**Analysis of the Persistence of Poverty in some regions of Uganda, case study of the Karamoja Sub- region in North Eastern Uganda**



**MSc. Thesis for Development and International Relations**

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# Abstract

Poverty has continuously created a barrier for development in the world. The rest of the world has made progress towards the alleviation of poverty but this has not been the case in Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. Countries in the region are working towards poverty alleviation however; the progress made in these countries is not even. One example of such a country is Uganda. The Karamoja sub-region in Uganda is still lagging behind in poverty reduction.

Due to its unpredictable climate, the sub-region has suffered prolonged drought and famine. The unpredictable weather and continuous insecurity and conflict, have kept the sub-region in a poverty trap. The government is faced with the task of bringing the sub-region to the same level of development as the other regions of the country. This study aims at finding out why the Karamoja sub-region has remained persistently poor.

Using the primary and secondary data collected, the study found out that there are a number of factors that have made difficult for the sub-region to move out of poverty. These include; prolonged insecurity and conflict, continuous dependence on food aid, high levels of illiteracy, poor governance and government policies, cultural traditions and customs and poverty of natural resources. It is also important that the government puts the Karamoja sub-region on its overall development agenda if the country is to develop. This is because the under development of the sub-region has spillover effects on the rest of the country.

Keywords: Poverty, Economic Growth

# List of Acronyms

AIDS : Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

FGM : Female Genital Mutilation

GDP : Gross Domestic Product

HIV : Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HPI : Human Poverty Index

LRA : Lord’s Resistance Army

MDG : Millennium Development Goal

MoFPED : Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development

NAADS : National Agricultural Advisory Services

NDP : National Development Plan

NPA : National Planning Authority

NGO : Non Governmental Organization

PEAP : Poverty Eradication Action Plan

PMA : Plan for Modernization of Agriculture

UBOS : Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UNDP : United Nations Development Programme

UPDF : Uganda People’s Defence Forces

UPE : Universal Primary Education

USE : Universal Secondary Education

# Chapter 1 Introduction

Poverty, the focus area of this master thesis, is a social phenomenon that has been the subject of debate and research for several decades. It is a major problem in the world and every minute a person dies due to poverty related reasons (Mack et.al.2009; 1).Despite institutions including the World Bank and United Nations launching various programs and projects such as the Millennium Development Goals[[1]](#footnote-1) to meet the needs of the world’s poorest people and directing their activities towards poverty reduction, high levels still exist in the world. According to the World Bank, an estimated 1.29 billion people were living below $ 1.25 a day in 2008 corresponding to 22% of the population of the developing countries. An estimated 2.47 billion were living below $2 per day in the same year corresponding to 43% of the population of the developing countries.[[2]](#footnote-2) The poorest of the poor are found in the developing countries with high disease prevalence, high infant mortality rates, high maternal deaths, and low literacy rates, malnutrition and stunted growth of children. The two regions most affected are Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa and children are the innocent victims of this enduring moral dilemma (Mack et.al.2009; 1). This master thesis will only focus on one country in Sub-Saharan Africa that is Uganda and the Karamoja sub-region will be the case study. Uganda was chosen because it is one of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that has made commendable progress in poverty reduction. The country is on track and most likely to meet the first Millennium Development Goal that is *‘Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger ‘by* 2015.Karamoja was chosen as a case study because despite the progress made in poverty reduction in Uganda, the sub-region still has high rates of poverty with 80% of the population living in poverty. It is also the most underdeveloped, volatile and marginalized region in Uganda which has not had a successful harvest in over 5years[[3]](#footnote-3) .

## Background

Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa lying astride the equator bordered on the north by South Sudan, on the east by Kenya, on the west by the Democratic Republic of Congo, on the south west by Rwanda and on the south by Tanzania. The country is blessed with substantial natural resources including small deposits of minerals such as cobalt and copper, untapped reserves of crude oil and natural gas, fertile soil with more than 75% of the land available for cultivation, regular rainfall and annual internal renewable water resources. Uganda like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa has had an era of steady economic growth from 1986 when the government with the help of donor countries and international agencies embarked on rehabilitating and stabilizing the economy. This was done by increasing prices of petroleum products, raising producer prices on export crops and carrying out currency reforms. The poverty reduction experienced in the 1990’s was due to a very high rate of consumption growth, high rates of GDP growth, improved security, the removal of market distortions, the restoration of macroeconomic stability and improvement in the terms of trade. From 1992 to 1997, a significant factor in consumption growth was the increased prices that the producers received for their crops. During this period, farmers were able to benefit from the increase in the world price of coffee and this was due to the liberalization of agricultural marketing .Income poverty fell dramatically and the proportion of Ugandans whose expenditures fell below the poverty line fell from 56% in 1992 44% in 1997/8 and even faster to 34% in 2000(MoFPED, March 2007;18).However, the most dramatic poverty reductions were only experienced by cash crop farmers .After 1997, GDP growth rate slowed down, terms of trade deteriorated, inequality began to rise and poverty in northern and eastern regions of the country increased (ibid.p.14).Uganda is thus still among the poorest countries in the world and in 2009,38% of the population was living below $ 1.25 per day .[[4]](#footnote-4) Poverty is deep rooted in the rural areas than in the urban areas with the poverty headcount in rural areas at 34% and yet more than 27million out of a population of 32million live in the rural areas.

