



**OPERATION
WEALTH
CREATION**

REPORT ON THE NORTHERN UGANDA QUESTION
*Addressing the current challenges in the greater Northern
Uganda (WALK)*

**TO THE SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA - 28TH AUGUST 2024**

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**KARAMOJA PEACE AND
TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Madam Rt. Hon. Speaker,

We recognize the Constitutional and critical role of the institution of Parliament. We are further cognizant of the major constitutional and statutory roles of Parliament namely: Representation, Legislation, Appropriation and Oversight. It is the reason OWC has deemed it necessary to present this report to you Rt. Hon Speaker.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, as you are very well aware, Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) was established by H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda under **Articles 98(1) and 99(1) (4) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as amended) and Sections 8(1) and 38(2) of the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces' Act, 2005.** Its roles are inter alia to eliminate poverty in Uganda as social reformers; to monitor the implementation of Government Programs through the Apex coordinating mechanisms, to advise H.E. the President on what is not going right in the economy and to propose corrective measures.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, in addressing the current challenges facing the country and in particular the greater Northern Uganda (West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja- WALK), H.E. the President and Parliament are acutely aware that the colonial masters created Uganda as a colonial economic exploitation project.

The Uganda Colonial Project was part of the grand global colonial master plan that was signed into law on the 18th day of June 1452 as evidenced in the Doctrine of Discovery, which is clearly articulated in the document called “Dum Diversas – Doctrine of Discovery”.

The Doctrine of Discovery was, in the grand scheme of things, the basis for the famous explorations spearheaded by among others **Vasco Da Gama and Christopher Columbus, David Livingstone, John Hanning Speke, Henry Morton Stanley** etc.

The Berlin conference was one of the phenomenal events that operationalized Dum Diversas in the scramble and partition of Africa. At the Berlin conference, Africa's interests and aspirations were sacrificed at the altar of a political buffet among the colonial powers. These points have been clearly articulated by His Excellency President Gen Yoweri Kaguta Museveni at various national and international fora.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, it is imperative to underscore the fact that civilization began in Egypt in Africa. It is also imperative to underscore the fact that Europeans became aware ahead of us of the immense mineral wealth and other natural resources of Africa.

It is further imperative to underscore the fact that the great Kingdoms of Africa such as Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Buganda and Bunyoro were highly developed and organized; involved in trade and commerce and practised medicine. For instance, the Bakiga in Kigezi and the Baganda in Buganda performed caesarean operations while brain surgery was done in Timbuktu in West Africa. Furthermore, the Madi in Moyo and the Bakiga in Kigezi were involved in iron smelting and tools. This was long before medicine and metallurgical science were practiced in Europe. This was therefore the basis for the Scramble and partition of Africa and the focus was mainly on the Great Lakes Region being among the richest in the world.

The tactics used by European powers to achieve this colonial project in Uganda were through distortion of knowledge through theoretical and selective education, divide and rule; imposition of chiefs through indirect rule; and promotion of the blame game between and among different communities. For example, in terms of selective and falsified knowledge, they have never told us that the 2nd longest wall in the world is in Benin which is 10,000 miles while the Chinese Great Wall is 13,000 miles; and that the oldest university in the world is in Morocco in Africa established 859 AD during the era dubbed Golden Age of Islam, whereby a young Muslim woman called Fatima Al- Fahri, established the University of Al Qarawiyyin in Fes Morocco

The practice of African medicine was branded as witchcraft and evil; hunting by local communities was called poaching but the same hunting done by colonialists and their agents was called sport hunting. Whereas the common person's drink was called local, inferior, dangerous and outlawed, the white man's Scottish Whisky was promoted. To the colonialists and their agents, every African product was considered local and inferior while promoting the sale of colonial manufactured goods. This is how the skewed economy in favour of colonial Europe was engineered, promoted and enforced.

While promoting their own products, goods and services, the colonial administrators created economic distortions and disparities under their policy of divide and rule; setting tribes and communities against each other. For example, Buganda was earmarked for trade and

commerce while North, East and West were earmarked to provide labor to support the colonial economy. Karamoja and Acholi sub-regions remained closed districts until much later.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, whereas the Asians have declared that the last century was for the Europeans, and that this one is theirs, and have since worked to actualize it, with number two, three and five biggest economies in the world being in Asia now, Africa must as of necessity pronounce itself that this too is the African century and Uganda must take lead. Africa must rediscover and redefine itself to assert its independence if we have to not only survive but live with dignity and strength. We must now begin the African Renaissance.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, the Parliament of Uganda must now be seen to take deliberate steps to correct the colonial distortions in post-independence Uganda. This implies that we must develop and construct our own new African Philosophy as expounded by Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela and Yoweri Kaguta Museveni to mention but a few. New concepts and new practices to drive Uganda in the new world order must be championed by this Parliament headed by you a lady.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Migration into WALK has a complex history shaped by diverse communities from South Sudan and Ethiopia and a few from DRC. Over centuries, groups such as the Luo, Ateker (including Karamojong, Iteso, and Langi), Madi, Lugbara and Bantu peoples migrated for various reasons, including famine, disease, and conflict. This resulted in a heterogeneous society led by local chiefs, preventing the formation of centralized kingdoms.

The second phase was an incursion by the Arabs looking for slaves and natural resources, which disrupted the normalcy of the population.

The third phase was the incursion of the Europeans before and after the Berlin conference mainly to out-compete the Arabs for natural resources and to control the Nile and establish the spheres of influence. This was the reason for redrawing the borders of Uganda and the DRC, the Sudan and Kenya.

The fourth incursion was the establishment of the British control of Uganda's protectorate. At this epoch, Uganda was only 1.6 million people and the British decided to use Buganda as the tactical base for controlling the rest of Uganda and for generating its wealth. Therefore, the

farms e.g. for coffee, tea, cotton, factories, and banks were all started in Buganda hence setting the pace for the skewed economy as it is today.

The colonial period negatively affected WALK, as the British authorities focused 90% of government spending on central regions, particularly Buganda while neglecting WALK. This led to economic disparities, with WALK remaining primarily agro-pastoral and underdeveloped and mainly used to provide labour, raw materials mainly cotton and tobacco and to serve in the army, police, prisons and casual laborers.

The legacy of soldiers being predominantly from WALK and in charge of the state, when they broke loose resulted in the subsequent challenges, including political instability and social fragmentation. This would later set the stage for the challenges as can be traced in the turbulent constitutional history from 1966-71, which was low-intensity warfare, and from 1971 to 2006, which was medium and high-intensity warfare and subsequently engulfed the entire WALK sub-regions in violence and war for more than 35 years.

With the gradual end of the war in various degrees in the WALK sub-regions, emergency Government and donor-funded relief and reconstruction programs started and have continued in various forms e.g. NUSAF, NURP, PRDP, KDP, KDA, CAP, KALIP and DRDIP, VSLs, SACCOs, PDM, etc. have been introduced to empower local economies and improve financial inclusion. To this far, approximately UGX 7 trillion has been spent in WALK sub-regions to entrench development.

From this stage, where do we go as WALK?

WALK VISION AND MISSION

The mission is to lift the economy of WALK sub-regions so that they can contribute to the tenfold economic growth of Uganda as envisioned by H.E. the President from USD 50bn to USD 500bn in the next ten years.

The execution of this mission shall be anchored on principles, fundamentals and the strategy of Museveniomics.

Whereas this is the case and as Parliament, we are aware of the financial implications. We would like you to consider amendment of the NSSF Act to create more NSSFs so that the country can have more players in the sector such as teachers' nssf, boda boda nssf, medical

and allied services nssf, teachers', taxi drivers and touts nssf, market traders and vendors' nssf etc. These are critical control points in the financial industry to enable the country to leapfrog. This is because low-cost financing is available in the country and even rich countries like Japan and Singapore that have no resources have used this for long-term investment and have developed.

To this end, we are aware of low-hanging fruits like the important markets such as Juba in South Sudan where we have supplied food items worth USD 350m in 2023 and USD 700m this year. South Sudan now requires food worth USD 2bn. The DRC is also in need of meat and this market needs to be satisfied. The region imports over USD 10bn of foods that can grow in Uganda. For instance, wheat that grows very well in East Acholi and Karamoja can sell very well in Eastern African markets.

The above activities can only enhance WALK to take the necessary steps to become a strong economic zone and change the economy of Uganda on top.

Please find herein below the data of the various regions of WALK sub-regions for your attention and action. Some of the data is not complete from within the districts indicating they must be developed within the respective districts for compliance.

CHAPTER ONE: WEST NILE SUB REGION

1.1 BRIEF BACKGROUND ABOUT WEST NILE

Overview of West Nile, Uganda

West Nile is a vibrant sub-region located in northwestern Uganda, spanning approximately 16,000 square kilometres. It is home to a population of around 3.98 million people, with a poverty rate of 34.9%. The sub region borders South Sudan to the north and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the west, making it a strategic area for trade and cross-border interactions. West Nile hosts about 777,751 refugees, primarily from South Sudan, representing 51% of Uganda's total refugee population.

Demographics and Administrative Divisions

West Nile is composed of thirteen districts: Arua, Adjumani, Koboko, Terego, Maracha, Moyo, Pakwach, Nebbi, Yumbe, Zombo, Arua City, Obongi, and Madi-Okollo. The region is characterized by its ethnic diversity, with various groups including the Lugbara, Madi, Alur, Kakwa, Bari, Kuku, Okebu, and Aringa. This diversity contributes to a rich cultural heritage, with distinct languages, customs, and social structures. The region is predominantly rural, with subsistence farming being the primary economic activity.

Economic Activities

The economy of West Nile is predominantly based on subsistence farming, with key crops including cassava, sorghum, simsim, finger millet, field peas, and beans. The region's agricultural practices are crucial for food security and the livelihoods of local communities. However, the focus on subsistence agriculture limits economic diversification. In recent years, there have been efforts to promote cash crops and alternative livelihoods, such as the cultivation of vegetables and other sustainable crops, in response to changing economic and health priorities. Tobacco, cotton and chilli have been significant cash crops in West Nile since the 1940s, thriving due to favorable climate and geography. However, global health concerns, low returns for farmers, and environmental impacts have prompted a shift away from tobacco cultivation. Local leaders have advocated for a total ban on tobacco production, citing the need for enforcement of the Tobacco Control Act.

1.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Pre-Colonial Period

Before colonization, a rich tapestry of ethnic groups, each with its own traditional political and social structures, inhabited the West Nile. Local trade networks were the order of the day, facilitating the exchange of goods and cultural practices. The economy was primarily based on subsistence fishing, agriculture and pastoralism, with communities maintaining distinct languages and belief systems. Migration into northern Uganda occurred in small waves over 1000 years, with communities from various tribes of South Sudan and Ethiopia settling in the region. Reasons for migration included famine, disease, wars, refuge, and the search for pasture. The Arab invasion and slave trade profoundly affected the people of West Nile before the colonial era. The trans-Saharan slave trade led to the capture and forced relocation of many individuals, resulting in significant labor loss and disrupting local economies and traditional agricultural practices. This created an atmosphere of fear and mistrust, fracturing families and communities. Culturally, Arab influences altered indigenous traditions and practices. Additionally, the focus on controlling resources like ivory and timber intensified conflicts over land, marginalizing local populations and hindering sustainable development in the region.

Colonial Era

The colonial period marked a significant shift in the governance and socio-economic landscape of West Nile. The Order in Council of 1914 officially incorporated the region into the Uganda Protectorate, establishing new administrative boundaries. British colonial policies, such as the Native Authority Ordinance of 1919, replaced traditional political structures with a centralized system of governance, undermining local authority. Land tenure systems were disrupted by the Land Ordinances of 1908 and 1927, which favored colonial interests and European settlers, leading to widespread land alienation and conflicts over ownership. The focus on cash crops, particularly cotton, integrated West Nile's economy into the colonial export system, often at the expense of local subsistence agriculture. The Cotton Ordinance of 1921 regulated the production and marketing of cotton, enforcing strict controls over farming. The Closed Area Policy, which designated West Nile as a "closed area," restricted movement

and forced many locals to seek work in central Uganda, further marginalizing the region. The impacts of colonial rule included economic exploitation, cultural erosion, and the fragmentation of communities, fueling political and ethnic tensions. The King's African Rifles (KAR) also had a significant impact on West Nile during the early to mid-20th century. Established in 1902, the KAR recruited African soldiers, including many from West Nile, contributing to military campaigns in World War I and II. Their involvement helped maintain British control in the region, influencing local governance. After the wars, returning ex-soldiers brought new skills, altering social structures and economies.

Post-Colonial Period

Uganda gained independence in 1962, but the early post-colonial period was marked by political instability and military coups. Under Idi Amin's regime (1971-1979), West Nile faced significant challenges, including economic and social marginalization. Many residents were targeted and killed, leading to an exodus of refugees to neighboring countries. Following Amin's overthrow, the region experienced further instability and conflict, with various rebel groups launching insurgencies against the central government. This period of violence resulted in the displacement of people and destruction of infrastructure. The Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) and the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) were among the rebel groups active in West Nile during this time.

Recent Developments

In 2002, the government signed a peace accord with the UNRF II rebel group, ending the insurgency in West Nile. Since then, the region has focused on reconstruction and development, although the legacy of conflict continues to impact socio-economic progress. Local leaders are advocating for sustainable agricultural practices and the diversification of crops to improve food security and economic resilience.

