity of researcher-practitioner teams to co-design solutions that translate into policy and practice.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Dr. Angella Atukunda, Dr. Julius Ssentongo, Dr. Sidionia Angom Ochieng, Mr. Vincent Abura, Dr. Frank Muhereza, Hon. John Bosco Ngoya, Mr. Daniel Lowalem and Ms. Agnes Nyabigambo, 2022. *The Voices of The Indigenous People And Child Trafficking in Karamoja Region - Dissemination and Co-Creation Report For Karamoja Region*. West Lafayette, IN: Long-term Assistance and Services for Research - Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (LASER PULSE Consortium).

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Acronyms

GBV	Gender-based violence
GUCC	Gulu University Constituent College in Moroto
LASER	Long-term Assistance and Services for Research
NFA	National Forestry Authority
PULSE	Partner University-Led Solutions Engine
RAN	ResilientAfrica Network
RFA	Request for Application
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority

Executive Summary

The Makerere University School of Public Health-ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) and the Gulu University Constituent College in Moroto (GUCC) conducted dissemination and community co-creation workshops to validate research findings on the marginalization of the indigenous peoples in Karamoja and child trafficking in the Napak District. The goal of the workshops was to jointly design innovative solutions to eliminate marginalization and child trafficking. Fifty-nine participants attended the indigenous peoples' workshop in the Moroto District, while 41 participants attended the child trafficking workshop in the Napak District. In both instances, participants included representatives of the districts' local governments, members of the central government, civil society organizations, Karamojong elders, survivors of child trafficking, and academics from the Moroto and Napak districts.

This report presents workshop deliberations on the voices of the Karamojong, who are marginalized indigenous peoples in two districts of northeastern Uganda: Moroto and Kaabong. It also discusses the development challenges driving child trafficking in the Napak District. It highlights the development needs of the Karamoja region, and issues surrounding child trafficking in the Napak District, which includes the causes, effects, and proposed mitigation measures. This report also contains communities' proposed solutions to help them safeguard against harm, support their development priorities, advocate for and exercise their rights, and build self-reliance.

The dissemination and co-creation process followed the human-centered design approach of needs-finding, problem-framing, and structured brainstorming (ideation) from which the project team generated recommendations. Before the workshop, the RAN and GUCC team shared the research findings from a study on the marginalization of the Karamoja indigenous peoples and child trafficking in the Napak District. The participants agreed that the findings accurately represented the challenges faced by indigenous peoples, including their marginalization and loss of dignity, and other issues driving children away from their homes and onto the streets. The co-creation exercise reinforced the development challenges identified by the research. For each of the challenges, the community was asked the following questions: 1) where and why the challenge occurred, 2) when it began, 3) who is most affected, and 4) how the challenge might be resolved.

Subsequently, attendees participated in in-depth group discussions of the development challenges that were structured as follows: grouping the challenges into key themes, ranking them in order of importance, and proposing illustrative solutions or innovations to address them. Challenges facing indigenous peoples were identified and ranked as follows: 1) landlessness and land disputes, 2) inadequate access to education, 3) erosion of language and culture, 4) inadequate livelihoods, 5) inadequate access to health, and 6) poor leadership and governance structures. Additionally, issues that require immediate attention to preserve the communities' identity and allow them to participate in community development projects were identified. These issues included insecurity, attitude/mindset change, and gender. They were considered cross-cutting because they affected all members of the community and thus were not ranked.

Child trafficking was attributed to seven factors ranked as follows: 1) poverty, 2) food insecurity, 3) peer influence, 4) insecurity in Karamoja, 5) inadequate family support and poor parenting practices, 6) gender-based violence, and 7) inadequate access to social services.

Workshop attendees reiterated that the Karamoja region is unique because of its geographical location and said that it needs a targeted approach to addressing the identified development challenges. Recommendations from the meetings were used to inform a request for applications (RFA) for innovative projects that will be prototyped, tested, and scaled to address the challenges.

1.0 Background

In partnership with the Makerere University School of Public Health-ResilientAfrica Network (RAN), the Gulu University Constituent College in Moroto (GUCC) conducted a dissemination and co-creation workshop to validate research findings on the marginalization of the Karamoja indigenous peoples and child trafficking in the Napak district. The meetings also focused on identifying priority areas and recommendations to later inform a process of solicitation for community-led interventions within the affected communities.

The first workshop focused on the marginalization of the indigenous peoples of Karamoja and was held on October 25-27, 2021 at Mt. Moroto Hotel in Moroto District (see Appendix 1 for the meeting agenda). Attendees (17 female and 42 male) included representatives of four indigenous peoples – the Ik, Tepeth, Kadam, and Ngikuliak. The second workshop was held on October 28-29, 2021, at the Napak District Farmer’s Hall (see Appendices 2) and focused on child trafficking in the Napak District with 41 attendees.

The selection of participants in both workshops ensured diversity of backgrounds, geographies, gender, and age. The districts’ technical, political, and cultural leaders, as well as representatives from civil society organizations, the Karamoja Regional Steering Committee, and USAID/Uganda Mission staff attended the workshop.

2.0 Approach to Dissemination and Co-Creation

Each meeting began with a presentation of key findings from the research on the marginalization of the Karamoja indigenous peoples and child trafficking in the Napak District. This was followed by a question and answer session, during which participants asked clarifying questions and contributed ideas as well as perspectives that enriched the study findings.

The community co-creation exercise followed the human-centered design approach of needs-finding, problem-framing, ideation, prototyping, and testing. This approach, which was developed by RAN, generated a range of desirable solutions to address prioritized community challenges that were both technically feasible and financially viable. These fed into the development of a request for applications (RFA) for innovative projects that will be prototyped, tested, and scaled to address development challenges affecting the Karamoja region.