The Karamoja sub-region is one of the rural areas with a high level of poverty. The region named after the people who have lived there for centuries, the *Karamojong*, lies on the western edge of the great Eastern rift valley in the northeast corner of Uganda and is flanked by Kenya to the east and Southern Sudan to the north. The region originally comprised five districts including Moroto, Kotido, Kaabong, Nakapiripiriti and Abim. In 2010, two districts Amudat and Napak were added after being carved out of Nakapiripiriti and Moroto districts respectively bringing the number to seven districts. The sub-region covers an area of 27,511 sq.km equivalent to almost one third of Uganda’s land surface with a population of 1,107,308 which is less than 20% of Uganda’s population. The sub-region is distinct both culturally and geographically from the rest of Uganda .The landscape is semi arid savannah, grassland and acacia wooded hills punctuated by volcanic mountains including Mt. Kadam, Mt.Moroto and Mt.Napak.[[5]](#footnote-5) The harsh climate that is dry, hot with seasonal rainfall dictates the nomadic agro-pastoralist lifestyle of the inhabitants who are the Nilotic Karamojong. The Nilotic Karamojong includes ethnic groups of the Dodoth, Jie, Pokot, Bokora, Matheniko, Pian, Tepeth, Nyakwe, Iik, Ngipore and Ethur.The region has the highest level of poverty above the national average with 82% of the total population living in poverty. The districts found in the Karamoja sub-region have a higher Human Poverty Index (HPI) than other districts in the country and in 2005, Kaabong, Abim and Kotido had HPI of 65.3.Moroto and Nakapiripirit had HPI of 60.7 and 56 respectively (UNDP Report,2007;63). The closer the Human Poverty Index is to 0, the better progress of the district and absence of human poverty, while the closer the HPI to 100, the more deprived the population (ibid.59).

Using primary data from the qualitative interviews and secondary data, the study aims at finding out why the sub-region is lagging behind in poverty reduction. The sub-region’s semi-arid climate, the subsistence based livelihoods, the marginalization and isolation of its inhabitants and the unpredictable security status have influenced its food security. Despite the fact that the sub-region’s inhabitants are often characterized as highly resilient, the direct and indirect effects of successive years of unevenly distributed rainfall, crop and livestock pests and diseases have all contributed to a decline in food security and coping capacity hence pushing the sub-region further into poverty. Although the external assistance to the sub-region especially food aid has fluctuated for decades, it is often incongruent with the livelihoods context of the sub-region inhabitants. It has only addressed a portion of their needs and created a dependency relationship between the inhabitants and the aid agencies since their incentive, energy and commitment to sustain their livelihoods has been destroyed by the continuous flow of aid.

During the research, it was discovered that the sub-region is blessed with minerals such as gold, copper and silver. However the minerals are not being used to improve the standard of living of the Karamojong because government officials, private individuals and private companies are using these minerals for their own personal gain. The sub-region has vast amounts of fertile land however due to continuous deforestation, over grazing and poor farming practices, the soil lost its fertility and can no longer support large scale agriculture.

Permaculture has been adopted by the Karamojong as a way to increase their food production in an environmentally sustainable way. Over the next years, surplus food will be produced by the permaculturalists and sold to neighboring districts to earn disposable income for investment and saving. This research also found out that most households in the sub-region have resorted to having one meal a day as way to survive in times of food shortage and save for the next days. Other households sell their labor in exchange for money or food and this in some cases takes the form of migration whereby inhabitants migrate to nearby towns of Kampala or Jinja to get jobs as casual laborers.

In addition to insecurity and unpredictable climate patterns, the research found out that other reasons given by the respondents for the persistent poverty in the sub-region include region *‘favoritism’* practiced by government officials when carrying out development activities and cultural practices that push them further into the poverty trap. William Arthur Lewis’ theory of Economic growth and David Ellerman’s Helping People Help Themselves Approach to development assistance are used to further explain reasons why the sub-region is not making progress in poverty reduction like other regions of the country.

## Problem Formulation:

Uganda has had a strong record of prudent macroeconomic management and structural reform over the past two decades. It was one of the first countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to embark on liberalization and pro-market policies in the late 1980’s[[6]](#footnote-6). Poverty eradication is the central objective of the government of Uganda and it has introduced various policies that have affected growth and poverty reduction in the last ten years. The policies include the following:

*The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP)* is Uganda’s national planning framework that was launched in 1997 and revised in 2000 and 2003 respectively as way of guiding public action in the eradication of poverty (MoFPED, 2004;1). All sectors develop detailed plans within this framework and it guides detailed medium term sector plans, district plans and the budget process. The PEAP is grouped under five pillars (MoFPED, 2004;xvi-xxv):