1.3 FACTORS OF PRODUCTION IN WEST NILE

Land

District	Total Land Size (Sq Km)	Titled %	Land Tenure System				Utilization %				
			Customary %	Freehold %	Lease hold %	Public Lands %	Arable Land		Forests & Woodlands	Wet lands	Game Reserves
							Total	Used			
1-Arua	800.00	30.00	70.00	-	30.00	-	80.00	50.00	17.20	2.80	-
2-Arua City	401.00	5.00	80.00	5.00	10.00	5.00	80.00				
3-Madi Okolo	2,100.00	12.00	88.00	9.00	2.00	1.00	95.00				7.90
4-Terego	1,163.30	10.00	90.00	10.00	-	-	80.00				
5-Maracha	445.18	0.27	-	96.40	3.60	-	97.00			0.02	
6-Koboko	820.80	10.00	99.00	0.50	0.50	-	-				
7-Yumbe	2,411.00	14.00	86.00	1.50	0.50	12.00	80.00	26.00	17.00	3.00	-
TOTALS	5,191.48										
Average %	741.64	11.61	73.29	17.49	6.66	2.57	73.14	10.86	4.89	0.83	1.13

District	Total Land Size (Sq Km)	Titled %	Land Tenure System				Utilization %					
			Customary %	Freehold %	Lease hold %	Public Lands %	Arable Land		Forests & Woodlands	Wet lands	Savannah Woodland	Forest Reserves
							Total	Used				
Moyo	2,059	25%					1,867			192		172
Adjumani	3,128	43.3%					1455	120.8		46.8	1588.76	37.44
Obongi	847.1	5%					72.66	72.66				43.63257
Total	116,400											

District	Total Land Size (Sq Km)	Titled %	Land Tenure System				Utilization %					
			Customary %	Freehold %	Lease hold %	Public Lands %	Arable Land		Forests & Woodlands	Wet lands	Savannah Woodland	Forest Reserves
							Total	Used %				
Nebbi	1,053	10						60				
Pakwach	1,008	1						83.2				
Zombo	939.7	<1						90				
Total	3,000.70							77.72				

Land is a crucial factor of production in West Nile, Uganda, significantly impacting agricultural productivity and economic development. However, the region faces several challenges affecting land use, including high poverty levels limiting investments, encroachment and grabbing of institutional land, land fragmentation, and poor land management practices. Insecurity of tenure, environmental issues like climate change, and cultural attitudes further hinder effective utilization. Recommendations to address these challenges include increasing land titling efforts, promoting sustainable practices through community sensitization, providing mechanization support to farmers, and implementing micro-irrigation systems. Capacity building, fostering a culture of hard work, and enforcing policies to curb harmful practices can also enhance land use efficiency. By addressing these issues and leveraging opportunities, West Nile can boost agricultural productivity and improve livelihoods.

Capital is a vital factor of production in West Nile, Uganda, significantly influencing agricultural productivity. Current initiatives like Emyooga, PDM, DRDIP, primarily target subsistence farmers, often overlooking middle-income groups, such as nucleus and commercial farmers. Stringent loan requirements from institutions like UDB and MSC limit access to capital for these groups. To enhance productivity, it is essential to establish alternative loan windows tailored for middle-income farmers, support mechanization for extensive land preparation, facilitate the transition from VSLs to SACCOs, and promote training in value addition practices. These steps can improve access to capital and foster economic growth in the region.

Labor is a critical factor of production in West Nile, Uganda, significantly impacting agricultural productivity. Challenges include high youth unemployment, limited access to capital, and reduced agricultural extension services due to the scrapping of essential grants. To address these issues, tailored skilling programs should be expanded to equip youth with market-relevant skills and linked to capital initiatives like Emyooga. Additionally, supporting agricultural extension workers with resources will enhance their ability to provide advisory services, ultimately boosting productivity and economic growth in the region.

Entrepreneurship is vital for economic development in West Nile, Uganda. Challenges include limited access to capital, lack of coordination between local investors and government, and an unfavorable business environment. To promote entrepreneurship, the

government should identify local investors, understand their skills, and sensitize them to available opportunities. Providing interest-free loans to skilled individuals can encourage commercial farming in sectors like cage fish farming and oil seed production. Improving the business environment and fostering collaboration will further enhance entrepreneurial growth and productivity in the region.

The culture of West Nile, Uganda, significantly influences production and productivity. Its ethnic diversity fosters tolerance and collaboration, facilitating trade and innovation. Traditional knowledge in agriculture and resource management promotes sustainable practices, enhancing efficiency. Cultural heritage, including festivals and crafts, offers tourism potential, generating revenue and jobs. Strong social ties encourage community engagement, resource sharing, and labor collaboration. Additionally, an entrepreneurial spirit drives small-scale businesses, contributing to economic growth. Leveraging these cultural strengths can enhance productivity and development in the region.

Markets are vital for production and productivity in West Nile, Uganda, especially with access to international markets in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). West Nile's strategic location facilitates trade, allowing local farmers to sell directly and access broader markets. However, challenges like poor infrastructure and competition from imports exist. Enhancing regional trade through improved transport, market information systems, and support for local processing can boost agricultural output. Leveraging international markets can further drive economic growth and improve livelihoods in the region.

1.4 GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS IN WEST NILE SUB REGION

The government of Uganda has implemented several interventions in the West Nile region to address various challenges, particularly in agriculture, refugee management, and infrastructure development. Here are some key initiatives:

- i. Agricultural Support Programs:** The government has launched initiatives like the Parish Development Model (PDM) to enhance agricultural production and productivity. This program focuses on providing farmers with access to resources, training, and financial support to improve their livelihoods.

- ii. **NutriCash Project:** In partnership with Sweden, the government initiated the NutriCash project aimed at improving nutrition among vulnerable populations, particularly children under two and pregnant or breastfeeding women. This intervention seeks to address malnutrition and enhance food security in the region.
- iii. **Refugee Management:** West Nile is a major refugee-hosting area, and the government has implemented strategies to manage the influx of refugees from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These strategies include providing access to financial services and integrating refugees into the local labor market to alleviate pressure on public services and promote social cohesion.
- iv. **Integrated and Multi-Scalar Planning:** The government, through collaborations with organizations like UN-Habitat, has developed integrated planning frameworks for municipalities in West Nile. This approach aims to enhance urban planning, resource allocation, and infrastructure development in response to the region's unique challenges.
- v. **Social Infrastructure Development:** Efforts are underway to improve infrastructure, including roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, to support both the local population and the growing number of refugees. This includes enhancing municipal finance management to ensure effective resource allocation.
- vi. **Gender Awareness Programs:** The government has also focused on improving gender awareness and addressing gender imbalances in land ownership and access to productive assets. Initiatives aim to empower women and enhance their participation in decision-making processes.
- vii. **Financial Services Access:** Programs are being implemented to provide financial services to vulnerable communities, including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), to improve their economic resilience and access to basic services.

1.5 SALIENT ISSUES IN WEST NILE

Several salient issues are affecting development in West Nile, Uganda, primarily driven by socio-economic challenges and the influx of refugees. Key issues include:

a) Refugee Influx

West Nile hosts approximately 0.7 million registered refugees, primarily from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This has led to increased demand for housing, healthcare, and education, straining local resources and infrastructure.

b) Youth Unemployment

High levels of youth unemployment pose a significant threat to social cohesion and economic stability. Many young people lack access to job opportunities, leading to frustration and potential social unrest.

c) Inadequate Infrastructure

Poor infrastructure, including inadequate roads, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions, hampers economic growth and limits access to essential services for both locals and refugees.

d) Overcrowding and Service Delivery

The rapid increase in population due to refugees has resulted in overcrowded schools and healthcare facilities, compromising the quality of education and health services.

e) Environmental Challenges

Solid waste disposal and sanitation issues have worsened due to increased population density, leading to health risks and conflicts over basic services.

f) Economic Dependency

Many refugees and locals depend on humanitarian aid, limiting self-sustenance and economic independence. The lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities further exacerbates poverty levels.

g) Cultural Integration

While there is a generally inclusive attitude towards refugees, the growing number of urban migrants poses challenges in terms of integration and resource allocation, potentially leading to tensions with host communities.

1.6 Lack of Government Support

There is insufficient budget allocation from the national government to support municipalities hosting refugees, resulting in inadequate public services and infrastructure development.

1.7 OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST FOR DEVELOPMENT IN WEST NILE

West Nile, Uganda, offers several development opportunities, particularly through access to international markets in neighboring countries such as South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Here are key opportunities for development in the region:

a) Cross-Border Trade

West Nile's strategic location as a gateway to South Sudan and the DRC facilitates significant cross-border trade. This access allows local producers to tap into larger markets, increasing demand for agricultural products and other goods.

b) Agricultural Export Potential

The region has a strong agricultural base, producing cash crops like tobacco, cotton, and sunflower. Enhancing agricultural practices and value addition can position West Nile as a key supplier to international markets, reducing Uganda's reliance on imports.

c) Agro-Industrialization

Investing in agro-processing facilities can create jobs and increase local production capacity. By processing agricultural products locally, West Nile can meet both domestic and international demand, boosting economic growth.

d) Tourism Development

With its rich cultural heritage and natural resources, West Nile has potential for tourism. Promoting eco-tourism and cultural tourism can attract international visitors, generating revenue and creating jobs.

e) Renewable Energy Initiatives

The government is working to improve energy access in West Nile, which can support local industries and attract foreign investment in renewable energy projects. This can enhance productivity and sustainability.

f) Investment in Infrastructure

Improving transportation and communication infrastructure will facilitate trade and access to markets. Better roads and transport systems can enhance connectivity with neighboring countries, making it easier for businesses to operate.

g) Public-Private Partnerships

Encouraging collaboration between the government and private sector can mobilize resources for development projects. This can enhance service delivery and stimulate investment in key sectors.

h) Financial Services Access

Increasing access to financial services for local entrepreneurs can stimulate investment in small and medium enterprises. This can lead to job creation and economic diversification.

1.8 RECOMMENDATION AND SPECIFIC PRAYERS

Cross-Border Trade: Leverage West Nile's strategic location to enhance trade with South Sudan and the DRC, facilitating local producers' access to larger markets.

- i. **Agricultural Export Potential:** Support the production of cash crops and enhance agricultural practices to position West Nile as a key supplier to international markets.
- ii. **Agro-Industrialization:** Invest in agro-processing facilities to create jobs and increase local production capacity, meeting both domestic and international demand.

- iii. Tourism Development: Promote eco-tourism and cultural tourism to attract international visitors, generating revenue and creating jobs.
- iv. Renewable Energy Initiatives: Improve energy access to support local industries and attract foreign investment in renewable energy projects.
- v. Investment in Infrastructure: Enhance transportation and communication infrastructure to facilitate trade and market access.
- vi. Public-Private Partnerships: Encourage collaboration between the government and private sector to mobilize resources for development projects.
- vii. Financial Services Access: Increase access to financial services for local entrepreneurs to stimulate investment in small and medium enterprises.

CHAPTER TWO: ACHOLI SUB REGION

2.1 BACKGROUND

The Acholi national group is part of the broader Luo linguistic and cultural group (the Nilotic group) found in South Sudan, Uganda, western Kenya, northern Tanzania, western Ethiopia, northwest Democratic Republic of Congo as well as in Cameroon and Nigeria. The dominant historical narrative suggests that the Acholi originated from the Barel Ghazel in the Sudan, where they were agro-pastoralists. Upon arrival in the present-day districts of Kitgum, Pader Omoro, Amuru, Nwoya, Lamwo, Agago and Gulu, and Gulu City, they formed independent decentralized states, governed through participatory democracy and consensus politics.

In the nineteenth century, for example, the independent Acholi states were destabilized, dislocated, ravaged and severely underdeveloped by Egyptians, Arabs, and Europeans slave and ivory raiders. The vertical, parasitic and harrowing encounters with the outside world were elevated to a higher level of destruction, fragmentation, dislocation and underdevelopment during the Victorian Age of violent imperial conquest, plunder and control of the region by Britain. For example, colonial economic and administrative policies, whose primary objectives were the exploitation of resources and maintenance of colonial hegemony, designated the Acholi states, that had been lumped together as a single colonial administrative unit, as a labor reserve. In the colonial setting, this meant that the Acholi were required, through overt coercion and taxation, to provide labor for the extraction of resources in the plantations in the “southern” part of the country. The colonial economic and administrative division of labor, carried alongside the colonial policy of divide and rule, also required the Acholi to provide labor to sustain the coercive machinery of colonialism, including serving in the armed forces. During the later period of colonial consolidation, the colonial government also encouraged the Acholi to grow cotton to sustain the textile industries in Britain.

The incursions of Arabs and the British authority over Acholi resulted into Population displacements which was characterized by violent colonial penetration, colonial consolidation, and the shifting colonial boundaries that also led to the displacement of the Acholi people from the present-day Murchison Falls National Game Park area in Nwoya and Amuru districts to Lacekocot in Pader district and Awach in Gulu district in 1911. This wave

of population displacement, which resulted from efforts to eradicate Tse Tse fly outbreak in the country, was part of the larger wave of population displacement that took place in other parts of Uganda as well. Although some people were allowed to return to their land after the eradication of most of Tse Tse fly, the colonial government using new boundaries signs (metallic basins) had seized much of the land.