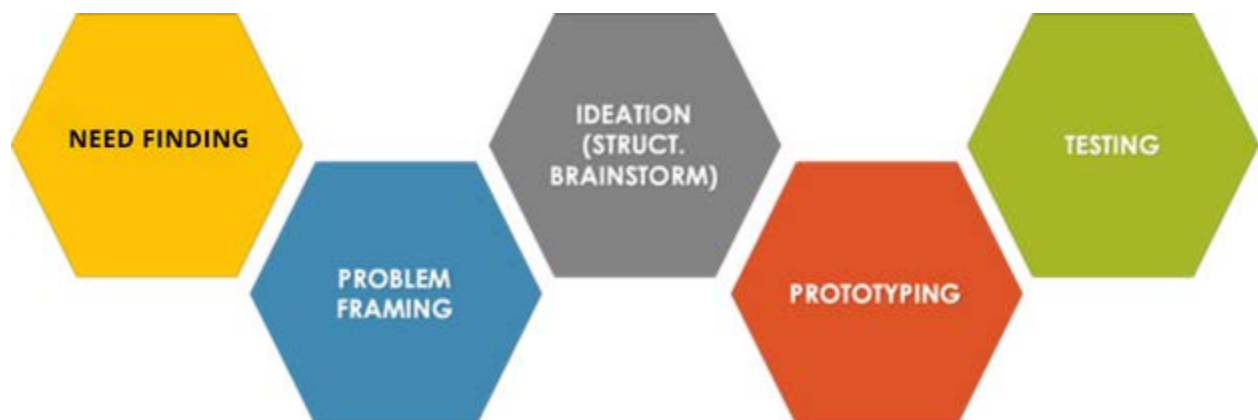


Figure.1: Human-Centered Design Approach Process

Needs-finding

Workshop participants thematically outlined key challenges impacting development among the indigenous peoples of the Karamoja region and the contributors to child trafficking in the Napak District. Each participant independently wrote on a sticky pad their responses to the following questions: why the challenge is happening; why it is important; where it occurs; who is involved; and who is most affected by it; when the challenge began; and how it could be used as an opportunity to steer development. Participants sorted their responses by previously identified themes.

Voting (Prioritization)

Responses to the questions above were rewritten on flip charts according to identified themes. Each participant was asked to select three priority issues (based on how commonly the issue occurred and how pertinent it was to them), write them on ballots, and cast the ballots. Some challenges were deemed as cross-cutting and thus were not subjected to voting.

Problem-framing

In smaller groups of 6–8, participants were tasked with creatively framing the core problems on the assigned development challenges. Each group tackled one challenge.

Brainstorming

Participants were asked to brainstorm potential solutions and interventions to the challenges they had identified. The outputs of this session later formed the basis of the call for applications for innovative projects that will be prototyped, tested, and scaled to address development challenges affecting the Karamoja region.

Subsequent sections of this report present in detail the development challenges that emerged from the needs prioritization, problem-framing, and brainstorming sessions of the workshops.

2.0 Key Themes and Takeaways from the Dissemination and Co-creation Workshops

2.1. Development Challenges Prioritized by the Indigenous Peoples

Representatives of all four groups of indigenous peoples in Karamoja (the Ik, Tepeth, Ngikuliak, and Kadam) agreed that they have a common ancestral origin and are closely related to one another. They also agreed that the research findings were a true representation of the challenges faced by all the indigenous groups in the Karamoja region.

“We have been kept down in several ways; ... including lack of peace and security, landlessness, poor social service delivery, poor governance, and poor economic empowerment.” Tepeth youth, Moroto District.

The challenges identified during the co-creation exercise corresponded with the research findings and included erosion of languages and culture, landlessness and land disputes, illiteracy due to poor access to education, insecurity, inadequate representation (leadership/governance), poor access to health services, poor societal attitude towards the indigenous peoples, and poverty. Of these, the following were identified as priority issues: landlessness and land disputes, poor access to education leading to illiteracy, erosion of languages and culture, and poverty (Figure 2). Insecurity, poor societal attitude towards the indigenous peoples, and gender were considered cross-cutting issues and thus were not subjected to a vote.