* Pillar 1: Economic Management
* Pillar 2: Enhancing production, competitiveness and incomes
* Pillar 3: Security, conflict resolution and disaster management
* Pillar 4: Good Governance
* Pillar 5: Human Development

The PEAP stresses poverty eradication and prioritizes social service delivery. It recognizes the importance of increasing income to poor households and places a high priority on eradicating income poverty, raising educational achievement of Ugandans, improving health of the people, and giving a voice to poor communities. It aims at transforming Uganda into a modern economy in which people in all sectors can participate in economic growth and reducing the population living in absolute poverty to 10% by 2017.The PEAP prioritized expenditure to improve personal security and access to primary education, healthcare and water. The economy experienced varying growth rates when the PEAP was implemented with an average GDP growth rate of 7.2% between 1997/8 and 2000/1, to 6.8% between 2000/1 and 2003/4, increasing to 8% over the period 2004/5 to 2007/8 (NPA,April 2010;1). The PEAP recorded progress with the poverty incidence falling from 44% in 1997 to 35% in 2000,and an increase in school enrollment mainly due to the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 with free primary education for all children of school going age. Primary school enrollment rose from 3.4 million in 1996 to 6.9 million in 2001 and to 7.41 million in 2007 (MoFPED, May 2003;8-14).The 10 years of the PEAP from 1997 to 2007 are considered a success story and this era stands in Uganda’s history as a crucial stage in the hazardous journey from conflict to successful nationhood. The PEAP was replaced by the new five -year National Development Plan (NDP) in 2010.

The National Development Plan is a five year plan running from 2010/11 to 2014/15 with the theme, *‘Growth, Employment and Socio-Economic Transformation for Prosperity’*. It details Uganda’s current development status, challenges and opportunities. The NDP marks the broadening of the country’s development strategy from poverty reduction to structural transformation for growth and increasing the standard of living of the people. The driving force in the NDP is to*,”accelerate socio-economic transformation to achieve the National Vision of a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years”* (NPA, April 2010; 1). The contribution to socio-economic transformation will be demonstrated by improved employment levels, higher per capita income, improved labor force distribution, improved gender equality indicators and improved human development indicators (ibid.).

Another policy is the *Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA)* which is a holistic, strategic and operational framework for efficiently transforming the livelihoods of the majority of the subsistence farmers in Uganda by reforming institutional and organizational structures and changing the type and methods of production and service delivery in the agricultural sector. The mission of the PMA is to*,”eradicate poverty by transforming subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture”* (MoFPED, March 2007; 20).The aim of the PMA is to accelerate agricultural growth in Uganda by introducing profound technological changes throughout the agricultural sector that will keep downward pressure on real food prices, thereby increasing the real incomes of the poor including those in the urban areas. The technological change will also lower per unit costs of agricultural production and increase Uganda’s agricultural competitiveness on international markets (ibid.).One of the components of the PMA is the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS)[[7]](#footnote-7) launched in March 2002 to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural extension services. NAADS targets poor subsistence farmers with emphasis on women, youth and people with disabilities. It aims to redress past shortcomings in the provision of extension services through far reaching reforms and innovative approaches in service delivery.

Decentralization was also introduced by the government and it involves transfer of political, economic and administrative authority, and functions from central to sub-national units of government; privatization that involves the opening up of public enterprises to market forces with respect to inputs and outputs with the view that private ownership will lead to a more efficient and higher productivity of resources.

The Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) was also launched and it is a framework on which the development of education sector in the country is formulated and presents targets and implementation strategies together with outline investment programmes that will fulfill government’s policy directions .Universalisation of schooling is the government’s major education priority and this led to the introduction of free education with Universal Primary Education(UPE) in 1997 and Universal Secondary Education(USE) in 2007(MoFPED,March2007;21-22).

The Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) is another policy developed within the framework of the ten-year National Health Polity and it gives details of the major technical health programmes and support services and their outputs. Its aim is to reduce morbidity and mortality from major causes of ill health and therefore contribute to poverty eradication, economic and social development of the people of Uganda (ibid.22-23).

The Transport Sector Policy aimed at boosting the provision of cost effective, efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport services to sustain increased agricultural and industrial production, trade, tourism and social and administrative services was also introduced. A well developed transport sector plays a critical role in the development of a self-sustaining economy, poverty reduction and economic integration of the country (ibid.23-24).

The government has also introduced various programs projects aimed at helping the people move out of poverty including the Prosperity for All program also known as ‘*Bona Bagagawale’* where Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) aimed at increasing access to credit and low cost loans to Ugandans will be established in 1,000 sub-counties throughout the country. These loans will enable the people invest in various projects with special attention to agriculture whereby people investing in agriculture will only pay an annual interest of 13% on their loans and people investing in commercial businesses will pay 17% interest on the loans. This program works hand in hand with the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS).