In 1952, another wave of land grabbing and population displacement by the colonial government took place when it gazette the Murchison Fall National Game Park, the Aswa Lolim Game Reserve and the Kilak Control Hunting Ground.

2.2 POST INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT

By operating within and in conformity with the vertical and parasitic international economic systems and by maintaining the essential structural policies established during the colonial moment, by and large, post-colonial governments reproduced structural underdevelopment, structural poverty, structural dispossession and structural economic disparity in the sub-region. In 1972 through statutory instrument number 51, 52 and 53, Amin government instead of giving back the land to the traditional owners who were displaced in 1911, he gave it to his people in an appeasement manner, the 1979 liberation wars had some effects on the livestock economy of Acholi sub region where the civilian population invaded all the government ranches.

These pervasive and protracted crises of underdevelopment, inequality and poverty were compounded by political instability and the harrowing war that ravaged the sub-region. For example, the war that lasted for over two decades (1987-2007) destroyed many lives, displaced almost the entire population into camps, destroyed livelihoods, destroyed schools and health facilities, destroyed values, customs and culture, networks of trust, loyalty, work ethics, and social cohesion. The war also contributed to widespread trauma and confiscation of livestock and land grabbing and land conflicts.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the Acholi sub-region, endowed with large and underutilized fertile agricultural land, experiences protracted, widespread and severe poverty, mass youth unemployment and underemployment, and social dislocations. These crises have defied many well-intentioned and high-sounding government programs and projects, such as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Project

(NURP), the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA), Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), Peace Recovery, Development Plan (PRDP,) and Development Initiative for Northern Uganda (DINU) etc, so much that the community has lost trust and faith in policies, promises, pronouncements, programs and projects supported by the government, development partners and Non-Governmental Organizations. To be sure, the impacts of these programs are tragically negligible in the sub-region because of the systematic embezzlements of the funds, and poor, uncoordinated, and vertically planned programs and projects.

2.3 THE COLLAPSE OF LIVESTOCK ECONOMY IN ACHOLI

According to Acholi War Debt Claimants Association Joint Verification Team, composed of Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional affairs, Attorney General Office, Internal Security Organization and Acholi war Debt Claimants Association in 2016, claimed that the sub region lost over 490,282 herds of cattle, 116,226 Goats and 91,496 sheep between 1986 to 1988. This was attributed to the NRA, Karamojong and rebel groups including the UPDA and Holy Spirit movement.

Table 1: Numbers of animals lost in Acholi between 1986 to 1992

SN	DISTRICT	CATTLE	GOATS	SHEEP
1.	AMURU	51,826	4,769	2,885
2.	GULU	128,955	15,201	14,826
3.	NWOYA	75,975	12,098	15,882
4.	AGAGO	72,738	32,350	18,337
5.	PADER	65,202	16,702	9,872
6	KITGUM	52,097	17,617	15,809
7.	LAMWO	43,489	17,483	13,885
		490,282	116,228	91,496

Source: Acholi War Debt Claimants Association, Verification reports 2016

2.4 Restocking Programme Interventions.

Government of Uganda through various programs distributed livestock to the local population of Acholi for examples; office of the prime ministers gave cattle in three phases through restocking program, other programs through HEIFER international donated dairy cattle to the local population.

Over the period, Government in restocking the Northern region has made many interventions. Efforts for compensation for those who lost livestock is being made but with little impacts. Facilities for livestock farming like the Milk Plant constructed are also not function and the dairy sector performance is very low that require revitalization. There is need to use part of the government ranching facilities to promote community livestock farming for community in Lamwo, Pader, and Nwoya.

2.5 The Land Question.

2.5.1 Status of Land in the Acholi Sub-region

Acholi sub-region has a total land mass of 2,831,610 **hectares or 28,316 sq. kms**. The total surveyed and titled land in Acholi sub region is **610,110.448 hectares**

- A. Protected Area in sq. kms (UWA and Central Forest reserves NFA) – **2,488.38 sq. kms**
- B. Percentage of registered land against total land mass in Acholi Sub region - **21.5%**
- C. Total number of titles in Acholi sub region – **5,494**
 - i. Leaseholds – 3,419
 - ii. Freehold - 2,075

Table 2: Title distribution per district

S/N	District Name	Freehold	Leasehold	Total
1	Gulu	1555	2443	3998
2	Kitgum	223	526	749
3	Nwoya	55	274	329
4	Amuru	145	82	227
5	Omoro	6	80	86

6	Pader	46	8	54
7	Lamwo	30	1	31
8	Agago	15	5	20
Grand Total		2,075	3,419	5,494

2.5.2 Certificates of Customary Ownership -

A total of 11,080 Certificates of Customary ownership have been issued to beneficiaries in 3 districts i.e. Nwoya – 8,000 CCOs, Agago – 1,820 CCOs and Pader – 1,260 CCOs as shown in the table below.

S/N	District Name	Sub counties/Divisions	Number of CCOs
1.	Nwoya	Alero, Lungulu, Purongo, Anaka, Koch, Goma, Anaka Town Council	8,000
2.	Agago	Paimol and Wol	1,820
3.	Pader	Pader, Ogom and Pajule	1,260
Grand Total			11,080

Production and Productivity in Acholi sub-region.

2.6 Communal Land Use in Acholi

There are four forms of customary land tenure systems in Acholi:

- “Aker” or “Kitar”**: This refers to vast farmland, which clan members cultivate collectively; it is a form of Block Farm. In most cases, the land is some distance from the settlement areas.
- “Tim Dwar”**: This refers to hunting grounds such as *Tim Lipan*, *Tim Padwat*, and *Tim Palukok*.
- “Olet”**: This refers to free range grazing ground which is communally owned by a specific community. The communal grazing grounds are carefully identified by the elders and usually situated along streams, at the confluence with natural sandy salty

points (Punu) e.g. Punu pa Min Owot in Purongo and Anaka, Punu Pa Min Binyu in Lungulu Sub County, and Punu Pa Aboto in Alero Sub-county.

- d) **“Dog Gang”**: This refers to settlements with small subsistence mix farming around homesteads for subsistence farming and rearing goats, sheep and poultry.

2.7 Key challenges facing the agricultural sector in the Acholi sub-region, include the following:

The land question in the Acholi sub-region is complicated by the harrowing and protracted war that destroyed almost everything that had defined and protected the society. The competing narratives about the origins and objectives of the war; some government actions about land in the sub-region and actions of some people closely associated with the government about land in the sub-region at a time when almost the entire population was in the camps; confiscation of land by some government officials when the population was in the camps and immediately the population returned home; the arrogance and fraudulent behaviors of some of the private investors brought to the sub-region by the government to develop land; the biting and dehumanizing poverty the population experienced while in camps and upon return from the camps; oppositional politics that presented any interest in developing land as a ploy by the government to grab land in the sub-region; lack of understanding of what customary land tenure meant; systematic land fraud by district land boards and area land committees; lack of security of land tenure; lack of land titling; poor land planning and land use management; and lack of conflict resolution mechanisms to handle land disputes also contributed to the widespread violence and disputes over land in the sub-region.

These disputes and violent conflicts, with their underlying socio-economic and political causes, inhibit production and productivity, economic development and socio-economic transformation of the sub-region and country, and may result in wider instability and jeopardize opportunities for investment and development in the sub-region.

During the chaotic, uncoordinated and disruptive period of repatriation, for example, some returnees, who were forced into the camps without anything in their hands and left the camps with nothing in their hand and found all that they had left behind destroyed and looted, lost the key economic asset for survival, their land, to people who were either highly placed in

government or people with strong connections in government. Some returnees were dispossessed of their land by neighbors who returned home before them. There were also those returnees who had difficulty reestablishing their rights to land because the elders who knew the boundaries of the land had died during the war. To be sure, conditions of protracted degradation, fragmentation and landlessness during the war also contributed to land conflicts because the conditions highlighted, for the first time in the history of the sub-region, the importance of individual land ownership so much that it produced feverish and violent competition over land once people returned home.

The feverish and heightened importance of land also reflected the fact that the population were uprooted to camps without taking any property with them. When the unsupported, uncoordinated, and chaotic repatriation was induced, people returned home without anything. The livestock which had provided them with dignity and security had been confiscated. Similarly, the property which they had secured for human, social, and economic security had been destroyed during the war. The only way they could attempt to reclaim their fractured and faltering dignity, send their children to “make-shift” schools, pay medical bills and pay bride wealth was by selling the only asset left, land. This response to the intense poverty and social dislocation turned the customary land owned by the clans, which the 1995 Constitution had returned some of it to the clans, into a battleground for individual and/or clan ownerships. The response to the intense poverty and widespread social dislocation also turned the transient custodians of customary household land and customary family-owned land into exclusive owners of those lands. The customs that had mediated and preserved customary land tenure systems also died during the war. One of the legacies of the war was the transformation of land as a factor of production and generational human preservation to a medium of exchange. To get more money for survival, as such, many returnees attempted to secure more land, including land owned by other people and customary owned land; thereby provoking and sustaining widespread and intense land conflict and land disputes in the sub-region.

Today, several broad types of land disputes and violent land conflicts envelop the sub-region. The first type of land dispute and violent land conflicts are between family members, neighbors, clans, and powerful government officials. Most of these disputes and violent land conflicts are over land rights, land access, land boundaries and competing land claims. The most common types of these disputes and violent land conflicts include:

- Land grabbing by neighboring villages, families and powerful people connected with the government or those with significant financial and political connections.
- Selling family land by younger family members without the permission of the family.
- Selling of customary land by a few clan members without the permission of the rest of the clan (customary individuals can't sell land that belongs to the clan).
- Disputes and violent conflicts between widows and members of their late husbands' families.
- Disputes and violent conflicts between "landowners" and "squatters."
- Disputes and violent conflicts over land ownership between the original owners of the land and those who claim that the same land was given or sold to them by deceased elders of the original owners.
- Disputes and violent conflicts over land between the "original" owners and some powerful government officials and/or some people who are "well-connected" who violently seize land and/or bribe district land boards to fraudulently grant them land titles for land owned by poor and marginalized community members or customary land. In many instances, these powerful government officials and these well-connected people have also "captured" the judiciary so much that whatever land they seize is legalized by the courts because favorable rulings on land matters are purchasable from magistrates and judges. Some of these land grabbers also deploy the military to violently chase away the original landowners and protect the loot.

The second type of violent land dispute and violent land conflicts are between ordinary citizens and a few misguided people who work for or have connection with the Uganda Land Commission, the Ministry of Land, District Land Board, Area Land Committees and offices of Mayors, Town Clerks, LCVs and LCIIIs. The latter group often seize, and title government land, customary land and land owned by vulnerable citizens. This seizure of land is made somewhat easy because of the absence of comprehensive government land inventories, inventories of customary land, and inventories of individual owned land. Furthermore, the cumbersome process of titling land and poor land planning and poor land use complicates lack of security of land tenure.

Disputes and conflicts over the Aswa Ranch, Acholi Ranch and Got Apwoyo, for example fall under this category because of lack of transparency by the government over the original sizes of the land, legal status of the land and fraud implicating some government officials.

The third type of land disputes and violent land conflicts are between the community and some “private investors.” These disputes and violent land conflict are influenced by many related factors, including the lack of transparency and accountability by the private investors in negotiations over land rights, land ownership, land access and land use, and the pervasive fear that the private investors will seize such land. These disputes and violent conflicts are also a result of the vertical and antagonistic way some investors and some government officials’ approach and interact with the community. Yet, generally, the community is interested in working horizontally, transparently, and collaboratively with private investors for the following outcomes:

- Titling the land in the names of the clans or households or individual landowners.
- Leasing, rather than land sale.
- Ensuring that land ownership remains with the clans or households or individual landowners.
- Providing employments to those who lease land to private investors.
- Ensuring that affected clan or households have consented to land lease agreements.
- Negotiating access to land through respected, transparent, and accountable elders and religious leaders, rather than through corrupt government or corrupt cultural leaders and corrupt politicians.

It is important to note that, although relationship between the Acholi sub-region and the government has improved to the extent that it voted overwhelmingly for the President and the NRM, generally, people still regard government’s actions on land issues with enormous suspicion and resentment. This perception, which has its origins during the civil war that lasted for over two decades, is reproduced and elevated when development initiatives involving land, such as overtures by the government to grant large tracts of land to agricultural businesses or investors, are not conducted with transparency, accountability, and inclusive community participation. Thus, in 2012, for example, some women in Lakang, Amuru sub-county, using their ruptured and contested sovereign bodies as sites of biopower, symbolic power and cosmological power, stripped naked before the then Resident District Commissioner (RDC) when he led a delegation to visit land that the government had proposed for sugar growing by the Madhvani Group of Companies. In this instance, poorly managed intervention by the government—which deliberately ignored historical context of

suspicion about government's intention on land issues that emerged during the civil war—was perceived as a thinly-veiled attempt to steal land in the sub-region. To be sure, the resistance by the community was also deliberately mobilized by some politicians who wanted the government and the investor to “purchase their consent as gatekeepers” before they could allow the community to reach a negotiated settlement with the government.