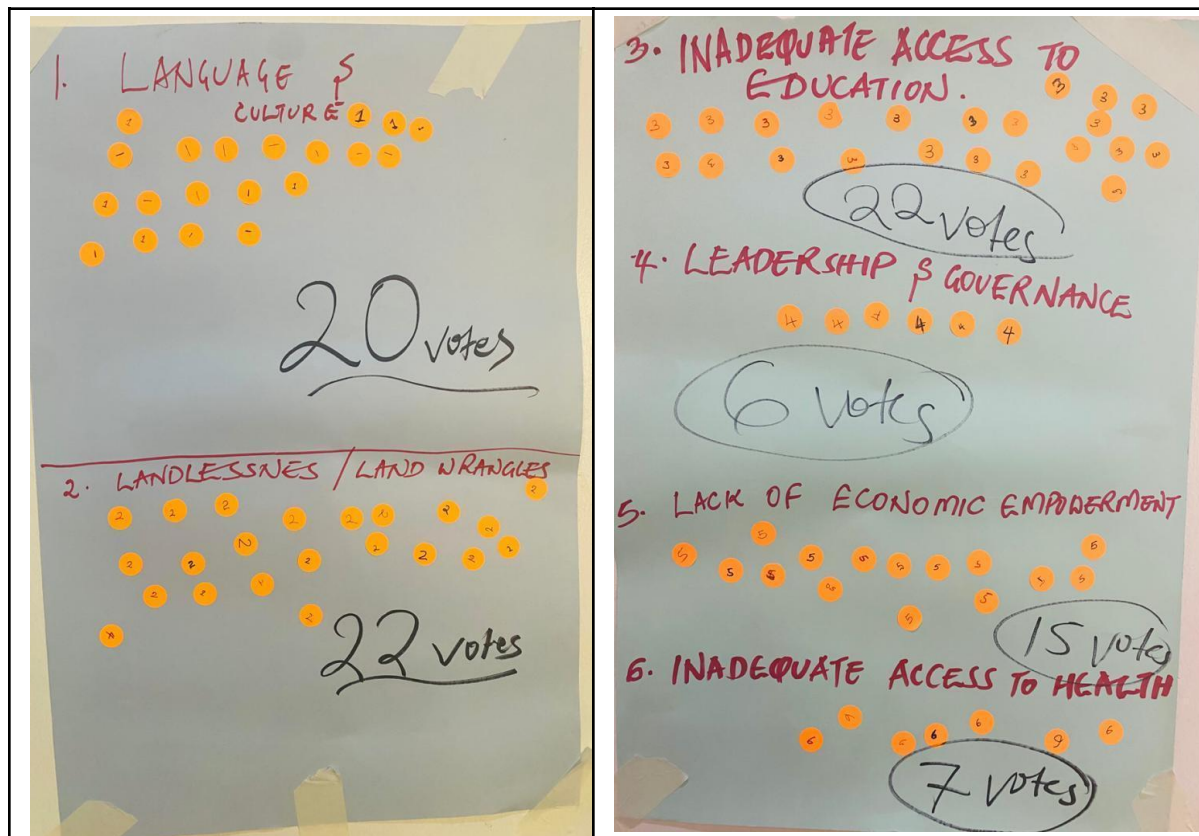


Figure 2: Prioritization of the development challenges of the indigenous peoples of Karamoja region through voting

- **Landlessness and Land Disputes**

Participants reported that historically, the indigenous peoples occupied the plains, but were forced into the mountainous areas of Karamoja by mightier neighboring tribes like the Dodoth. The most significant driving force for the move was insecurity caused by cattle raids, which prompted the indigenous peoples to flee to mountainous areas for safety. For instance, the Ik and Tepeth were often caught in the crossfire between the Dodoth and the Turkana, and the Matheniko and the Turkana. Another driving force was that the more dominant tribes took over the plains to graze their animals - the Matheniko and Dodoth respectively took over land previously owned by the Tepeth and Ik. Consequently, the indigenous peoples have been displaced farther into the mountains which are gazetted either as wildlife or forest reserves by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the National Forestry Authority (NFA), respectively, and cannot be utilized for some activities that the indigenous peoples need to improve their livelihood.

“The Karamojong have pushed us to the mountains. They say it's only the mountains that belong to us, yet even the mountains belong to the National Forestry Authority as a forest reserve! Where should we go? We are stuck!” Kadama community member

“We don't like to cut down trees and because of this conservation culture, the Government calls our land forest reserves.” Indigenous peoples leader, Ik community

- **Poor Access to Education**

It was reported that indigenous peoples have poor access to basic social services, especially education. This results in low literacy levels. The mountainous terrain hinders the establishment of schools - there are very few primary schools and no secondary schools in most parishes and sub-counties in the region. Where schools are established, the poor road network limits access by learners. Other factors that hinder access to education include inadequate school staffing levels, a poor attitude towards education, the use of children as a source of labor, and girls as young as 12 being married off to fetch dowry for their families.

Few teachers report to schools because indigenous peoples' communities are hard-to-reach and are also difficult for teachers to live in. Additionally, most community members are not able to afford the school fees or scholastic materials needed for their children to progress through all levels of education. As a result, dropout rates are high. Few children make it to upper primary.

“Parents need to change their mindset of looking at girls as sources of wealth; here in Karamoja girls are married off to get cows in return, even when they are still young.” Elected youth leader, Ik community

- **Erosion of Languages and Culture**

Participants noted with great concern that the languages of the indigenous peoples were gradually disappearing from the communities. For instance, it was noted that the language of instruction in early childhood education is *ḡakarimojong*, even in schools located in the

indigenous peoples' communities. The children grow up with little knowledge of their indigenous dialects, such as ichien (for the Ik), ηatepeth (for the Tepeth), ηikuliak (Ngikuliak), and ηikadam (Kadam). Subsequently, the children shy away from their heritage as they grow up and do not wish to identify with their culture.

“Our children are being taught in ngakarimojong language, yet we have our own language.”
Elder, Ik community

- **Inadequate Livelihoods for Economic Empowerment**

The majority of the indigenous peoples live in absolute poverty due to a combination of factors including the absence of viable sources of income for households, lack of assets for wealth generation, armed conflict, poor communication because of poor telephone and road networks, and local governments' general neglect and exclusion of indigenous peoples from services. Additionally, there is limited access to financial services including credit, and limited opportunities for small-scale retail trade and other businesses. Furthermore, alcohol abuse amongst the adult population affects their ability to work.

Unlike neighboring tribes, the indigenous peoples do not keep animals such as cattle. Instead, they depend on subsistence farming. Their main economic activity is wild honey harvesting, which is seasonal and therefore not a stable source of income. While tourism is a potential source of income, it is not well-developed. There is no infrastructure at the tourist sites to facilitate visitors' payments.

“... even when the tourists visit, they make us dance for them... afterward they just walk away without even listening to our problems or paying for our time.” Elected youth leader, Ik community

- **Inadequate Access to Health Services**

There are a few sparsely located health facilities that are understaffed and often inaccessible due to the mountainous terrain. For example, there are only two health centers in the entire Ik territory, located in Kamion and Timu. The majority of the population in the Ik territory lives 15 to 50 km from these health centers. Furthermore, there are no ambulance services, thus patients who require emergency medical attention are transported on improvised stretchers. Other issues hindering access to health services include poor motivation of medical staff, lack of staff accommodation, inadequate medicines and other health supplies, absence of maternity wards, and men and women sharing wards, which limits privacy.

Access to clean drinking water is limited as open water sources are shared with animals. It was also reported that most families lack latrines, and use bushes for waste disposal.