All the above mentioned reforms, policies and programs led to a reduction in the level of poverty with headcount poverty falling from 56.4% in 1992/3 to 24.5% in 2009/10 meaning that 23million Ugandans were above the poverty line in 2010 (UBOS, November 2010;73-75).The number of the absolutely poor declined from 9.3million in2002\3 to 7.5million in 2009\10,the non-poor but insecure increased from 9.6million in 2002\3 to 13.2million in 2009\10 and the middle class rose from 5.1million in 2002\3 to 10million in 2009\10 (MoFPED,May 2012;ix).The poverty gap narrowed from 12 in 2002/3 to 9 in 2005/6 and this is an indication of the improvement in monetary welfare even for those households still below the poverty line. Uganda is also among the countries that are on track and most likely to meet the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to *‘Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger’* by 2015.In addition to the improvement in the well-being of the Ugandans, there has been an increase in the capabilities and opportunities of the people. However, despite this progress, challenges still remain in the country in terms of consolidating democracy, extending protection of basic human, social and economic rights to all Ugandans, removing barriers to sustained and sustainable economic growth especially strengthening the country’s underdeveloped infrastructure, increasing access to and quality of social services and removing regional and other inequalities (MoFPED Report, September 2010; 5). The biggest challenge is that the reduction in poverty has not been country wide with some regions moving in and out of poverty and others remaining persistently poor. In this instance, poverty is not only defined as lack of income but also failure to meet the basic needs of life, insecurity of persons and property and failure to break out of the cycle of poverty.

The poverty headcount levels are a lot higher in the rural areas at 34% than the urban areas with only 14% and yet more than 27million people out of the country’s population of 32million live in the rural areas. The central region that is comprised of urban areas and the capital city Kampala has had a decline in the poverty headcount from 46% in 1992/3 to 16% in 2005/6 while the northern region had a slight decline from 74% to 61% during the same period (ibid.13).Karamoja, the case study of this master thesis is found in the north eastern region and the reduction in poverty has been slower than the national average with 82% of the total population in the sub-region living below poverty .It is the most underdeveloped and volatile region in Uganda with the lowest development indicators. The sub-region has been the focus of numerous government programs and interventions by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and subject of academic and policy research. The sub-region lags behind the rest of Uganda in achieving the MDGs.Only 46% of the population have access to safe drinking water and 8% have access to sanitation units. The Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate is high at 10.9% compared to the national rate of 6%.The Literacy rates and life expectancy are lower than any other region in the country with a literacy rate of 21% in 2004 which was well below the national average of 68 % ( Powell, March2010;3). The maternal and infant mortality rates are the highest in Uganda and the infant mortality rate was 178 per 1,000 live births in comparison to 88 per 1,000 live births nation-wide (ibid) and only 6% of women in the sub-region deliver at health centers (UN,2011;6). There is food insecurity in the sub-region with some households having no food or only eating one meal a day and 44.8% of children live in households that only eat one meal a day. Limited livelihood opportunities in the sub-region have forced many to migrate to Kampala. This has led to an increase in the number of street children and beggars as 90% of the street children and 80% of the beggars in Kampala, are from Karamoja (ibid.).The life expectancy is 47.7years lower than the national life expectancy of 50.4years .The literacy rates are high and there are more children out of school and fewer completing primary education than any other region of the country with the completion rate of 10% in 2011 (UN, 2011; 3).

In the *Moving out of Poverty* report by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Uganda, movement out of poverty is determined by a set of economic, social and political factors. Under the economic factors, households have a higher probability to escape poverty on a permanent basis if they *,”(a) live in communities with better infrastructure endowments ,more diversified economies, and better overall economic performance, and (b) have higher asset endowments ,better access to markets and credit, and more diversified income sources “*(MoFPED, March 2007;2).For the social factors, households have a higher probability to escape poverty on a permanent basis if they, *“(a) live in communities with stronger community organizations and norms ,and (b) have higher levels of bonding and bridging social capital”* (ibid.) and lastly under the political factors, households have a higher probability to escape poverty on a permanent basis if they*,”(a) live in communities with democratic and accountable local governments,(b) are empowered and able to make a number of economic and political actions that increase their control over their lives ,and (c) enjoy a wide range of freedoms and have positive economic aspirations towards the future”* (ibid.).In addition to these social, economic and political factors are seven key multi-dimensional individual assets and capabilities that are important for households to move out of poverty or maintain their prosperity and these include (MoFPED, March 2007;25-38):

* Having multiple income sources
* Possessing Marketable technical \ professional skills, primary education and above , or a formal job and regular salary
* Being hardworking
* Inheriting and\ or buying and utilizing productive assets (especially land) profitably
* Having hardworking spouse(s) (often wife) and \ or abundant family labor
* Having a good saving culture
* Being enterprising

This master thesis will therefore investigate if the above mentioned factors, assets and capabilities are present or lacking in the sub-region. Three questions will help to guide the research as the researcher investigates why the Karamoja sub-region is lagging behind in poverty reduction:

* What do we know about poverty in general?
* How is poverty measured and analyzed in the world?
* Why do some regions fail in reducing poverty levels while others succeed?