In a similar vein, in 2015, some women in Apaa village in Amuru stripped naked before the former Minister of Land and former Minister of Internal Affairs, protesting a new land demarcation exercise which was perceived by marginalized members of the community as land grabbing by the government. This violent land conflict has its roots in the territorial demarcation of boundaries by British colonial authorities, which put the boundaries between Acholi and Madi at the River Nile; the unsuccessful petitions to parliament by Martin Okello in the 1960s to change the land boundaries; the Decree by the Amin regime that created West Madi District to include Apaa; the reversal of the Decree by the National Consultative Council in the immediate post-Amin era; campaigns to the government by some District officials of Adjumani in the 1990s to transfer Apaa to Madi as a punishment against the Acholi during the civil war; failed negotiation between the government and Gulu District for private investment in the area when Colonel Walter Ochora was the Chairperson of the district; and the 2002 decision by the government to “[re]turn” Apaa to/into a conservation area at a time when almost the entire population of Acholi was internally displaced in camps. The result was that since 2017, the area has been enveloped in violent and bloody conflicts.

The fourth and final broad type of violent land conflict is deliberately manufactured by the merchants of underdevelopment, chaos, and disinformation in the sub-region. One of the strategies this group has perfected to benefit from the status quo is to present any program or project that encourages the community to work with the government or private investors to develop customary land as a ploy by the government to grab customary land. This group is diametrically opposed to protecting customary land by titling it in the names of the clans or household (Certificates of Customary Ownership) before the clans or household can sign contractual agreements with the private investors to develop the land for commercial agriculture for a specified period. Ironically, some members of this group have titled customary land in their own names and continue to buy land very cheaply from the poor whose land they claim to protect. This group also benefitted from the policy of appeasement by the government which meant securing peace and stability at almost any cost in the region,

including working with or purchasing the support of or not directly disrupting the activities of the merchants and other spoilers in the region.

- Most small and medium-scale farmers (subsistence households), who constitute most farmers in the Acholi sub-region, rely on family labour and hand tools with minimal use of inputs such as fertilizer, herbicides and improved, high-yielding, and fast-growing seeds adapted to changing climate. This method of farming contributes to low and poor yields and crop losses from pests, diseases and poor post-harvest handling of the produce and low marketable volumes and low profits.
- Upwards of 90% of small, medium, and large-scale farmers lack security of land tenure because they do not have land titles and/or legal land documentation. This challenge contributes to land insecurity, land conflicts and poverty that undermine production and productivity. This challenge and its effects also apply to customary owned land in the sub-region.
- Upwards of 35% of production is lost during or after harvesting, transportation and storage due to poor harvest handling systems and under-supply and low access to affordable on- farm storage technologies. This problem further compromises the quality and quantity of the produce, fragments production and makes it difficult to assemble economically viable volume for trade. As well, this challenge undermines the profitability of agriculture.
- Small, medium, and large-scale farmers lack post-harvest handling equipment to improve quality of the produce.
- Small, medium, and large-scale farmers often sell off their produce immediately and cheaply after harvesting to parasitic middlemen because the farmers are poor, act as individuals and lack functional and profitable transport infrastructure, access to profitable market, and safe and reliable storage and warehousing facilities. These challenges persist, in part, because the Agro Processing Facilities established by the government and development partners, which are scattered and uncoordinated throughout the sub-region, are dysfunctional and lack capital and access to low interest rates loans. The result is that the challenges undermine production and productivity and reproduce and intensify vulnerability and poverty.

- Production is constrained due to lack of access to affordable rural credit or financial services, absence of functioning saving schemes, very low interest rates on deposits, non-functioning and/or poor functioning cooperative societies, unfair lending practices with high interest rates, and lack of credit guarantee and commodity risk management services. Lack of access to affordable credit to farmers and farmer groups and lack of credit guarantee and commodity risk management, among other considerations, reproduce and intensify economic vulnerability, marginalization, and poverty further weakens the shrinking and faltering foundations for sustainable and inclusive socio-economic transformation.
- Lack of affordable mechanization, including tractor hire services is particularly acute at the peak of the ploughing seasons. As well, there are not enough affordable tractor service providers that can deploy throughout the year, including undertaking dry ploughing.
- Lack of extension services to small, medium, and large-scale farmers in rural areas compounds farmers' lack of critical agronomic knowledge, lack of financial literacy and information about value addition, lack of competitive marketing information and lack of business knowledge and skills.
- Farmers market their crops without processing them because they lack even simple processing equipment. This problem disrupts potential value addition for small, medium, and large-scale farmers.
- Relationship between farmers and traders—characterized by manipulation, fraud, and mistrust— affects farmers' knowledge of the markets, communication between the actors in the value chain and the overall workings of the market.
- Many farmers remain unorganized and act as individuals without collective knowledge and bargaining power in the value chain.
- Lack of functioning bulking and drying centres, though there are over 100 poorly planned and dysfunctional Agro-Processing Facilities scattered throughout the sub-region.

- Lack of access to affordable, high-yielding, fast-maturing, drought-tolerant and certified quality seeds.
- Inadequate and poor production road networks.
- Lack of compliance with and enforcement of standards.
- Sometimes when small, medium, and large-scale farmers are encouraged to increase production of priority crops, demands drop and prices plummet, thereby intensifying poverty and discouraging production and productivity.
- Where electric power is available, it is erratic and inadequate. This discourages industrialization and economic development in the sub-region. Where rural electrification is available, the rates are so high that it has become a major source of impoverishing the community.
- Environmental degradation and climate change.
- Fraudulent and super exploitation by off-takers.

Requested Interventions:

Establish at least twelve Rural Farm Service Centers in the sub-region. According to the Office of the Chief Coordinator Operation Wealth Creation, *RFSC: Establishment of Regional Farm Service Centres Component, 2019/20-2024/25*:

[A Farm Service Centre is] “a one stop-shop and centre of excellence that provides all the essential farm inputs including provision of certified seeds, agrochemicals, fertilizers, farm machinery, extension services, agriculture insurance services, disease control services, expertise and guidance regarding inputs provided, enhance farmers’ knowledge of skills in farm management” (2019).

This functional definition of RFSCs—which focuses on improving access to quality and affordable inputs and services; enhancing agricultural productivity and production; commercializing farming and increasing incomes; promoting inclusive market system development; stimulating job creation; encouraging technology transfer; and improving food security and nutrition and other agricultural production—is tailored to specific needs of local

farming communities and ensures that farmers have access to knowledge and tools to participate in profitable and sustainable agricultural businesses. The shared objective of RFSCs is to build sustainable, accessible, and resilient market systems and agribusinesses, empower farmers to improve agricultural production and productivity and their livelihoods and incomes and strengthen food and other agricultural systems and security.

It is also critical to deconflict land by facilitating titling of land to streamline ownership and tenure; address the challenges of squatters by encouraging landowners to negotiate a settlement with them and/or use the land fund to buy out landowners and title the land for the squatters; expand the use of land tribunal court to settle land conflicts; and eradicate multiple land titling.

Utilizing land as a factor of production to eradicate poverty also requires reviving the cattle economy in Acholi by using the existing Aswa Ranch and Got Apwoyo Ranch to support community livestock farming.

2.8 Dysfunctional Agro Processing Facilities

The Government and some development partners established over one hundred Agro Processing Facilities in the Acholi sub-region. The facilities were intended to raise on-farm production, productivity, and marketable volumes of selected agricultural enterprises; and support capacity building for the target beneficiaries and support the development of agricultural input markets, value addition, warehousing and farm access roads and choke points at the community level. However, most of the facilities lack the required equipment; are not connected to the national grid; lack capitalization; and are not operational because of poor workmanship and are pest infested. As a result, the targeted beneficiaries and neighboring farmers lack access to tractors, quality agro-inputs such as certified seeds, fertilizers, agro-chemicals, and tarpaulins. The facilities are constrained by poor road infrastructure (links from farms to major access roads) and lack access to market as well.

SN	DISTRICT	COMMENTS
ACHOLI SUB REGION	Gulu/ Gulu city	• 04 facilities all GoU owned • 03 funded by GoU, 01 by WFP
	Lamwo	• 39 facilities (37 GoU owned, 02 Privately owned)

		• 15 GoU funded, 01 Privately funded, 23 NGO funded
	Nwoya	• 36 facilities (04 GoU owned, 30 privately owned, 02 CoU owned) • 23 GoU funded, 05 Private funded, 08 by NGOs/CoU • There is no single store that is powered by HEP. 25/36 Facilities have no power and the remaining 11 are using generators. • Some stores do not have machines but can be used to store produce • Some stores are complete and are yet to be handed over to the community. • The land owner where CoU storage store in Kochgoma has turned the facility into a school. • Although most stores do not have power, they do have access to the main grid. • Some facilities need repair to be functional again.
	Amuru	• 22 Facilities (04 GoU owned, 18 privately owned) • 17 GoU funded, 05 NGO funded • 19 facilities have no power access, 03 have power • Most milling machines were stolen or broke down • Machines are yet to be installed in some facilities
	Kitgum	• 06 facilities, all privately owned and

		funded • 01 has power, 05 don't
	Pader	• 21 facilities (02 are GoU owned, 19 privately owned) • 13 GoU funded, 08 NGO funded • 02 facilities are being used as sub county offices
	Agago	• 21 facilities privately owned • 02 GoU funded, 19 NGO funded
	Omoror	• 05 facilities, all GoU owned and funded • 02 have no equipment installed

2.8.1 Requested Intervention:

Given the importance of the stated objectives of the facilities, where required, the government (UDC) should renovate and capitalize them. Thereafter, UDC should contract the private sector to manage them.

2.8.2 Labour

According to the 2024 Uganda Population Census, the country has approximately 46.7 million people. The total population of Acholi is approximately 2,047,118. Most of these people are employed in the agriculture, followed by the informal sector and trade. However, the youth that constitute most of the total population are unemployed and underemployed, with limited or no skills required in the limited job market. Most of the unemployed and underemployed youth have negative attitude towards agriculture as mainly, a “poor person’s” occupation, characterized by long back-breaking work with low economic returns and social status. This attitude, which reflects the youths’ socioeconomic environment, is concretized by parents’ discouragement of youths from pursuing careers in farming and opting for non-existent white-collar professions which are presented to have higher economic returns and fewer risk factors.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that there is lack of modern technology to drive and improve agriculture and make the sector profitable and not back-breaking; widespread and normalized corruption and plunder which generate wealth without work and discourages decency and productive work; current agricultural programs which do not adequately address structural issues underpinning youth participation in agriculture; poor quality education with its problem-laden curriculum and lack of employable skills; and the chronic lack of access to affordable finance production inputs and resources, markets and extension services, and training. These attitudes and challenges—further complicated by mass unemployment due to the rapid population growth, slow and vertically uneven economic growth, and a higher unemployment rate concomitant with a large volume of unskilled workers—reproduce and sustain the protracted low labour productivity, poverty, underdevelopment and mass unemployment in the sub-region.

Yet, the region's strong agricultural focus creates a demand for skilled agribusiness professionals. Similarly, construction and building technology skills are required for ongoing infrastructural development projects. As well, there are growing market demands for skilled workers in metal works and fabrication, Social Inclusion and Gender, Climate Smart Agricultural practices, environmental science, agri-science, farming management and technologies, market intelligence, agro-processing, technology information, and health science.

Since the youth can play a pivotal role in revitalizing and modernizing agriculture—which is the backbone of the economy, the biggest platform for job creation, elimination of poverty and food insecurity—the intervention recommended is for the government to establish two Technical Youth Service Institutes (TYSI), one in East and Acholi and the other in West Acholi, which will train a total of 10,000 unemployed youth annually for a period of two years per intake. The institutes will provide innovative and industry-driven technical training and professional skills and work practice that will make the youth productive and creators of employment and wealth in the economy. The training will also create opportunities for employment in trade, farming and across the value chain, including in processing, transportation and equipment making and maintenance.

2.8.3 Markets

There are growing markets for agricultural products in the country, the African continent and internationally. However, farmers have difficulty accessing the markets and are discouraged by price volatility, which, in turn, discourage production and productivity. What is required, as such, is for the government and the private sector to build networks of stable markets with attractive economic returns for agricultural produce (contract farming). As well, both the government and the private sectors are strongly encouraged to enhance value addition in the agricultural and livestock value chain by building agro based factories, reviving the existing idle Agricultural Processing Facilities (APFs) and the Dairy Processing facilities in the region.