“We have resorted to traditional healers and TBAs (traditional birth attendants) for our women in labor. We have no ambulances but use stretchers to carry the women in labor to the Health Center IV once there is a need.” Kadam community representative

“Water is scarce, we always share our water sources with baboons and other wild animals; their fecal waste is shared with us.” Indigenous peoples leader, Ik community

- **Leadership and Governance Gaps**

The indigenous peoples suffer due to poor representation in local and central governments. While indigenous peoples elect representatives to the district local councils, the representatives are few and are often silenced by the dominant tribes who have majority control of the councils. This is exacerbated by the fact that some of the indigenous peoples' representatives are not well-educated or empowered and therefore get overshadowed during decision-making processes. There were also claims that elected leaders from the indigenous communities who get appointed to administrative positions at the district level rarely raise issues affecting their local communities for fear of being removed from their positions.

“In the district council committee, we have four Tepeth members but two are illiterate; they can't speak English, so we are silenced.” Elected leader, Tepeth community

- **Insecurity**

Frequent livestock theft and raids from neighboring dominant tribes such as the Dodoth, Jie, Matheniko, and Turkana cause insecurity in the Karamoja region. One cause of livestock raids is high bride-price demands which force these dominant tribes to raid livestock to give them to a bride's family. Raiding is also perpetuated by warriors for prestige, as those who conduct successful raids are usually revered in their communities.

The indigenous peoples generally do not own cattle, but the raiders from neighboring communities traverse their lands to reach other cattle-raising communities. While the majority of the Karimojong have been disarmed, their neighbors, the Turkana, still possess firearms. This makes the Karimojong vulnerable to frequent attacks from the Turkana. During the cattle raids, the indigenous peoples are sometimes caught in the crossfire between warring pastoral groups like the Matheniko, Jie, Bokora, and Dodoth in Uganda and the Turkana in Kenya. During the raids, the indigenous peoples are killed, and some children and women are abducted and made to carry looted items including food, while others are raped. These raids add to the poverty problem since they reduce productivity and school attendance and also increase problems like displacement, loss of life, and hunger.

“The Government of Uganda has disarmed us—yet our neighbors still have guns and attack us anytime.” Tepeth indigenous leader

“As cattle raiders returned from a failed raiding attempt, they slaughtered pupils who were on their way to school and women who were gardening. This was very harsh!” Ik community member

2.2 Recommendations for Addressing the Development Challenges Faced by the Indigenous Peoples

Table 1: Summary of development challenges faced by the indigenous peoples in Karamoja region and recommendations for addressing the development challenges

Development challenge	Recommendations to address the development challenge
Landlessness and land disputes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land reforms • Utilization of gazetted land for development
Inadequate access to education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote access to quality education • Encourage and empower parents to embrace education programs
Erosion of language and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote indigenous peoples language and culture • Create cultural centers
Inadequate livelihoods for economic empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve livelihood opportunities for indigenous peoples in Karamoja • Improve communication and information access
Inadequate healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to healthcare • Empower village health teams to treat common ailments
Leadership and governance gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower individuals for leadership and governance
Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve security in Karamoja

• Land Reforms for the Indigenous Peoples

Participants called for a review of the existing communal land ownership system in the indigenous communities as a means to protect peoples' land. A suggested approach was the issuance of ownership agreements to clans or subclans. Participants hoped that the Government and development partners would understand their existing traditional land management systems of clans, sub-clans, and families. They proposed that these could form the basis of communal land associations. It was felt that acceptance of these reforms could help them collectively manage land using modern land management principles. They also perceived these groups as crucial to resolving land disputes, which at their core are often boundary conflicts.

“Community ownership of land is most appropriate now. An individual may be convinced to sell but the process of acquiring community land is more protective. We can acquire clan land titles/agreements of ownership.” Ik indigenous leader

• Reimagine Access to Education

Participants mentioned that promoting access to quality education is key to ending the marginalization and vulnerability of the indigenous peoples in Karamoja. They emphasized the need to re-design the education system to better suit the indigenous peoples. For instance, the

curriculum should be revised to ensure that primary school pupils are taught in their local languages to encourage enrollment and retention of children in school. It was also proposed that schools furnish children with scholastic and non-scholastic materials such as sanitary towels, to increase the likelihood of learners from indigenous communities completing primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education.

Other proposed interventions included programs to encourage and empower parents to keep their children in school, mentorship by literate indigenous peoples (role models), and the penalization of child labor and non-school enrollment. The custom of using girls as a source of wealth through bride price (dowry) needs to be discouraged. One approach to enforcing this is enrolling girls in boarding schools since these schools are considered safer institutions.

“We can form community drama groups to communicate the benefits of education to parents and use indigenous peoples who have gone to school as role models to promote education.”
Kadama community representative

- **Promotion of Indigenous Peoples' Languages and Culture**

Participants agreed that indigenous peoples' languages and culture should be preserved and promoted through the following: the establishment of language and cultural centers; the composition of songs and traditional dances; and the documentation of existing languages for future generations. They discussed the need for cultural centers that would provide these services and that would also act as tourist attractions, earning revenue for communities, as they would hold the indigenous peoples' artifacts for display and purchase. Participants recommended that elders who are fluent in their indigenous languages should tell stories and compose songs, rhymes, and plays to empower and encourage young people to speak their languages. It was also thought that instruction during early childhood education should be in local languages instead of the *ɲakarimojong* language, to ensure indigenous children get a firm grasp of their own languages early.

“Let's promote the construction of traditional “tuklu” houses and cultural centers to attract tourists and use local tour guides to lead the tourists to the tour points, fetching us income.” Ik youth elected leader

- **Improving Livelihood Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in Karamoja**

Unlike the rest of the Karimojong who are mainly pastoralists, the only source of income for the indigenous peoples of the Karamoja region is subsistence farming and foraging. The indigenous peoples requested support to participate in other income-generating activities such as beekeeping, poultry farming, and a boosted tourism industry. They believed that by working in liaison with NFA and UWA, they could utilize the gazetted land for beekeeping, commercial tree planting, hosting cultural sites, eco-tourism, herbal medicine extraction, artisanal mining, hay production, sand mining, and road construction to improve their livelihoods. Workshop participants also requested better communication between the Government and the indigenous

peoples to boost the latter's involvement in income-generating programs coordinated by the Government.