## Research Strategy:

Research for this master thesis will focus on the topic of poverty and its persistence in the Karamoja sub-region found in north eastern Uganda. A brief introduction of poverty trends in Uganda will be included to give the reader an idea about poverty in general in the country. This thesis is a document study which is used to describe human aspirations and intentions for the period they refer to, and places, events, and social relations, where we cannot present ourselves. In writing this thesis, I will delimit myself from the use of quantitative questionnaires and the research will involve analyzing various sources of data including books, journals, articles, working papers, the World Wide Web and e-books. Poverty which is the main concept in this thesis will be defined and this will also involve the local people’s understanding of poverty. This will be followed by a section on how poverty is measured and analyzed in the world. I will then analyze the factors responsible for the slow progress in poverty reduction in the Karamoja sub-region. The last section will include proposals on how poverty in this region can be reduced.

## Search Design

**Problem Statement**

*Why is the Karamoja Sub-region lagging behind in poverty reduction?*

*Case study Approach*

*Secondary Data*

**Conclusion**

*Recommendations on how to reduce poverty*

**Analysis**

*Link problem formulation with theories and*

*Empirical Findings*

**Empirical Findings**

*Data collected from Interviews*

**Concepts and Theoretical Considerations**

*Theory of Economic Growth*

*Helping People Help Themselves Approach*

*Qualitative Interviews*

**Methodology**

**Research Questions**

* *What do we know about poverty in general?*
* *How do we measure and analyze poverty in the world?*
* *Why do some regions fail in reducing poverty while others succeed?*

# Chapter 2 Methodology

This section contains considerations about the overall methodology and how the questions in relation to the problem statement will be answered. The most relevant methods in line with social science research will be applied in conducting research for the master thesis because methodology is the foundation of good research work. The approach adopted and methods of data collection selected for research depend on the nature of the inquiry and the type of information required for the research.

A mixed methods approach will be employed for the research in this master thesis. Inductive and deductive methods of research will be used because the two occur in collaboration. The inductive method will be used to acquire new knowledge and also contribute to the existing body of knowledge. It will be used to analyse concrete empirical work on the thesis topic in the sub-region. However the thesis will not only be inductive because there are premises and theories to work from and this is where the deductive method will be used. Deductive method will be used to look at the type of poverty that exists in the sub-region, what the inhabitants have to say about poverty and how they experience it and why poverty reduction has failed in the sub- region. Systematic knowledge on new areas will be applied through the deductive method and problem statement will be put to the test. The theories to be used are known in advance but the analysis will be used to conclude on the theory.

The qualitative and quantitative method of research will also be explored. In order to do justice to a research topic, there is need to combine the two methods although focus will be more on qualitative method since it is more interpretative and analysis is done in words rather than figures. Qualitative researchers are concerned with understanding individuals perceptions of the world and according to Judith Bell the researchers*,” doubt whether social facts exist and question whether a scientific approach can be used when dealing with human beings”* (Bell, 2010;6).The qualitative method will thus help to redirect the mind of the researcher from already known facts and help to contribute to a state of wider awareness of the social phenomena, poverty which is the main focus of the thesis and possible ways to reduce it. On the other hand, quantitative researchers collect facts, study the relationship between the different sets of facts and use numerical data and techniques that are likely to produce quantified and generalized conclusions (ibid.5).Therefore the quantitative method will be used to show data in relation to poverty reduction.

The case study approach will also be used in the thesis because it is appropriate for individual researchers and it provides an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in depth. Like other research strategies, it is a way to study an empirical topic by following a set of prescribed procedures. In his book *Case Study Research Design and Methods*, Yin defines a case study as*,”an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident”* (Yin, 2003;13)*.*The case study method is thus used when one purposely wants to cover contextual conditions, believing that they may be pertinent to the phenomenon of study (ibid.).The case study approach is thus relevant to this thesis because focus will be on the persistence of poverty in the Karamoja sub-region of Uganda. However as Yin states in his book, the strategy has its limitations and many researchers disregard it for a number of reasons. First, there is concern over the lack of rigor of case study research. Case study researchers become sloppy, do not follow procedures and allow evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions. The second limitation is that case studies provide little basis for scientific generalizations because it is hard to generalize from a single study. Case studies are neither generalizable to populations or universes but to theoretical propositions. A case study does not represent a sample and the goal when one is using a case study is to expand and generalize theories and not to enumerate frequencies. The third limitation is that case studies take too long and the outcome is massive and unreadable documents (ibid.10-11).

The available data gathered primarily from the interviews carried out in the sub-region and secondary sources will be explored. Care will be taken to try and limit the flaws and be accountable for all the research work done in this thesis. A high level of reliability will be obtained, where the collection and use of data can be repeated with the same result. This will be achieved this by being critical of the documents and materials used and ensure that the empirical data comes from reliable sources. Registrations of the dates the material and document for the thesis are found and used will be made so that through a test of examination it would be possible to use the same sources (Yin, 2009; 41-45). The information and facts collected will enable the researcher to answer the problem and contribute to its solutions through recommendations (Miller, 1991; 5-6).

# Chapter 3: Concepts and theoretical consideration

This section contains definitions of concepts used in the master thesis with the main concept as poverty. Two questions presented earlier in the problem formulation section, what do we know about poverty in general and how is poverty measured and analyzed in the world, will be answered in this chapter. The chapter will also include theoretical considerations and approaches to be used in the master thesis.