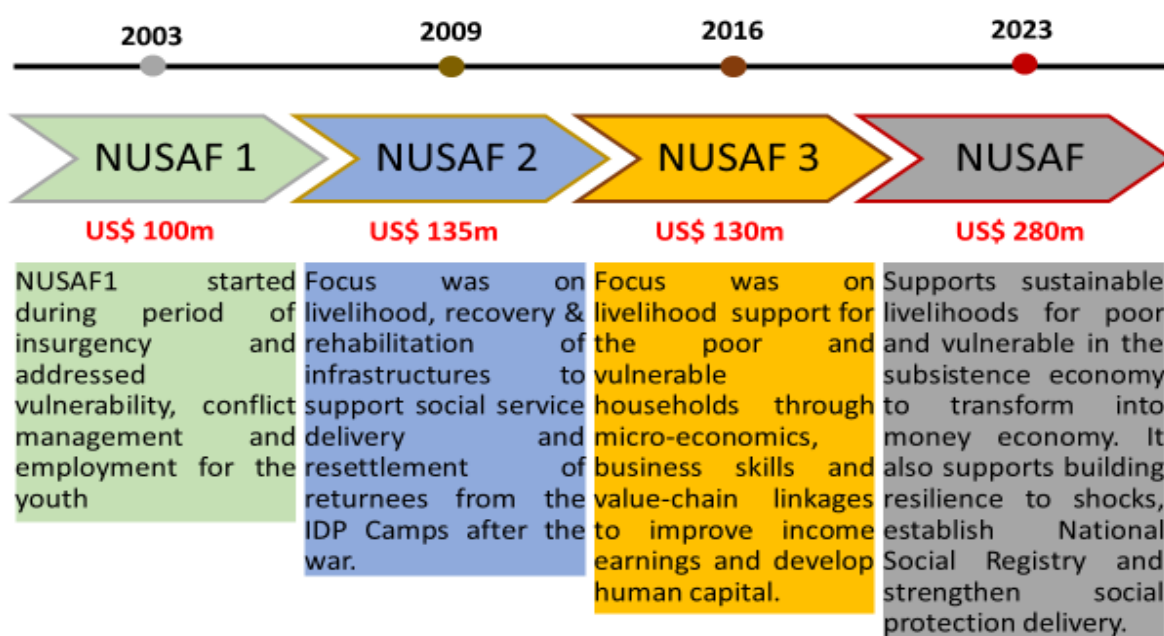
2.9 Examples of Government Investments in the Region

The biggest percentage of UDC investment portfolio are in the north and in the agricultural sector. However, some of the investments, including those at the Atiak Sugar, Bukona, Acholibur Cassava Factory, Nwoya Fruit Factory, Yumbe Fruit Factory, and Amuru Sugar have not stirred as much economic growth as required and have not significantly contributed to the transformation of the local economy.

2.9.1 Examples of Success stories

- i. There are substantial improvements in road connectivity almost throughout the sub-region. Gulu City, for example, has some of the best road networks in the country.
- ii. After decades of unreliable power supply that discouraged the industrialization of the region, there is a marked improvement in power supply is a direct result of the completion of Aswa Dam and Karuma dams. Still, there are areas without power supply. The cost of electric power is also too high to facilitate the modernization of the economy and improve the living standards in the region.
- iii. The Logistics Hub in Gulu City is intended to facilitate trade for the whole north and neighboring countries by providing logistics services such storage, customs, transportation, bulking and packaging, and business support services. This one required a functional rail system to be operational.

- iv. The Oding Skilling Centre, located in Gulu district, is intended to provide skill training to unemployed youth. This institution is churning out skill youths who can fit both the job market and self-employment.
- v. UDC has received UGX 100 billion under COVID Economic Stimulus for investment this financial year (2020/21). Of these, UGX 53.2 billion is going to be invested in projects in Northern Uganda.
- vi. NUSAF: Over the last ten-year Northern Uganda Social Action Fund was implemented at various phases to address challenges of vulnerability, recovery, livelihoods and rehabilitation of the north. The figure below summarized the interventions and the amount of money involved.



2.10 Special areas that require attention in Acholi sub-region are:

- a) Provide appropriate and sustainable financial support to victims of the Nodding Syndrome.
- b) Degazette 100,000 acres of the contested Apaa land and divide it equally between the two “warring” parties.
- c) Pay all the cattle compensation before the next general elections.
- d) Revisit the designation and operation of NUSAF IV.
- e) Fund International Border Markets in the sub-region.
- f) Address the demands of the Regional Cancer Center.

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Amuru	• 22 Facilities (04 GoU owned, 18 privately owned) • 17 GoU funded, 05 NGO funded • 19 facilities have no power access, 03 have power • Most milling machines were stolen or broke down • Machines are yet to be installed in some facilities	Amuru

Kitgum	• 06 facilities, all privately owned and funded • 01 has power, 05 dont	Kitgum
Pader	• 21 facilities (02 are GoU owned, 19 privately owned) • 13 GoU funded, 08 NGO funded • 02 facilities are being used as sub county offices	Pader
Agago	• 21 facilities privately owned • 02 GoU funded, 19 NGO funded	Agago
Omoro	• 05 facilities, all GoU owned and funded • 02 have no equipment installed	Omoro

CHAPTER THREE: LANGO SUB REGION

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF LANGO SUB REGION

The Lango sub-region in north-central Uganda spans approximately 15,570 km² and has a population of around 2.88 million. It includes ten districts: Lira, Apac, Amolatar, Alebtong, Dokolo, Kole, Oyam, Otuke, Kwanja and Lira City. The Lango people are the predominant ethnic group, speaking the Lango language, with smaller communities such as the Acholi and Iteso. The region's economy is primarily agricultural, focusing on crops like millet, sorghum, and cash crops such as tobacco and cotton, alongside livestock farming, fishing, and trading. Its fertile soils and favorable climate contribute significantly to agricultural productivity.

3.1 BRIEF HISTORICAL FACTS OF LANGO

Pre-colonial: Before the colonial era, the Lango people relied on customary laws that emphasized communal land ownership, with land considered a shared resource. Clans served as the primary social units, each led by elders who mediated disputes and maintained order within the community. Conflict resolution was achieved through traditional practices, fostering social harmony. Military leaders were chosen during conflicts, reflecting a decentralized military structure. Additionally, traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and the supreme god Jok played a crucial role in shaping social norms and governance, reinforcing community ties.

Colonial Rule: During the colonial period, the Lango sub-region was significantly impacted by key legal frameworks. The Land Ordinance of 1903 vested all land in the colonial government, undermining traditional communal land tenure and leading to conflicts over ownership. The Native Authority Ordinance of 1919 formalized indirect rule, eroding the authority of traditional leaders and imposing appointed chiefs. The Local Government Ordinance of 1949 further structured local governance under colonial control, diminishing the influence of customary law. These frameworks disrupted Lango society, contributing to marginalization and lasting socio-economic challenges. The colonial legal frameworks contributed to the political fragmentation, economic marginalization, and social disruption of Lango society. The legacy of these policies continues to shape challenges related to land conflicts, ethnic tensions, and the lack of reconciliation with colonial legacies in the Lango sub-region today.

Post-colonial civil wars:

The Lango sub-region in Uganda has been profoundly affected by a series of civil wars and conflicts, particularly during the post-colonial era. The political landscape began to shift dramatically following Uganda's independence in 1962. Milton Obote, a Lango leader, initially rose to power, but his government faced significant opposition. This culminated in a military coup by Idi Amin in 1971, which led to widespread violence, repression, and instability across the country, including in the Lango region. The 1979 coup that overthrew Idi Amin marked a brief period of relative stability; however, it created a power vacuum that led to further unrest. The transitional government struggled to maintain order, which resulted in ongoing violence and political fragmentation. The Lakwena War (1985-1987) emerged during this tumultuous period, led by Alice Auma, also known as Lakwena. She claimed to be a medium of the Holy Spirit and sought to liberate northern Uganda from oppressive regimes. The Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) gained traction among the Acholi and Lango communities, promising protection and liberation. The conflict resulted in significant displacement, civilian casualties, and social fragmentation in the Lango region. Although the HSM was ultimately defeated by government forces in 1987, the conflict set the stage for the rise of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony. The LRA insurgency (1987-2006) targeted northern Uganda, employing brutal tactics that included abductions, killings, and widespread displacement. Many Lango people were forced into Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, disrupting their agricultural activities and traditional livelihoods. The LRA's reign of terror left deep scars on the community, exacerbating poverty and insecurity. Additionally, the Uganda People's Army (UPA) insurgency (1987-1992) arose in response to grievances against the National Resistance Army (NRA) and further contributed to instability in the region. The UPA's activities led to violence and economic decline, compounding the challenges faced by the Lango people. The cumulative impact of these conflicts has been devastating. Displacement disrupted agricultural practices, while the destruction of infrastructure hindered access to markets and essential services. The loss of livestock and abandoned land led to a decline in agricultural productivity and food security. Ongoing violence increased ethnic tensions and mistrust within the community, complicating post-conflict recovery efforts. Women faced heightened vulnerabilities during these conflicts, significantly impacting their roles in agricultural production and household food security.

3.2 FACTORS OF PRODUCTION IN LANGO SUB REGION

Land: In the Lango sub-region of Uganda, approximately 70% of land is owned by men, indicating a significant gender imbalance in land ownership. This inequality restricts women's access to land, crucial for agricultural production. Since 1990 to date, agricultural land expansion has led to deforestation and habitat loss, compromising biodiversity and soil health. Pressures on land resources arise from population growth, the conversion of land for farming, and the push for industrialization. These factors collectively threaten agricultural productivity and sustainability, necessitating a balanced approach to land rights, environmental conservation, and economic development.

Labour: Youth labour is crucial for agriculture in Lango, yet challenges like education gaps, off-farm job opportunities, and health issues hinder productivity. Over 80% of the workforce is in farming, but yields lag due to land degradation and inadequate technology. To engage youth, vocational training, entrepreneurship education, and improved access to inputs are vital. Addressing malnutrition and infrastructure deficits can also boost labour effectiveness. By investing in youth, Lango can transform agriculture, driving economic growth and sustainability through this vital factor of production.

Markets are vital for production in Lango, Uganda, significantly impacting agricultural productivity. However, challenges like poor road infrastructure, market distortions, and limited access to information hinder farmers' ability to sell produce effectively. Poor road infrastructure and storage lead to post-harvest losses, while price fluctuations reduce investment incentives. To improve market efficiency, Lango can invest in rural infrastructure, establish reliable market information systems, strengthen farmer cooperatives and promote contract farming. These strategies can enhance agricultural growth and improve livelihoods in the region.

Capital is a vital factor of production in Lango and Uganda, but limited access to financial services constrains farmers and entrepreneurs. Many lack collateral for formal loans, relying on costlier informal credit. Low incomes also limit household savings and investments in productive assets. Government infrastructure investments in roads, irrigation, and storage can boost agricultural productivity, but competing priorities often result in inadequate rural spending. To improve capital formation, strategies are needed to expand microfinance, promote savings mobilization, and develop innovative financial products. Investing in human

capital through education and training can enhance skills for productive activities. Public-private partnerships can leverage resources for infrastructure development. Reducing bureaucratic barriers and strengthening property rights can encourage investment. By addressing capital constraints and implementing targeted interventions, Lango can boost productivity across sectors and improve livelihoods.

Knowledge and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are vital factors of production in Lango and Uganda, enhancing agricultural productivity. Access to agricultural education enables farmers to adopt better practices, while ICT tools like mobile phones and radios provide crucial information on market prices and weather forecasts. However, challenges such as limited infrastructure, a digital divide, and inadequate training hinder effective ICT use. To improve productivity, Lango should invest in ICT infrastructure, provide training programs, promote ICT innovations and promote knowledge sharing among farmers and extension workers.

Culture plays a vital role in production and productivity in Lango and Uganda in influencing agricultural practices, social structures, and economic interactions. Traditional farming methods and communal labor enhance productivity, while cultural beliefs shape crop selection and resource management. However, cultural norms can hinder the adoption of modern techniques, and gender roles may limit women's access to resources. To leverage culture positively, Lango should integrate traditional knowledge with modern practices, empower women in decision-making, and engage local leaders in agricultural initiatives.

3.3 GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS IN LANGO SUB REGION

Government interventions in the Lango sub-region have made significant strides in improving infrastructure, social services, and economic opportunities. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, mismanagement, and low capacity in some programs limit the overall impact. Addressing these issues is crucial to ensuring that these interventions achieve their intended goals of sustainable development and improved livelihoods in Lango.

1. Roads: The Lango sub-region has seen the construction and rehabilitation of several key roads to improve connectivity. Key roads include the Soroti-Lira road, Lira-Kamdini road, and Lira-Karuma road, Amolatar- Dokolo, Lira-Kotido, Rwekunya – Apac- Lira – Acholi Bur and Aboke - Bobi. These roads are crucial for transportation and trade. Most of these roads are not in good conditions because of heavy rains despite ongoing maintenance.

However, some rural roads require further improvement. Improved road infrastructure has enhanced access to markets, schools, and health facilities, facilitating economic activities and reducing transportation costs.

2. Schools: The government has constructed and rehabilitated several primary and secondary schools across the Lango sub-region. There are hundreds of primary schools and a growing number of secondary schools. Most schools are operational, but challenges remain, including overcrowding, inadequate teaching materials, and insufficient teachers. Increased access to education has improved literacy rates, though quality remains a concern. School enrollment has risen, but drop-out rates, especially among girls, remain high. Several seed schools have not been completed.

3. Health Centers: The sub-region has a network of health centers ranging from Health Centre IIs to Health Centre IVs, as well as district hospitals. Lira Regional Referral Hospital is the primary referral center. Lango Sub-region has only one district Hospital in Apac District which requires serious and major renovation. Many health centers face challenges such as understaffing, inadequate medical supplies, and poor infrastructure. However, most are functional and provide essential health services. The establishment of health centers has improved access to healthcare, reducing maternal and child mortality rates. However, service quality and access in remote areas remain a challenge.

4. Production and Agro-Processing Inputs and Equipment: The government, through initiatives like Operation Wealth Creation (OWC), used to distribute seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural equipment to farmers. There are also efforts to establish agro-processing facilities. But challenges include delays, poor-quality inputs, and insufficient equipment. Agro-processing facilities are few and often underutilized. While these interventions have supported farmers, overall productivity remains low due to inconsistent input quality and access to markets. There are also a number of ACDP supported by government as indicated in the table below:

District	Number of tractors	Status of the machines	Remarks
Kwania	07	All functional	All the 07 are provided by GOU
Kole	07	All functional	02 provided by NAADS secretariat to 2 cooperatives and 05 Private
Oyam	11	all functional	3 provided by NAADS,8
Apac	11	All functional	03 supplied by NAADS Secretariat and 07 private
Total	36	all	

5. Parish Development Model (PDM): The PDM is a recent government initiative aimed at promoting inclusive development at the parish level. Implementation is ongoing, with mixed progress. Some areas report slow disbursement of funds. The PDM aims to uplift the poorest households, but its impact is yet to be fully realized as the program is still in its initial phase.