“With sport hunting, we will benefit from the meat of the animals killed and also share in the revenue from these spot hunting activities.” Ik youth representative

“We can have collaborations between NFA, UWA, and the community to harmonize activities such as commercial tree planting, beekeeping, accessing cultural sites, eco-tourism, artifacts, herbal medicine extraction, artisanal mining, fuel for cooking, hay production, sand mining, and community access roads through the natural reserves.” Tepeth community member

“I would recommend that we specifically provide radios for our communities that could tune into translated information on government programs, NGO programs, research programs to local languages so that we are informed because otherwise we are cut out from the information which could improve our lives.” Ngikuliak community member

- **Empowerment for Leadership and Governance**

While the indigenous peoples have elected leaders who represent them in district and sub-county local councils, participants proposed that elected leaders receive empowerment workshops and training in advocacy to enhance their ability to participate in decision-making for the benefit of their communities. Participants also discussed ways that civil society and development partners could help them actively engage with all political officials to increase government awareness of indigenous peoples' needs. They felt this process would lead to more targeted interventions.

- **Improved Access to Healthcare**

Several suggestions on how to improve access to healthcare for the indigenous communities were made, including the construction of new health centers; the opening of access roads to existing health centers, and the provision of ambulance services for pregnant mothers and those in need of specialized care. Existing health centers also need to be upgraded and equipped with qualified personnel, better housing to encourage the onsite presence of staff, and stocks of drugs and other necessary equipment.

The continued reliance on traditional birth attendants (TBAs) to manage childbirth should be discouraged because it has contributed to high maternal and neonatal mortality. TBAs should be encouraged to refer mothers to health centers as guided by the Ministry of Health. Deliberate efforts to train members of indigenous communities in medical fields such as nursing, midwifery, and clinical medicine could increase the number of staff delivering critical services at health centers. Participants also recommended that village health teams (VHTs) be trained to manage common ailments. These steps would also aid in reversing common negative attitudes towards modern medicine and the facilities where it is delivered.

In addition, communities need to be sensitized to modern hygiene and sanitation practices, including the use of latrines and good grooming. This will help to prevent prevalent sanitation-related illnesses, such as scabies.

“On a sad note, our community has been separated by a river following heavy rains and most of the people cannot cross it to access the only health center. Several people have lost their lives in an attempt to seek medical care as they crossed the river, especially after the rains. Why can't the Government construct a bridge to ease access?” Tepeth Youth

- **Improve Security in Karamoja region**

Participants called on the Government of Uganda to provide security for the Karamoja indigenous peoples, who though not directly involved in livestock raids, still get caught up in the crossfire between neighboring raiders and attacked communities. Dominant neighboring tribes must be restrained from raiding other communities for livestock. Since cattle raiding is conducted partially for prestige and partly to obtain the cattle that a suitor needs to pay a bride price, there must be a mindset change throughout the communities in Karamoja. Participants supported the disarmament efforts, especially of the few Karamojong who still possess firearms, and of neighboring pastoral tribes in Kenya and South Sudan to help reduce insecurity in the Karamoja region. The Government should also enforce security at the border points through which raiders from pastoral tribes in Kenya and South Sudan have entered the indigenous peoples' territories.

3.3 Development Challenges as Prioritized by Communities Affected by Child Trafficking

The major development challenges that drive child trafficking in the Napak district of Karamoja are insecurity in Karamoja, peer influence, inadequate family support including poor parenting practices, gender-based violence (GBV), and food insecurity (Figure 3). Participants also discussed a cross-cutting challenge of inadequate access to social services, especially healthcare and education.



Figure 3: Community co-creation process on drivers of child trafficking in Napak District.

● **Poverty**

“The biggest challenge causing child trafficking in Napak is poverty” exclaimed one of the district leaders during the Co-creation meetings. Participants reported that children, especially teenagers, move to towns such as Jinja, Mbale, Kampala, Gulu, and Nairobi to seek employment so as to support their families. Parents often send their teenage children to search for jobs to support their younger siblings. Additionally, once girls marry as teenagers (a common practice), they are forced to move to neighboring districts in search of casual employment to support their young families. During a recent rehabilitation activity, the girls who were returned to their communities reported having left their homes because their parents (especially fathers) pressured them into marriage so the parents could earn a bride price.

“The children who came back, when interviewed, mentioned poverty and hunger as having caused them to leave Napak.” Leader, Napak district

“Parents have made the children fend for the families. ‘Who will feed the family?’ they say, and encourage children to go do domestic work and send the money back home instead of allowing them to attend school.” Elected leader, Napak district

- **Food Insecurity**

Indigenous communities have dealt with food insecurity since the 1970s. This insecurity is a crucial issue because it has led to severe malnutrition among children and adults and also to their migration to other communities. Seasonal hunger-induced migration increases their susceptibility to child trafficking. Participants reported that household food insecurity mainly affected children, the elderly, and women who were either pregnant or breastfeeding.

Food scarcity is attributed to the semi-arid climate in the Karamoja region, a condition that has been worsened by severe deforestation and rainfall that is insufficient for crop production. The problem is exacerbated by cultural norms, for instance, the tendency of waiting for the first rains to end before plowing, which delays planting. Communities have not been trained on improved food production practices.