### What do we know about poverty in general?

Poverty has been a subject of debate and research for several decades. Various definitions of poverty have been presented and according to Ruth Lister in her book *‘Poverty’*, the role of a definition is to*,” differentiate the condition defined (poverty) from other conditions (non-poverty)”* (Lister,2004;13). How the concept is defined is thus significant to political, policy and academic debates on poverty and it should be defined relative to the living standards of specific societies. This is because poverty between societies, countries and continents is different .In Africa, to be poor means an individual or household is starving with no food while in a developed country such as France to be poor means you cannot afford to eat out at a restaurant. The United Nations defines poverty as*,”a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and cloth a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one’s food or a job to earn one’s living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households, and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation “*(Gordon, 2005; 1)*.* Haughton and Khandker in their book, *‘Handbook on Poverty and Inequality’* present the World Bank definition of poverty as,”*pronounced deprivation in well-being”* (Haughton & Khandker, 2009; 2).Well-being arises from the capability to function in a society and it is viewed as the command over commodities. People are at an advantage if they have a greater command over resources (ibid.2-3). In Participatory Rural Assessments (PRA) used by researchers and NGO’s working in poor villages in the world, the poor are frequently defined as those who cannot work due to ill health, suffer from long term disability or are elderly (Banerjee et.al.2006;4).

Stein Ringen combines low income and living standards in his definition of poverty that is*,” a low standard of living, meaning deprivation in way of life because of insufficient resources to avoid such deprivation”* (Lister, 2004;14). Therefore an individual is poor when he has both a low standard of living and a low income. Nolan and Whelan define poverty as the inability to participate in society due to lack of financial resources (ibid.13). This definition is thus restricted to areas of life where consumption and participation are determined by one’s control over financial resources. It excludes non-material elements such as lack of participation in decision making, powerlessness, lack of voice and respect (ibid.).

Amartya Sen offers a different perspective on the role of low income when defining poverty. He looks at it as a denial of choices and opportunities to live an acceptable way of life (ibid.15). To him, income and living standards don’t matter and are instead instruments to what matters including the kind of life that a person is able to lead and choices and opportunities open to the person to lead that life. Sen explains his idea using two terms, *‘capabilities’* and *‘functionings.* Functionings are defined as*,”the various things a person may value doing or being”* (Sen, 1999; 75).It includes things that make up a person’s well being like being educated or being healthy. On the other hand, capabilities of a person are,”*the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for her to achieve”* (ibid.). Capabilities are viewed as freedom to get pleasure from functionings which are in form of beings and doing. An individual can choose between different ways of living e.g. a person with food has the capability to eat it, fast or go on hunger strike. Sen looks at poverty as deprivation of basic capabilities rather than low income. He argues that poverty should be defined in terms of capability failure that is, failure of basic capabilities to reach minimally acceptable levels and not income or living standards (Lister, 2004; 16). In relation to Sen’s definition is Karel Van den Bosch’s definition of poverty as*,”a situation where people lack the economic resources to realize a set of basic functionings”* (ibid.19). This definition ties capability deprivation to income poverty.

Nallari and Griffith in their book, *Understanding Growth and Poverty: Theory, Policy and Empirics*, define poverty as a condition involving the critical shortages of commodities or resources and assets (Nallari & Griffith, 2011; 15). They argue further that,*”poverty is not just a shortage of quantifiable resources but a more general state of vulnerability marked by lack of access to health services and education, low self-confidence, and a sense of powerlessness”*(Nallari & Griffit,2011;16).

In Uganda, the government and the civil society organizations define poverty as*,”a lack of means to satisfy basic material and social needs, as well as a feeling of powerlessness”*(Lwanga-Ntale & McClean,2003;2).The poor in Uganda define poverty as,”(i) *A persistent situation like rain that socks the poor and does not stop in which one survives marginally, with problems that follow you,living hand-to-mouth and in perpetual need due to lack of basic necessities of life and the means of production,(ii) Lack of social support ;and (iii) Feelings of negativity, frustration and powerlessness to influence the things around [one] because one has no source of life”* (ibid.6).

In his book *‘Teaching with Poverty in Mind’*, Eric Jensen identifies six types of poverty. These include (Jensen,2009;6);

* *Situational Poverty* caused by an unexpected crisis or loss (environmental disasters, divorce, serious health problems) but is often temporary.
* *Generational Poverty* which occurs in families that have had at least two generations born into poverty. The families do not have tools to move out of poverty.
* *Absolute Poverty* which is rare in developed countries and involves scarcity of basic necessities of life such as shelter, food and running water. The families focus on day –to-survival. It depends not only on income but also on access to services.
* *Relative Poverty* defined as the economic status of a family whose income is not enough to meet its society’s average standard of living
* *Urban Poverty* which occurs in metropolitan (urban) areas with populations of at least 50,000 people. The poor in the metropolitan areas deal with a number of chronic and acute stressors such as crowding, violence and noise.
* *Rural Poverty* occurs in the non-metropolitan or rural areas with populations with populations below 50,000 and has more single-guardian households. Families have less access to services and quality education than families in the metropolitan areas.