DISTRICT	Total No	Public	Private	National link	Status of operation	How they are being used	Linkage with DPM
KWANIA	12	11	1	1	12 operational	Bulking beans and maize. Cotton ginning.	All linked to PDM
KOLE	21	14	07	4 all private	20 operational	Bulking grains Bulking quality declared seed Housing processing plants (oil, Cassava, Maize & rise	All linked to PDM
OYAM	18	13	05	05	16 operational	Bulking grains Bulking quality declared seed Housing processing	All linked to PDM

						plants (oil, Cassava, Maize & rice	
APAC	11	07	04	00	11	Bulking grains Bulking quality declared seed Housing processing plants (oil, Cassava, Maize & rice	All linked to PDM
Total	62	45	17	05	59		

6. Emyooga: Emyooga is a government initiative to support specialized groups like artisans, boda-boda riders, and women entrepreneurs. In Lango, several groups have been formed and funded. The program is functional, but challenges include inadequate training and delayed disbursement of funds. Emyooga has empowered some youth and women economically, but its overall impact is limited by operational challenges like administration and supervision.

7. Youth Livelihood Program (YLP): The YLP has funded several youth groups in Lango, providing grants and loans for business ventures. The program faces challenges such as mismanagement of funds and low repayment rates. Some youth have benefited, leading to increased employment and income. However, the program's sustainability is in question due to high default rates.

8. Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE): SAGE provides cash transfers to elderly citizens. In Lango, many elderly have been enrolled and are receiving these grants. The program is operational and has a relatively smooth disbursement process. SAGE has improved the welfare of the elderly, providing them with a steady income source for basic needs.

9. Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Program (UWEP): UWEP has supported several women's groups in Lango, offering loans and grants for business activities. The program is active but faces issues such as low repayment rates and limited business training. Women's

economic empowerment has improved, but challenges in business management limit the long-term success of these ventures.

10. GROW Program: The GROW (Grants for Rural Opportunities and Wealth Creation) program targets agricultural productivity and income generation. Several farmers in Lango have not yet benefited from this initiative. Training of women entrepreneurs is ongoing and the loans have not been accessed.

11. Water: The government has drilled boreholes and constructed piped water systems in various parts of Lango. However, access to clean water remains limited in some rural areas. Many water sources are operational, but maintenance issues often reduce functionality. Access to clean water has improved, leading to better health outcomes.

12. Energy: The Rural Electrification Agency (REA) has extended electricity to several areas in Lango. Solar power initiatives have also been promoted. Electricity access has improved, but power reliability and coverage remain challenges, especially in remote areas. Access to electricity has spurred small businesses and improved living standards, though coverage gaps persist.

3.4 KEY SALIENT ISSUES IN LANGO

Socio-economic issues: Lango faces significant socio-economic challenges: widespread poverty restricts access to food, healthcare, and education, with many living below the poverty line. High unemployment, particularly among youth, exacerbates poverty and social unrest. Inadequate infrastructure, including poor roads, unreliable electricity, and insufficient water supply, stifles economic development and access to essential services. Despite recent improvements, quality education remains difficult to access in rural areas, and the healthcare system is often overburdened, limiting care for those in remote locations.

Lango faces critical environmental issues: Illegal logging, charcoal burning business and land clearing for agriculture have led to substantial forest loss, harming ecosystems and biodiversity. Deforestation and poor farming practices exacerbate soil erosion, reducing soil fertility and agricultural productivity, while causing broader environmental degradation. There is also over flooding of the area when there is more rain. The region is increasingly affected by climate change, experiencing more frequent and severe droughts and floods, which threaten agriculture, water resources, and ecological stability.

Lango contends with key governance and security issues: Pervasive corruption at different government levels impedes development, misallocates resources, and erodes public trust, undermining effective service delivery and progress. Although conditions have improved, the region has experienced security challenges, such as cattle rustling and community clashes. Additionally, early political engagement often disrupts service delivery, further complicating stability and development efforts.

Land conflicts: The Lango sub-region in Uganda faces significant land challenges due to customary tenure systems, disputes, and socio-economic factors. Over 70% of court cases relate to land conflicts driven by greed, mismanagement, and gender inequalities. Existing institutions struggle to manage conflicts effectively due to limited resources and capacity. The government's land policy reforms aim to address grievances, but their effectiveness remains to be fully realized. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from local governance structures, cultural institutions, and the government to create a more equitable and sustainable land management framework.

3.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR LANGO SUB REGION

The Lango sub-region presents several opportunities for development that can enhance commercial production and productivity. Here's a brief description of each opportunity:

- **The 48 factories** in Lango mainly privately owned significantly enhance production and productivity by diversifying manufacturing across sectors such as agro-processing, textiles, and construction. They create job opportunities, utilize local resources, and add value to agricultural products, ensuring better prices for farmers. These factories also promote skill development, foster economic growth, and drive innovation. Furthermore, they improve local infrastructure and facilitate market access, ultimately boosting the region's economy and livelihoods.
- **Cottage Industries:** The growth of small-scale, home-based industries can stimulate local economies, create jobs, and promote the use of local materials, enhancing self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on external markets.
- **Arable Land:** The availability of fertile land supports agriculture, allowing for the cultivation of various crops. This can lead to increased food production and potential export opportunities, boosting the local economy.

- **Lands and Swaps (crop rotation):** Implementing land swaps can facilitate better land use and management, allowing for the consolidation of land for more productive agricultural practices and reducing disputes over land ownership.
- **Hardworking Labor Force:** A dedicated and industrious workforce can drive productivity in agriculture and industry, fostering economic growth and encouraging investment in the region.
- **Enable Political Environment:** A supportive political climate can enhance policy implementation and attract investment, ensuring that development initiatives are effectively executed and sustained.
- **Available Market for Agro-pastoral Goods:** Access to markets for agricultural and pastoral products due to increase in cross boarder trade can enhance profitability for local farmers, encouraging higher production levels and supporting the overall economy. This can be done through opening of boarder points and government negotiations with the neighbouring countries,
- **Rich Culture:** The unique cultural heritage of Lango can be leveraged for tourism and cultural industries, promoting local crafts and traditions, which can generate income and employment.
- **Improved Social Services:** Enhancements in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and energy services can create a conducive environment for business development, improving quality of life and productivity.

3.6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PARLIAMENT

Our Prayer to the Parliament of Uganda

We, the people of Lango, respectfully submit the following requests to enhance our region's development and productivity:

1. Transfer management of Lake Kyoga to the fisheries department to ensure sustainable fishing practices and community engagement.
2. Promote fish farming in Lango's swamps and establish a processing factory in Amolatar to boost local food production and income.

3. Support the cultivation of high-value crops like coffee, cocoa, hass avocados, and cashew nuts, and provide subsidized seeds to farmers to enhance agricultural productivity.
4. Support low-energy farming techniques, such as tractorization and ox-plough services, to improve efficiency and crop yields.
5. The 25% small scale irrigation farmer cost sharing, the farmers should be given the option of payments by installments. Most districts in Lango are returning the money for irrigation to the national treasury because most farmers cannot afford the 25% cost sharing at once. E.g Oyam District has returned 3.7bn in 2023/24 financial year.
6. Provide grants to farmers for investment in modern farming practices and equipment.
7. Establish seed banks to promote sustainable farming and ensure access to quality seeds for local farmers.
8. Invest in a commercial airport to improve transport links, facilitating trade and access to markets for local products.
9. Revive the former spinning mill and starch factory to create jobs and stimulate local industries and allocate funds for the construction of the three industrial parks (Aler in Lira 500acres, Dokolo 200 acres and Oyam 98 acres).
10. Implement cross-breeding programs to enhance livestock breeds, improving productivity and resilience.
11. Construct a palace for the paramount chief of Lango to strengthen cultural governance and community cohesion.
12. Renovate schools hosting IDPs (Agweng SS, Aromo SS, Apala SS) to improve educational facilities and support community rebuilding.
13. Compensate individuals whose land was degraded while hosting IDPs to restore trust and encourage sustainable land management.
14. Acknowledge and honor those who fought in the world wars from our area to foster community pride and historical preservation.
15. Compensate Amuka Militia who sacrificed their lives to fight and uproot Lord's Resistance Army in Lango.

16. Create markets for products suitable for international consumption to open new revenue streams for local farmers.
17. Provide equipment for value addition to enhance the quality and marketability of local products.
18. Invest in agro-processing equipment to help local farmers efficiently process their products.
19. Enact fair laws to protect local farmers' interests and ensure equitable market access.
20. Construct Aki-Bua Stadium to national standards to promote sports and tourism, generating additional economic activity.
21. Increase paved road networks from Dokolo to Namasale, Lira to Kotido, Aboke to Bobi, Lira to Alebtong, and Lira to Barlegi to enhance connectivity, reduce transport costs, and boost agricultural productivity. Lango Subregion has only 3% of paved road network in Uganda.
22. Support the Strategic development plan for Lango Sub region to ease coordinated development initiatives in the sub region,
23. Provide data cards to compensate Lango War Debt Claimants. There has been gross inadequacy of the data cards across the Sub-region.

CHAPTER FOUR: KARAMOJA SUB REGION

4.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

Today, Karamoja is the richest part of Uganda in terms of minerals and other natural resources and therefore has the potential to spur economic growth and prosperity for its people and Uganda at large given the available resources in the region and the political will of the NRM government. This was evident during the post-disarmament period (2010 - 2018) when the region registered significant growth in some key sectors; infrastructure, tourism, mining, crop production and livestock etc. However, from 2019 to 2023, there has been sharp drop of development efforts due to chronic insecurity, that is affecting all sectors of the economy in Karamoja.

This has been exacerbated by other factors including; severe corruption, recurrent drought, erratic rainfall, low agricultural productivity (85% HHs are in subsistence farming and subsistence herding), locust invasions, and, the negative effects of COVID-19. Other drivers include insufficient investments in critical infrastructures and services; bulk water storage and bulk water transfers for production, mass education and skill development, health, roads, electricity, telecommunications and ICT.

The above circumstances have entrenched deplorable abject poverty (comprising high levels of income poverty (65.6%), multi-dimensional poverty index (84.9%) food insecurity (70% of HHs chronically food insecure), illiteracy (86% male and 88% female), alcoholism, unsafe migration (including child trafficking) and high prevalence of diseases.

Distribution of assorted inputs (irrigation systems, tractors, iron sheets, heifers, goats, seeds, cassava cuttings etc) to thousands of HHs – impacting on crop production and dietary diversity. Not change in livestock status.

Distribution of processing equipment (grinding mills, sewing machines, honey processing, milk processing etc.) to groups.

Improvements in infrastructures – security roads, ICT, extension of electricity to trading centres, sub-county, and valley tanks etc.

Below is an insight of the Karamoja region that canvasses historical facts, factors of production, government interventions, salient issues and existing opportunities for Karamoja development and recommendations for considerations by Parliament.

4.2 BRIEF HISTORICAL FACTS OF KARAMOJA

Pre-colonial influences on Karamoja's development is significant, characterized by centralized **chiefdoms** and decentralized societies that "shaped governance and resource management" ¹. The pastoral lifestyle shaped community identity but also created vulnerabilities leading to environmental changes and resource conflicts, resulting into contemporary governance challenges and cycles of violence. **The Cattle Grazing Act of 1945** regulated cattle grazing in Uganda to prevent overgrazing, protect land resources, and manage conflicts, allowing veterinary officers to enforce grazing limits. Additionally, the introduction of small arms, especially the Guns (*Ngamakadae/Ngamatidae*) by Arab traders involved in the ivory trade, escalated violence and transformed traditional cattle rustling into destructive conflicts. Understanding these factors are crucial for effective development of Karamoja today.

Colonial Rule: The British colonial administration from 1916 to 1962 significantly impacted Karamoja's social structures and development, leading to marginalization. Karamoja was, often referred to as a "human and wildlife zoo" due to its complex relationship between local communities and wildlife. **The Karamoja Act of 1964** was a colonial legislation that aimed to restrict the movement and activities of the Karamojong people in Uganda. It gave the colonial administration broad powers to control the region and its inhabitants, contributing to the marginalization and underdevelopment of Karamoja and this marginalization persists to this day. The colonial administration marginalized the region, prioritizing resource allocation elsewhere, resulting in chronic poverty and underdevelopment². This perception undermines

Mirzeler, M., & Young, C. (2000). Pastoral politics in the northeast periphery in Uganda: Gun as change agent. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 38(3), 407-429.

² Oxfam. (2001). *Conflict's Children: The Human Cost of Small Arms in Kitgum and Kotido, Uganda*. Kampala: Oxfam.

the Karamojong people's rich cultural heritage, highlighting the need to consider historical context in contemporary development strategies of Karamoja³.

Post-colonial civil wars have severely impacted Karamoja's development through increased violence and disrupted livelihoods. Livestock raiding and government disarmament campaigns have led to insecurity and loss of property, exacerbating food insecurity⁴. These conflicts hinder development efforts, as NGOs struggle to operate effectively in unsafe environments, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. A multifaceted approach addressing these challenges is essential for sustainable progress. Post-colonial regimes have further continued to marginalize Karamoja politically, allocating inadequate resources for development.