“When these children were intercepted and brought back, they were interviewed and they mentioned poverty and hunger as reasons for leaving their homes.” Elected leader, Napak district

“Sometimes families fight over food because of scarcity and sometimes they fight because the men are drunk.” Community elder, Napak district

- **Peer Influence**

Workshop participants reported that children aged 10 to 17 years are the most targeted for trafficking. They discussed how children in this age group are highly influenced by trafficked peers who return to the communities with valuable items such as smartphones and nice clothes. Furthermore, trafficking is usually disguised as a form of employment. For instance, children between the ages of 12 and 16 years, especially females, are trafficked into casual work, especially sorting beans or cereal like rice at farms and warehouses. Returnees share (false) information about well-paying jobs in towns and cities, thus motivating other children to escape from home in search of a better life. The participants noted that these persuasive interactions often take place wherever people congregate, including churches, markets, soccer grounds, along highways, and entertainment venues in trading centers, as well as during mundane activities such as collecting firewood.

- **Insecurity in Karamoja region**

Insecurity was identified by workshop participants as one of the major causes of the region’s underdevelopment.

Historically, cattle raiding was between the Karimojong sub-tribes (the Jie, Matheniko, Bokora, and Pian) and the Turkana and Pokot of neighboring Kenya. The main driver for cattle raiding was territorial control of pasture and water for livestock, and the raiding was done with spears, bows and arrows. The 1970s witnessed a turning point for increased armed cattle raiding and escalated insecurity. This was done for commercial purposes and resulted in the loss of lives and property, and human migration to peaceful communities within and outside of Karamoja.

Additionally, Karamoja started to experience sub-ethnic counterraids, for example between the Matheniko of Moroto and the Bokora of Napak.

There was also a breakdown of traditional governance systems which has led to systemic levels of corruption and the disenfranchisement of elders and kraal leaders. Attempts to build peaceful co-existence between sub-ethnic groups have been futile despite high levels of government investment in disarmament and wealth creation efforts. This has led to the witnessed cyclical periods of relative peace and security within Karamoja.

Over the years, as these raids took livestock from families, adults and children have lost a main source of work and income. Without livestock, the primary way for out of school children to survive is to search for odd jobs outside Karamoja, which raises their susceptibility to child trafficking.

Workshop participants reported that for others, the persistent poverty in the Karamoja region led them to actually participate in raiding other communities for cattle and food. They mentioned alcohol and drug abuse as contributing factors in family insecurity and participation in raids. The disruption and migration from this time continues to impact life today.

Additionally, in situations of insecurity, the women who are often the providers of household basic needs are often unable to provide food for their families. As a result, men tend to physically abuse them or subject them to GBV.

Although communities have had dialogue to improve policing and the Government has also deployed some security forces, insecurity still prevails in the Napak District.

“..... as a result of the cumulative raids, now families are poor, adults have no livelihood sources, there are no animals to rear and the children are young. Hence, families traffick their children to do odd jobs to earn some money to send back home to sustain everyone else.”

Indigenous leader, Napak district

- **Inadequate Family Support and Poor Parenting Practices**

The main ideal goal of parenting is to provide basic needs and guidance to children at home. However, in Karamoja, especially in Napak District, the lack of male employment, often tied to alcoholism, means that homes have more dependents and fewer breadwinners. Worse still, some children even become alcoholics themselves. In villages, men were reported to be lazy and it's said that they usually marry off their young girls to generate income or wealth that comes from receiving cattle as a bride price. Teenage brides usually relocate after marriage searching for jobs to provide for their new family, including the husband and his parents.

Workshop participants highlighted that in most families, men may be present, but they do not support their households. Instead, women are the main providers for families. Women's responsibilities include building houses for shelter, paying school fees, and providing food. This is a common practice in northern Uganda. Cases have been reported where mothers “sell off” their children to traffickers to earn money.

Inadequate family support and poor parenting practices lead to child abuse, which has further aggravated child trafficking. Children are exposed to violence at home, which pushes them to seek seemingly safer environments in towns and cities, where they take on petty jobs to earn a living. The issue of inadequate family support impacts most households and mainly affects women and girls since they are the primary providers at the household level. Pressure from parents for bride price also drove some girls to flee their homes, to avoid early marriages.

“The women are the ones who take care of men in this culture, and when a woman has been married off, she runs off to look for employment to take care of her new family.” Community elder, Napak district.

They make deals for the girl, once it’s her time to be married off, so she runs off and is aided to escape to Kampala or another town.” Indigenous leader, Napak district

Poor parenting became more evident in the 1990s as a result of the forceful disarmament and associated loss of livestock. Families were forced to flee to neighboring districts, and this disruption distorted the traditional family structure and parenting roles. However, continuous sensitization, through radio talk shows which involve testimonies from victims or survivors, has been organized in the intervening years. Community dialogues, especially in the most affected areas were organized as well. Finally, there are also Government of Uganda efforts to educate parents in the Karamoja region against this vice. Despite these interventions, some parents still push their children toward trafficking situations.

“Many parents have contributed to trafficking. When children reach age 15, they are often sent away to do domestic work and provide household items such as mattresses and utensils. When one parent has these things and boasts, other parents then begin to send away their children.”
Elected leader, Napak District

- **Gender-based Violence (GBV)**

The Karamoja region is very patriarchal, hence the reason for men’s dominance over women, and the high rates of GBV. Men are perceived to be superior with more rights, benefits, and opportunities than women. While women are expected to look after families, they do not have control over family resources such as land. Household wealth, irrespective of how it is accumulated, belongs to the men. In instances where women fail to provide for their families, men become violent, and household GBV begins. The participants discussed how most women and children were traumatized by this cycle, which brought about negative impacts on household economic productivity and social organization. Participants drew connections between GBV and trafficking, as family victims often flee their abusers and end up on the receiving end of human and child trafficking.