The type of poverty found in developing countries is absolute poverty. When absolute poverty is experienced for an extended period of time, it becomes chronic poverty. Hulme, Moore and Shepherd define chronic poverty as poverty*,”measured by household consumption, which is of extended duration (set arbitrarily at 5 years)”* (Lwanga-Ntale & McClean, 2003;2).Individuals defined as chronically poor experience severe poverty which is measured as the degree below the poverty line and are affected by many interconnected factors that compound their situation to poverty. The chronically poor always or usually live below the poverty line unlike the transitorily poor who move in and out of poverty ,or occasionally fall below the poverty line (ibid).The chronically poor include widows, the disabled, poor married women, the elderly, street kids, orphans, refugees and internally displaced persons. Furthermore there are two terms used to refer to the chronically poor that is the *‘poorest of the poor’* and the *‘hardcore poor’*. The poorest of the poor are households or individuals who are chronically poor in terms of the severity of poverty while the hard core poor are households or individuals who are chronically poor and living below the food poverty line (ibid.3). The factors that keep people chronically poor and make escaping from poverty difficult are referred to as *‘maintainers of poverty’* (ibid.17).

### How is poverty measured and analyzed in the world?

There is difficult task when measuring poverty with many questions asked including, the domain in which poverty is to be measured, if the poverty line separating the poor from the non poor is invariant across space and time, whether to consider only the incidence of poverty or also the depth of poverty, and if poverty should be measured at the individual or household level (Mack et.al.2009; 22-23). The techniques used when measuring poverty can shed light on whether poverty is increasing, decreasing or whether economic growth is benefitting the poor. Most of the techniques used for measuring poverty only focus on the monetary aspects of poverty however the nonmonetary aspects are important and should not be forgotten. This is because the poor are rarely poor only in income but unlike the non poor, they are more likely to be cold, hungry, ill, malnourished ,sick, alcoholic ,unemployed, depressed and excluded from society (Nallari & Griffith,2011;16).The measurement of poverty involves three steps (ibid.17):

* An indicator of welfare must be defined
* A minimum acceptable standard of that indicator must be established to separate the poor from the non poor. The standard is known as the poverty line.
* A summary statistic must be devised to aggregate the information obtained from the distribution of the chosen welfare indicator

The most common way of measuring poverty focuses on economic welfare which is the monetary aspect of poverty. Household welfare can be measured using household income .However it is rarely used by poverty analysts because households are usually unwilling to report income if they have evaded taxes or have illegal earnings. Instead, households are willing to report what they have spent than what they have earned. Secondly, some types of income are not easy to measure for example farm income and the incomes of the poor vary considerably over time especially for those in rural areas who depend on rain for agriculture (ibid.17-18).Consumption based measures of living standards are thus preferred to income based measures because consumption is more stable than income and the problems mentioned above with the income based measures are minimized. The consumption based measures include purchased good and services. When making comparisons across households using the consumption measures of poverty, the value of the durable goods owned should be calculated in the year of measurement .This should consist of the depreciation of the item during the year and the interest cost of having money locked up in the item. The durable goods should be measured because some of the households that cannot afford enough food use some of their money on items such as clothing which represent the very basic needs of the household. Housing is another item which should be included in consumption. The cost of housing is estimated by calculating the actual rent payments or imputed rent payments for owner occupied houses .Imputed rent payments are payments the household would have to pay in rent if it didn’t own this household (ibid.18-19).

Households differ in size and composition therefore comparison of aggregate welfare can be misleading in terms of the well being of the individuals in a household. This problem is solved by converting from a measure of household consumption to a measure of individual consumption. This is done by dividing household expenditures by the number of people in the household. When determining whether a household is poor, the amount of the household’s consumption is measured against the poverty line. The poverty line was first used by the World Bank in 1985 using an international poverty line of a purchasing power equal to $1 per capita in 1985 prices. From 1985, there have been two updates of the poverty line to $1.08 and $1.25 in 1993 and 2005 prices respectively (Mack et.al.2009; 23).The poverty line shows the minimum standard necessary for an individual to fulfill his or her basic food and non food needs. It can either be a relative poverty line or an absolute poverty line. According to the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) of Sri Lanka,a relative poverty line is defined, *”in terms of some percentage cut off point in welfare distribution, such as the bottom three deciles of per capita total consumption expenditure distribution”* (Department of Census and Statistics, June 2004; 1).The total consumption expenditure includes consumption expenditure on both food and non food items while the bottom or lowest decile includes the lowest ten percent of the persons derived after the households are arranged in the ascending order of their per capita total consumption expenditure (ibid.).Relative poverty lines should be tailored to the overall level of development of a nation and revised upward with increases in per capita consumption. It is not relevant to compare the relative poverty across countries because the relative poverty lines are only defined in relation to the overall income distribution within a country .Therefore one cannot compare the incomes of those living in relative poverty in a country such as the United Kingdom to the income of those living in relative poverty in Vietnam because the living standards and prices of the two countries are very different (Nallari & Griffith, 2011; 20).