Discriminatory laws like the **Karamoja Act of 1964** undermined legal protections and this exacerbated poverty. **The Cattle Grazing Act of 1945** Act criminalized grazing on any land declared by the veterinary officer or district administration official as prohibited area. Failure to observe this prohibition would lead to confiscation of cattle and imprisonment of the offender. While the rest of Ugandans enjoyed the presumption of innocence at law, the Karimojong suffered the presumption of guilty at law until one proved oneself innocent. In effect, this meant that the colonialists applied the civil law system in Karamoja while the rest of Uganda was governed under common law. This was a salient feature of discrimination against the Karamojong.

The ongoing insecurity disrupts pastoralism, which is central to Karamojong livelihoods. The key factors contributing to underdevelopment in Karamoja are persistent cattle raiding, Civil wars and famine of 1980 that have left underdevelopment stings in the Karamoja sub region to date.

It is a fact that Karamoja is the only region in Uganda that was included in the NRA/ NRM 1986 10-Point program⁵. Karamoja continues to be a priority on the NRM government agenda and this forms the basis for affirmative action programs for Karamoja todate.

³ Catley, A., Stites, E., Ayele, M., et al. (2021). Introducing pathways to resilience in the Karamoja Cluster. *Pastoralism*, 11, 28. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-021-00214-4>

⁴ Oxfam. (2001). *Conflict's Children: The Human Cost of Small Arms in Kitgum and Kotido, Uganda*. Kampala: Oxfam.

⁵ Point no.8 of NRA/ NRM ten point program of 1986.

4.3 FACTORS OF PRODUCTION FOR KARAMOJA SUB REGION

Land is a crucial factor of production in Karamoja, where pastoralism dominates. Livestock rely on land for grazing and water, but environmental challenges impact productivity. While pastoralism is primary, land also supports crop farming and charcoal production, leading to degradation. Unclear land tenure and governance undermine sustainable use, exacerbating conflicts. Karamoja has become a significant livestock supplier, but sales are often driven by immediate cash needs rather than market prices. Addressing land tenure, promoting sustainable use, and enhancing market access are essential for improving livelihoods and fostering development in the region. Key players in play are conservation, National Forest Authority, Mining and nomadism.

Labor significantly contributes to the GDP of Karamoja through its engagement in agriculture and livestock production, which are the primary economic activities in the region. Seasonal agricultural work and informal labor markets facilitate food security and household incomes. Livestock provides sustenance and generates income. Despite contributing to economic resilience, the labor force faces high unemployment, especially among youth lacking skills. Insecurity disrupts productivity.⁶

Capital is vital for Karamoja's economy, but its utilization is hindered by challenges. The region is rich in natural resources like minerals, but inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, and lack of investment limit exploitation. Livestock serves as capital, 97% of the domestic livestock population is found in the agro-pastoralist/pastoralist systems in Karamoja. According to the 2021 National Livestock Census in Uganda, the livestock population in Karamoja is as follows: Karamoja had the highest number of cattle at 2.4 million, which is 16.7% of the national cattle population that increased by 35% between 2002 and 2008, Karamoja had 2.0 million goats in 2008, representing 16.3% of the national goat population, the goats population of 17.4 million in 2021, a 39.4% increase from 2008 and indigenous goats constituted 97.2% of the total goat population, Karamoja had 1.7 million sheep in 2008, accounting for 49.4% of the national sheep population, the total sheep population in Uganda increased to 4.4 million in 2021, a 27.8% increase from 2008 and Karamoja had the highest sheep population at 1.8 million, contributing 40.4% to the national herd size and Karamoja had the highest number of donkeys at 46,000 and camels at about 10,000 in 202. Cattle

⁶ USAID, 2020 Wage labour for food security in Southern Karamoja

approximately were 2.3 million, representing 19.8% of the national cattle population goats were 2.0 million accounting for 16.3% of the national goat population and sheep were approximately 1.7 million, making up 49.4% of the national sheep population.⁷ But reduced herds due to insecurity and degradation diminish this asset. Access to financial services is limited, with most wealth held in livestock rather than cash. Many turn to charcoal production for income, but this degrades the environment. Addressing these issues is essential for enhancing capital utilization and fostering sustainable economic growth in Karamoja. Karamoja's biggest capital is the mobile livestock liabilities.

The market for agricultural and livestock products is constrained by poor infrastructure and limited access to regional and national markets. Markets in Karamoja are vital for economic production and food security, with 47 functional markets primarily operating weekly. They play a key role in food availability, especially during lean seasons, but prices can be high due to low supplies. Livestock markets are growing, yet infrastructure and security issues limit trade potential. Access challenges disproportionately affect poorer households. Enhancing market functionality and accessibility is essential for improving livelihoods and fostering sustainable development in Karamoja⁸.

The Karimojong culture, characterized by strong pastoralist traditions, influences economic activities and social structures. Karimojong culture promotes productivity through pastoralism, livestock management, community cooperation, and traditional knowledge. However, it also hinders productivity by restricting women's roles, resisting change, and perpetuating conflict. Gender norms limit women's access to resources and decision-making. Strong adherence to traditions prevents adopting new techniques. Cattle raiding and inter-clan conflicts disrupt livelihoods.

Traditional knowledge about livestock management and sustainable agricultural practices is crucial, but there is a need for affirmative modern university education and training, for example flexible university education system that addresses Karamoja issues by creating pathways for the vulnerable Karimojong to acquire skills at certificate level to progress to degree levels. Knowledge is a crucial factor of production in Karamoja, influencing livestock management and agricultural practices. Traditional ecological knowledge helps communities

⁷ FAO/GIEWS Livestock and Market Assessment Mission to Karamoja

⁸ FEWS NET-Uganda Enhanced Market Analysis link

adapt to environmental changes and optimize grazing. However, gaps in modern agricultural knowledge and low literacy rates hinder productivity. Limited access to market information restricts economic participation, leading to missed opportunities. Enhancing practical university education and capacity-building initiatives is essential for improving livelihoods and fostering sustainable development in Karamoja.

4.4 GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS IN KARAMOJA

- **Disarmament and Demobilization:** Efforts to disarm warriors have contributed to reducing violence and improving security with relative development.
- **Roads Infrastructure:** The government has invested in improving roads, some have been tarmacked (Soroti Moroto, Moroto Sironko and Moroto-Lokitonyala-onging) and many more need to be tarmacked.
- **Agricultural Development:** Programs to support agricultural production and promote food security have been implemented, although challenges remain.
- **Education:** The government has expanded access to education for example UPE, USE, Vocational training institutes, the industrial hub, the establishment Gulu University constituent college of Agriculture in Moroto, and Karamoja Peace and technology University (KAPATU) Project in Kotido municipality.
- **Health care:** Government has established 1 Referral Regional Hospital, 3 General Hospitals (30%) complimented by Matany Private missionary Hospital, 4 Health Center IVs, (3%) 46 center IIIs (31%), 93 Health center II (61%) complimented by private health care facilities. Karamoja's healthcare faces challenges like insecurity, poor infrastructure, staffing shortages, and high malnutrition rates. Improving access, resources, and community health initiatives is crucial.
- **Energy:** Hydropower electricity for domestic and industrial use with substation in Loputuk in Moroto has been established. There has been rural electrification covering a number of sub counties. There is need to extend to all other areas in Karamoja.
- **Water infrastructure:** The Ugandan government is developing water infrastructure in Karamoja to improve livelihoods, health, and resilience. Some sample dams that are functional are Kobebe-Moroto, Kaichom-Amudat Arecek-Napak, Longoromit-

Kaabong. There are also more non functional ones like Usake-Kaaabong, Nakonyen-Moroto, Key initiatives include rainwater harvesting, multipurpose dams, and integrated water management. Challenges include inadequate infrastructure, environmental concerns, and limited data. Sustainable technologies and community engagement are crucial for future progress.

There is limited data on most functional and non functional productive assets in karamoja, provided by government and development partners. There is need to have a one stop center in karamoja for data management for informed decision making and investments.

4.5 KEY SALIENT ISSUES IN KARAMOJA

Poverty: Karamoja has one of the highest poverty rates in Uganda, with many residents living below the poverty line. Poverty is pervasive in Karamoja, with 66% living below the income poverty line and 75% unable to afford minimum daily food needs. Poverty is driven by structural food deficits, climate change, conflict, high fertility (8 children/woman), and a young population (half under 15). Livestock poverty is high, with 56.5% owning less than the minimum livelihood threshold. Investing in agriculture, livestock, health, education, infrastructure and security is crucial to address multi-dimensional poverty. Long-term, holistic interventions are needed to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods in this marginalized region.

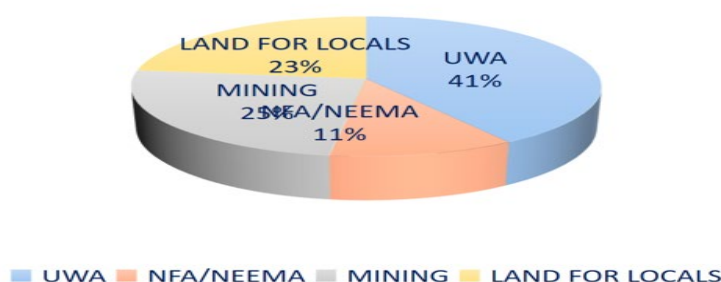
Persistent Insecurity: Cattle raiding, cross-border conflicts, and other forms of violence remain significant concerns in Karamoja. Insecurity in Karamoja has deep historical roots, primarily driven by cattle raiding traditions among ethnic groups. The first major disarmament campaign in Karamoja was launched by the British colonial government in the early 1900s and other subsequent disarmament efforts aimed at reducing violence in karamoja. Insecurity has continued to claim lives, loss of property and threatened investment. Underlying causes include low levels of education, poverty, proliferation of small arms, marginalization, climate change, and cross-border conflicts. Effective, community-driven conflict resolution and sustainable development are crucial for lasting peace.

Limited Infrastructure: The region lacks adequate infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and healthcare facilities. Karamoja's infrastructure falls short of national standards characterized by Poor connectivity and impassable routes hinder access to markets and services, exacerbating food insecurity, Low electrification rates limit access to power,

affecting healthcare and education and Facilities are understaffed, poorly equipped, and often too far from communities, compromising social services.

Land issues: land in Karamoja involve conflicts over land tenure, with disputes between traditional rights holders and investors, often leading to illegal land grabs. Mismanagement and under-utilization of land, wildlife conservation restrictions, and economic pressures from returning peace complicate effective land use and contribute to ongoing tensions. Additionally Human-wildlife conflicts in Karamoja arise from wildlife encroaching on farmland, leading to crop damage and livestock predation, particularly near Kidepo Valley National Park, affecting local livelihoods.

CUSTOMARY LAND DISTRIBUTION IN KARAMOJA



Climate Change: Karamoja is vulnerable to climate change, leading to droughts, food insecurity, and resource scarcity. Karamoja is highly vulnerable to climate change, resulting in severe droughts, food insecurity, and resource scarcity. Erratic rainfall patterns and rising temperatures exacerbate agricultural challenges, threatening subsistence farming. This leads to crop failures and livestock losses, undermining livelihoods and increasing malnutrition. The region's reliance on natural resources makes it particularly sensitive to climate dynamics, compounding existing poverty and limiting adaptive capacity. Addressing these climate risks is crucial for enhancing resilience and ensuring food security in Karamoja.

Education Deficits: Whereas Karamoja is ranked Number 8 in the 1986 NRA/NRM 10 point Programme, it is the only sub region in Uganda without a fully-fledged public University. This has hindered education in the sub region. Low literacy rates and high dropout rates, particularly among girls, hinder human capital development. Karamoja faces significant education deficits, with low literacy and high dropout rates, especially among girls, due to cultural barriers and inadequate infrastructure. Limited access to affordable university education pathways for those unable to have direct university entry further stifles human

capital development, perpetuating poverty and hindering economic growth. Addressing these challenges is crucial for empowering youth and fostering sustainable development.

4.6 OPPORTUNITIES FOR KARAMOJA SUB REGION

- **10-Year Karamoja Development Plan (KRDP):** This strategic plan aims to address the region's challenges through coordinated efforts in education, infrastructure, and health, promoting sustainable development.
- **Mineral Exploration:** Karamoja has the biggest mineral and other natural resources base. Responsible exploration and extraction can contribute to economic growth and provide jobs with long-term benefits sharing mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods of the local population.
- **Potential International Markets:** There is a very big market for Karamoja's agricultural, mineral products and tourism to access international markets, enhancing trade and economic opportunities.
- **Communication Networks:** Improving communication networks can facilitate better access to information, services, and markets, fostering economic development.
- **Karamoja as the largest Tourism destination:** The unique cultural heritage and natural beauty of Karamoja present opportunities for tourism development, which can generate income and employment. Karamoja is a rising tourism destination in Uganda, featuring rich Karamojong culture, Kidepo Valley National Park's wildlife, stunning mountains for hiking, and unique adventure experiences.⁹
- **Diversity of Cultures:** The presence of 11 cultural groups in Karamoja offers opportunities for cultural tourism and the promotion of cultural heritage, enhancing community cohesion and economic benefits.
- **Enabling political environment by NRM:** An enabling political environment fosters supportive policies, inclusive governance, strong leadership, respect for human rights, and collaboration among stakeholders, promoting stability and development.