- **Inadequate Access to Social Services, Especially Education**

The study found that there are only 51 primary schools and only four secondary schools for the 33 parishes (with 226 villages) in Napak District. Consequently, children travel very long

distances to access education. Worse still, parents discourage children from attending school, as they believe that education neither meets their immediate needs nor is a good investment of time. As a result, boys rear cattle during school hours, while girls support their mothers by taking care of babies, cultivating crops, and performing other household chores. Workshop participants emphasized the need for parents to be sensitized to understand the importance of education for their children, saying that this would improve enrollment and student retention.

“The poor road network, insecurity, and a poor attitude by parents towards education has hindered children’s schooling. The schools are few and far from homes.” Elected leader, Napak District

3.4 Recommendations for Addressing the Development Challenges which Drive Child Trafficking

Table 2: Recommendations for Addressing the Development Challenges which Drive Child Trafficking

Prioritized development challenges	Recommendations to address child trafficking
Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve agriculture in the Karamoja region; engage in income-generating activities. ● Form farmers' associations and programs.
Food insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase crop yields and improve food storage.
Peer influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a peer-to-peer counseling program.
Insecurity in Karamoja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish community policing committees.
Inadequate family support and parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop community mobilization and train parents in roles and responsibilities. ● Peer-to-peer support for parents to discourage the vice of sending away children for employment.
Gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish community dialogue and GBV police posts
Inadequate access to social services, especially education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitize parents to the benefits of education and encourage children’s enrollment in school. ● Make more investments in education in the Napak district.

● **Improve Agriculture in the Karamoja Region to Improve Livelihoods**

Workshop participants believe that the use of modern farming methods will result in improved incomes and livelihoods for communities in the Karamoja region. They also suggested the formation of farmers' associations to aid farmers to secure markets for their products and to

provide affordable loans through savings and loan schemes. It was believed that the farmers' associations and programs could also be used as platforms for zoning land in Napak District for crop production. They hoped that fertile areas would be marked for practicing improved agro-economic practices that guarantee better yields, improved food security, and improved income.

- **Increase Crop Yields and Improve Food Storage**

Respondents advocated that communities establish food storage facilities that would gather food during harvests and make it available at a cost during extended droughts. Participants also suggested lobbying development partners such as the World Food Program and the Government of Uganda to provide food supplies in periods of scarcity. Additionally, food storage needs to be encouraged at the household level. They felt that Napak livelihood associations had a strong role to play in food storage, and they also advocated market regulations that would encourage the saving of food for consumption during periods of food scarcity.

- **Develop a Peer-to-Peer Counseling Program**

The challenge of peer influence among children could be solved through peer-to-peer counseling programs in schools. A creative environment would be provided in which facilitates children's interaction with other children through drama, poems, and songs that would encourage pupils to stay in school, while also communicating the negative impact of being trafficked. These programs would play a strong role in the reintegration of child trafficking survivors into their communities.

All children in the region should have access to information on the dangers of child trafficking and the broad range of its impacts, including sex abuse and exploitation, unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and other STIs, limited access to proper nutrition and healthcare while on the streets, and physical injuries as extreme as illegal organ harvesting. Development partners that fight child trafficking should be encouraged to document and disseminate success stories from adult returnees. These approaches will provide awareness of the realities of trafficking and will help children to resist trafficking.

“The testimonies of returnees can be used to discourage the vice. For example, the testimony of the girl who returned after her kidney was harvested in Nairobi. She says she regained consciousness and had a fresh surgical wound on her abdomen, yet she was not sick. When she returned, she was examined and found to have one kidney, such stories can be used to discourage child trafficking.” Community member, Napak District

- **Establish Community Policing Committees**

Since insecurity has been linked to homelessness among children and adults, and since it impacts individuals and communities, participants gave several suggestions for improving policing. Community policing committees could be established and empowered to gather information on planned cattle raids and to work with the army or police to intervene and maintain security. The Government should deploy more security officers in impacted regions. Participants recommended the forceful disarmament of the Karamojong who still possess firearms.

- **Develop Community Mobilization and Peer-to-Peer Support**

The challenge of inadequate family support and poor parenting could be resolved through community mobilization. Participants supported the idea of mindset-change activities that encourage communities to share more strongly in the upbringing of Karamajong children. As part of this process, parents from families whose children have experienced child trafficking could share their stories with other parents to help deter families from participating in trafficking.

“What if parents of the children who returned with consequences such as pregnancies and HIV talked to fellow parents? They would understand it better.” Community elder, Napak district

- **Establish Community Dialogue and GBV Police Post**

Participants emphasized the need to sensitize communities on the dangers of GBV through community dialogue. They recommended that police posts be established in each sub-county for simplified reporting and resolution of GBV cases. They also felt that families should require their husbands and fathers to be more engaged in family affairs, to provide for their family members, and to be good role models.

- **Sensitize Parents About the Benefits of Education and Encourage Enrollment of Children in School**

Participants expressed the need to continuously sensitize communities on the benefits of education, especially for girls. Communities should also be encouraged to participate in the Government’s affordable education programs such as Universal Primary Education and Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) Programme in Karamoja. In addition, the Government should support existing schools by providing more teachers and more staff housing, and by opening access roads to facilities. These interventions will pair well with the government’s ongoing work to improve access to education in Napak by building schools in more parishes and villages.

3.0 Conclusion

This report presents findings from dissemination and co-creation workshops held in the Moroto and Napak Districts. Those workshops shared findings from research conducted in Karamoja and brainstormed on collaborative, innovative ways to address development challenges identified during the research. Workshop participants agreed that the findings accurately represented how indigenous peoples are marginalized and treated with less dignity, as well as the issues driving children into trafficking away from their homes and onto the streets.

The indigenous peoples ranked inadequate access to education and landlessness highest on the list of development challenges affecting them. They felt that solutions to these two issues would best address the marginalization that they encounter. Other highly-ranked challenges included: erosion of language and culture, lack of economic empowerment, inadequate healthcare, leadership and governance gaps, and insecurity.

Regarding child trafficking in the Napak District, the meeting highlighted the drivers in order of their priorities as poverty, food insecurity, peer influence, inadequate parenting, insecurity in Karamoja, GBV, and inadequate access to social services, especially education.