⁹ Karamoja tops African tourist sites, Saturday, January 21, 2017 — updated on January 15, 2021

4.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM KARAMOJA TO PARLIAMENT

Karamoja urgently prays for affirmative action for equitable development which has been brought out clearly in the 10 –Year Karamoja Development Plan (KRDP), This is a thorough plan that has come out as a result of deep participatory approach: It has Quick wins to be implemented in the immediate and flagships that will be game changers in the Karamoja sub region.

For the start, the plan has targeted to implement the following as quick wins in the first 18 months:

1. Transform nine (9) primary schools for each district and four (4) secondary schools from the districts of Napak, Kaabong, Kotido and Nakapiripit into boarding schools with capacity of 3000 pupils per primary school and 2000 students per secondary school;
2. Provide affirmative action support for market and demand driven practical skills training that provide pathways to the most disadvantaged especially children and Karachunas offered through the Gulu University Constituent college of Agriculture in Moroto and Karamoja Peace and Technology University (KAPATU) Project in Kotido Municipality. This will impart skills to those learners that failed to make to the university after senior six and below especially the Karachunas, street children etc by offering them practical skills at certificate and diploma levels with pathways to upgrade to degree levels.
3. Upgrading roads with low-cost sealing (i.e., Kotido-Kaabong-Karenga (150kms), Abim-Kotido (69kms), Patongo-Abim (42kms), Napak-Kotido (100kms); Moroto-Kobebe (45 Km)-Kotido , completing Mt. Moroto Ring-road-(75Km)
4. Formulating a comprehensive community mobilization strategy to promote peace in the region;
5. For agricultural production, the targets are to desilt four (8) big earth dams in the districts of Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nabilatuk, Amudat, Nakapiripit and Napak, rehabilitate 2 valley dams per district and supply of agricultural inputs and tractors in the region;
6. Strengthening both human and institutional Capacity for all the Local Governments in the region;

7. Reconciliation, skilling, and reintegration of the Karachunas, 100 youths per district;
8. Upgrading Kobulin Rehabilitation Center in Napak to a comprehensive learning centre;
9. Resettling back displaced Karamajong families currently in Teso (100 families);
10. Resettling street children from Karamoja Region; and
11. UBC relocating and improving Totore FM (90.0MHZ) radio station in Moroto-to cover the whole region including addressing Amudat radio broadcasting challenges.

The following proposed flagship projects are critical for addressing the food security situation and achieving socio-economic transformation in Karamoja:

1. Construct man-made lakes (Water Bulking and Storage est.500,000-1,000,0000 Million gallons of water) in the following potential Water Catchment points are identified
 - a) ON UPPER PAGER SUB-CATCHMENT -ASWA WATER CATCHMENT.
 - i. Kapeta Valley Swamp -where: Kanamugeot, Namoru, and Lolelia rivers converge. This will benefit in Kotido District (Kapeta SC, Kacheri SC), Karenga District (Saangar SC, Kapedo SC and Lobalangit SC) and Kaabong District (Lolelia SC and Lolelia South SC)
 - ii. Meus Valley (Swamp) where Lokapelepelot, Solikek and Pupa rivers converge. This will benefit in Kaabong District (Kathile SC, Kathile South SC, Lotim SC, Kaabong East SC, Kalapata SC and Morungole SC)
 - iii. Longortopoj Valley where Dopeth, Nawokosiyai and Kaabong rivers converge. It will benefit in Kaabong District (Sidok SC, Kakamar SC, Loyoro SC, and Lolelia SC) and in Kotido District (Rengen SC and Longaroe SC)
 - b) ON LOKERE WATER CATCHMENT.
 - i. Aduko/Kangorok Valley where Dopeth, Longiro Lokwakile and Kapus rivers Converge west of Toror hill before lion's bridge. It will benefit in Kotido District (Panyangara SC, Kotido SC, and Kamoru SC), Abim District (Opopongo SC, Rogom SC, and Nyakwae SC) and Napak District (Apeitolim SC and Lokopo SC)
 - ii. **Lokichar (Lopei) Valley** Where Nangolol Apolon, Apule, Komatheniko, Natoo rivers converge-east of Lopei bridge. It will benefit in Napak District (Lopei SC,

Ngoleriet SC, and Lokopo SC), Moroto District (Nadunget SC and Lotisan SC), in Kotido District (Nakapelimoru and Panyangara SC) and in Kaabong District (loyoro SC)

- iii. **Nachailap Valley (Swamp)** where Kalokwangaese, Lochoman, and Kosuwat rivers converge. In Napak District the sub-counties that will benefit are (Lokopo Sc, Lorengechrwa Sc, Iriiri SC, Kokulonyo SC, and Poron SC).
- iv. **Kailong /Omaniman river Valley -East of Nabilatuk and South west of Nakonyen-**Where rivers and Omaninima tributaries east of the Kamsalaba (Moroto-Nakapiripirit Road) escarpment converge. This will benefit in Amudat District (Kangorok SC,Loroo SC and Ochorichor SC), Moroto District (Tapac SC, and Loputuk SC), and in Nabilatuk District (Lorengedwat SC)

c) **ON AWOJA WATER CATCHMENT.**

- i. **Kogulepo Valley (Swamp)** where Longaroi,, Nataa and Kamothing rivers converge before Okutot and Lochagar. This will benefit in Nabilatuk District (Nabilatuk SC, Kosike SC, and Lolachat SC), and Napak District (Lotome SC, Lorengechorwa SC, Iriiri and Nabwal SC)
- ii. **Komuriapus Valley (Swamp)** where Amaler river, Nakirianget and lolachat rivers converge. It will benefit in Nabilatuk District (Kosike SC and Natirae SC) and Nakapiripirit District (Namalu SC, Loregae SC and Loreng SC)

- 2. Bulk water transfers to Karamoja from Lake Bisina in the long term
- 3. Karamoja Seed Project in Kaabong, Karenga and Nabilatuk for sustainable seeds development
- 4. Establish a meat processing & hides and skins processing plants in Kotido for value addition.
- 5. Establish an industrial park in Moroto
- 6. Cement Factory Project in Nadunget and Katikekile sub counties-Moroto;
- 7. Klinker Factory in Moroto;
- 8. Construct Kidepo International Airport
- 9. Tarmac Karenga-Kapedo-Kaabong- Kotido-Moroto Road;

10. Elevate Kaabong Hospital to referral status; and Karenga HCIV to a hospital.
11. Construct 73 public boarding primary and 44 secondary schools in strategic locations.
12. Electrification of Karamoja sub-region
13. Green Industrial Zone in Kaabong
14. Support Gulu University Constituent College for agriculture in Moroto and at former Kotido PTC and Karamoja Peace and Technology University (KAPATU) Project in Kotido Municipality to enable Karamojong to have access to appropriate University Education that promotes skilling and pathways for upgrading to degree levels.

4.8 PRAYERS TO THIS PARLIAMNET

It is therefore our humble recommendations to parliament to attend to the following centers of gravity in the Karamoja Situation to enhance accelerated development:

1. Proposal for Supporting the 10-Year Development Plan for Karamoja

Proposal: Revive the Karamoja Development Agency (KDA) to implement the 10-Year Development Plan, engaging local and national professionals with close community's participation.

Rationale: Reviving the KDA enhances local ownership, improves implementation efficiency, and facilitates stakeholder collaboration.

Our Prayers: Amend the KDA Act, allocate adequate funding, establish monitoring frameworks, promote community participation, and strengthen partnerships to ensure effective execution of the development plan for sustainable transformation in Karamoja.

2. Enhanced Disarmament and Security Initiatives

Proposal: Strengthen ongoing disarmament efforts and enhance security measures to ensure lasting peace in Karamoja.

Rationale: The disarmament campaigns conducted have shown positive outcomes in reducing violence associated with cattle rustling. Continued efforts, including community engagement and the establishment of trust between security forces and local communities (Improved Military Cooperation), are essential for maintaining peace and enabling development initiatives to take root .

Our prayers: Peace is a prerequisite to development. The transitional justice and peace policies need to be passed by parliament to attend to a number of insecurity challenges in conflict affected areas in Uganda to enhance development.

3. Economic Diversification and Market Access

Proposal: Promote economic diversification through support for commercial agriculture, mining, and local entrepreneurship.

Rationale: The transition from a subsistence economy to one that includes commercial activities can create jobs and improve livelihoods. Encouraging investments in crop and livestock, mining, and local businesses can help reduce poverty and enhance food security. The government can facilitate access to markets and provide boosted capacity for entrepreneurs.

Our prayers: Healthy economic laws and policies enhance commercial based development in Karamoja. There is need for people centered and empowerment legal frameworks in crop and livestock investments, mining and tourism sectors that are key economic game changers for Karamoja.

4. Infrastructure Development

Proposal: Invest in critical infrastructure, including roads, water supply systems, and energy access.

Rationale: Improved infrastructure is vital for enhancing connectivity and access to services. This investment can facilitate trade, support agricultural productivity, and improve healthcare and educational services. The construction of roads and energy projects can significantly boost economic activities in the region .

Our prayers: Support to integrated infrastructure plan prioritizing roads, water, energy in Karamoja, fortunately already in the 10 years development plan for Karamoja.

5. Education and Vocational Training Programs

Proposal: Expand people centered educational opportunities, vocational training programs and flexible university education that provides pathways to meet the needs of the people of Karamoja especially youth (karachunas), women Street children.

Rationale: With a high percentage of the population lacking basic literacy skills, enhancing education, vocational training and flexible university education is crucial for empowering the productive labour force in Karamoja. Programs that provide practical skills relevant to local economic needs can reduce unemployment and foster economic growth .

Our prayers: Propose compulsory free and boarding education for children in Karamoja, expanding vocational training tailored to local needs, and establishing flexible university programs. Invest in teacher training for customized educational needs in Karamoja.

6. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Proposal: Implement policies and programs that promote gender equality and empower women in decision-making processes.

Rationale: Addressing gender disparities is essential for sustainable development. Empowering women through education, access to resources, and participation in economic activities can lead to more equitable resource distribution and improved community resilience .

Our prayer: Enact and enforce laws against gender-based violence, improve girls' education access, enhance women's economic empowerment, promote women's leadership, and engage men in gender equality initiatives in Karamoja.

7. Sustainable Resource Management and Climate Resilience

Proposal: Promote sustainable land management practices and climate resilience initiatives.

Rationale: Given the region's vulnerability to climate change, implementing sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing water management can help communities adapt to environmental challenges. This approach can ensure food security and sustainable livelihoods while reducing reliance on cattle raiding.

Our prayers: Support the development of early warning systems desk, climate action plan, and climate adaptation funds to respond to climate change shocks Karamoja.

8. Proposal for Addressing Land Challenges in Karamoja

Proposal: Implement comprehensive land reform policies that secure land tenure, address land grabbing, and promote equitable access to land for all community members, particularly women and marginalized groups.

Rationale: Karamoja faces significant land challenges, including inter-district boundary disputes, ethnic land conflicts, and land grabbing linked to wildlife conservation and mineral exploration. These issues undermine livelihoods and exacerbate poverty. Securing land rights and promoting equitable access are essential for sustainable development, food security, and community resilience.

Our prayer: Enact laws securing land tenure, especially for women. Create local land tribunals integrating traditional practices. Mandate comprehensive land use planning balancing pastoralist and farmer needs. Support community-led sustainable land management practices and Monitor and evaluate land policy implementation.

9. Proposal on addressing persistent Human-Wildlife Conflicts in Karamoja

Rationale: Human-wildlife conflicts in Karamoja threaten livelihoods and safety, with wildlife causing significant crop damage and livestock losses. Approximately 50% of wildlife resides outside protected areas, leading to increased encounters of loss of lives and destruction of property.

Our Prayer: We urge Parliament to degazette and fence off animal corridors to ensure safe wildlife movement, implement community-centered conservation, enhance speedy compensation mechanisms, and promote sustainable livelihoods. This will foster harmony between communities and wildlife.

10. Audit and Monitoring of Development Programs

Proposal: Conduct a comprehensive audit of investments and funds allocated to Karamoja to assess their impact and effectiveness.

Rationale: There have been concerns about the lack of visible impact from funds invested in the region. An audit can identify gaps, inefficiencies, and areas for improvement, ensuring that resources are utilized effectively to benefit the local population.

Our prayers: Mandate comprehensive monitoring and evaluation policies for all development programs. Establish an independent oversight body and clear performance indicators. Ensure public access to program information and feedback mechanisms. Enforce strict anti-corruption laws.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Presenting these game changers to Parliament can facilitate discussions on targeted interventions and policies that address the multifaceted challenges facing the Karamoja region. By prioritizing these initiatives, the government can foster sustainable development, improve the quality of life for the Karamojong people, and promote peace and stability in the region.

4.9 GENERAL PRAYER

Rt. Hon. Speaker, this paper addresses the Northern Uganda Question and we pray that you pay attention to the issues raised and address the recommendations therein.

We therefore pray that Parliament should use its powers as conferred by the constitution and take the necessary actions to implement.

Operation Wealth Creation shall continue to play its role in monitoring the implementation of Government Programs and within the government Apex coordinating mechanisms.

Parliament must do everything in Uganda especially in West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja (WALK) to achieve this function.

Thank you.