A lot of work and resources are required to address the situations creating marginalization among the Karamoja indigenous peoples and child trafficking in Napak communities. Stakeholders from the affected groups provided recommendations for their future engagement in development projects that address these challenges. Most importantly, they want to participate in interventions that address the development gaps and that target specific, prioritized challenges while working towards inclusivity and cultural preservation.

Appendix 1: Dissemination and Co-creation Agenda for Indigenous Communities of Karamoja Region at Mt. Moroto Hotel, October 25-27, 2021

Time	Activity	Facilitator	Moderator
DAY 1 (Monday, October 25, 2021)			
8.00-9.00 am	Arrival, Registration, Prayer, and Introductions	All	
9.00-9.10 am	Brief background of the research	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng
9.10-9.20 am	Brief background about the participating consortium	Dr. Julius Ssentongo	
9.20-9.30 am	Remarks: Chairperson, Karamoja Regional Steering Committee	Ms. Susan Akello	&
9.30-9.40 am	Remarks: CAO Moroto	Mr. Charles Kumakech	Mr. Vincent Abura
9.40-9.50 am	Opening Remarks: LC 5 Chairperson, Moroto	Hon. David Koryang	
9.50-10.00 am	Overview of Workshop Agenda, Structure, and Approach	Dr. Julius Ssentongo	
10.00-10.30 am	Overview of the study (objectives, study sites, sample size and selection, data collection methods and period of study)	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng	
10.30-11.00am	Coffee/Tea Break & Networking	All	
11.00-11.30 am	Presentation: Research findings on the IK	Dr. Frank Muhereza	Mr. Vincent Abura
11.30-12.00 pm	Question and Answer Session		
12.00-12.30 pm	Presentation: Research findings on the Tepeth	Hon. John Bosco Ngoya	
12.30-1.00pm	Question and Answer Session		
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch	All	
2.00-2.10 pm	Remarks: USAID/Uganda Mission	Mr. Denis Okwar	Dr. Julius Ssentongo
2.10-3.00 pm	Need finding - Group Discussions (Ik, Tepeth, Kadam, Tepeth-Napak, Ngikuliak)	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
3:00-5:00 pm	Clustering needs	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
DAY 2 (Tuesday October 26, 2021)			
8:30am– 9:30 am	Prioritizing needs	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Hon John Bosco Ngoya
9.30-10.30 am	Q&A about prioritizing needs	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
10.30-11.00 am	Break Tea/Coffee & Networking		

Time	Activity	Facilitator	Moderator
11.00-12.00pm	Needs finding	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Dr. Sidonia
12.00-1.00 pm	Problem framing	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Angom Ochieng
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch		
2.00-3.00 pm	Problem framing	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Mr. Vincent Abura
3.00-5.00 pm	Possible Solutions / Recommendations (Group Discussions)	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
DAY 3 (Wednesday October 27, 2021)			
8.30-9.30 am	Setting the stage for Co-creation	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Dr. Frank Muhereza
9.30-10.30 am	Plenary Discussion on solutions and recommendations	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
10.30-11.00 am	Break Tea/Coffee & Networking		
11.00-1.00 pm	Development of the RFA strategy and objectives	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch		
2.00-4.00 pm	Development of the RFA strategy and objectives	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Hon John Bosco Ngoya
4.00-5.00 pm	Evaluation of the Workshop & Departure	Agnes/Julius/Angella	

Appendix 2: Dissemination and Co-creation Agenda for the Meeting to Discuss Child Trafficking at Napak District Farmers' Hall October 28-29, 2021

Time	Activity	Facilitator	Moderator
DAY 1 (Thursday, October 28, 2021)			
8.00-9.00 am	Arrival, Registration, Prayer, and Introductions	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng
9.00-9.05 am	Brief background of the research	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng	Ochieng
9.05-9.10 am	Brief background about the participating consortium	Dr. Julius Ssentongo	&
9.10-9.15 am	Remarks: Chairperson, Karamoja Regional Steering Committee	Ms. Susan Akello	Mr. Vincent Abura
9.15-9.20 am	Remarks: USAID/Uganda Mission	Ms. Jackee Batanda	
9.20-9.25 am	Remarks: CAO Napak	Mr. Jack Byaruhanga	
9.25-9.35 am	Opening Remarks: LC 5 Chairperson, Moroto	Hon. David Koryang	
9.35-9.40 am	Overview of Workshop Agenda, Structure, and Approach	Dr. Julius Ssentongo	
9.40-10.00 am	Overview of the study (objectives, study sites, sample size and selection, data collection methods, and period of study)	Dr. Sidonia Angom Ochieng	
10.00-10.30 am	Research findings on child trafficking	Mr. Vincent Abura	
10.30-11.00 am	Break Tea/Coffee & Networking		
11.00-11.30 pm	Question and Answer Session		Dr. Frank Muhereza
11.30-1.00 pm	Prioritizing needs	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch		
2.00-3.00 pm	Need-finding sessions (Group Discussions)	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Hon John Bosco Ngoya
3.00-4.30 pm	Problem framing	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
DAY 2 (Friday, October 29, 2021)			
8.30-9.30 am	Structured brainstorming (Ideation)	Agnes/Julius/Angella	
9.30-10.30 am	Possible solutions and recommendations for Trafficking in People	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Mr. Vincnet Abura
10.30-11.00 am	Break: Tea/Coffee & Networking		
11.00-1.00 pm	Development of the RFA strategy and objectives	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Dr. Frank Muhereza

Time	Activity	Facilitator	Moderator
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch		
2.00-4.00 pm	Development of the RFA strategy and objectives	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Dr. Sidonia Angom
4.00-4.30 pm	Evaluation of the Workshop & Departure	Agnes/Julius/Angella	Ochieng