On the other hand, the absolute poverty line is explicitly fixed over time and it enables poverty analysts to review the impact of anti poverty policies over time and to compare poverty rates across countries (Nallari & Griffith, 2011; 20-21).It is adopted in most developing countries because changes in poverty over time or across regions can be monitored. The World Bank regularly uses two absolute poverty lines, the per capita consumption of less than $ 1.25 a day and the per capita consumption of less than $ 2 per day in 2005 purchasing power parity terms (ibid.21).

To obtain the poverty line, a bundle of goods and services considered adequate for basic consumption needs is specified and the cost of meeting these needs is specified. A poverty line is generated for all households in a group and adjusted from household to household. However the difference in prices that households face and differences in demographic composition should be considered. A small household in a rural area will face low housing costs and fairly modest food prices therefore its poverty line will be low if compared to the poverty line of a large household in the city with more expensive housing and higher food prices (ibid.20).As mentioned earlier, the absolute poverty line is used by most developing countries but there are various problems faced when using this line. First, it is difficult to agree on a standard of living to be measured by the poverty line. Secondly, there is difficulty in defining the correct commodity value of the poverty line because households vary in their size and demographic composition (ibid.22). When information on per capita consumption and the poverty line has been collected, the aggregate measures of poverty can be computed.

The aggregate measures of poverty include the Headcount Index. It is the most widely used measure of poverty and it is used to measure the proportion of the population that is considered to be poor. Although it is easy to construct and understand, the headcount index has a number of weaknesses; it does not capture the degree and depth of poverty and if a fairly poor household were to offer a fraction of its wealth to an extremely poor household, the headcount index would remain the same despite the fact that poverty as a whole has dropped. Secondly, the headcount index expresses the percentage of individuals who are poor instead of the percentage of poor households therefore an assumption is made that all members of the household enjoy the same level of well-being and this may not be true (Nallari & Griffith,2001;23).

The Poverty gap index is another measure of poverty .It adds up the distances that the poor people fall from the poverty line and expresses the sum as a percentage of the poverty line. The index is a means to compute the total cost of bringing each poor member of the society up to the poverty line. The poverty gap index has advantages over other measures of poverty and these are, *“(a) that it gives policy makers an idea of the minimum amount of financial resources that would be needed to tackle poverty and (b) that it highlights the importance of identifying the characteristics of the poor, as it demonstrates the potential savings of well-targeted programs to alleviate poverty”* (ibid.23-24). It is however not able to capture the inequality among the poor because it is a measure of the average gap between the poor people’s standard of living and the poverty line. In addition to the above measures of poverty is the Squared poverty gap usually described as the measure of the severity of poverty. It uses the square of the distance that is derived by the poverty gap index when the distance separating the poor from the poverty line is added up (ibid.24).

In Uganda, the poverty line is defined as,*”the minimum consumption below which individuals are considered poor”* (MoFPED, May 2012; 11). It was developed in the 1990’s and shows the cost of consuming 3000 calories per day based on the food basket of the poorest 50% of the population when the monitoring survey was conducted between August 1993 and February 1994 .The poverty line based this survey has been kept constant in real terms and is only adjusted for inflation using the consumer price index (ibid.). When the poverty line is drawn, those above it are out of poverty while those below it are in poverty. In Uganda, households that have consumption below twice the poverty line are referred to as the *‘Insecure non-poor’*. The households are able to meet basic needs but still remain insecure and vulnerable to falling into absolute poverty. The *‘middle class’* refers to households above twice the poverty line. They are much less vulnerable, face lower risks because their incomes are higher and more stable. These households are able to cope with risks because they own more assets and have better access to saving instruments and insurance mechanisms (MoFPED, May 2012;1).

In addition to poverty, several other concepts will be used in the thesis and these are defined below:

### Well-being

Measuring the characteristics and extent of poverty requires the definition of well-being. Nallari and Griffith define well-being as*,”command over commodities or resources, as access to assets, or as the ability to function in society”* (Nallari & Griffith, 2011; 15). A key component of well-being is vulnerability defined as,”*the risk associated with being poor or of falling deeper into poverty”* (ibid.16). A household near the poverty line is said to be vulnerable and a natural disaster or economic shock can affect its consumption level and cause it to fall below the poverty line. The sources of vulnerability are intrinsic to rain-fed smallholder agriculture and include unpredictable weather, pest attacks, livestock epidemics and poor seed quality.

### Insecurity and conflict

Conflict is defined as a, *”situation that exists between two persons or groups of persons who perceive that they have competing interests relative to a single issue, thing or situation”* (Oxfam Uganda, December 1999;13).Each party wants to follow its own interests and by doing this, it contradicts, compromises or defeats the interests of the other party. On the other hand, insecurity is defined as a*,” manifestation of conflict, which undermines personal and collective security, and is characterized by the incidence of violence”* (ibid.14).Insecurity is thus a more real and pressing problem that people can easily and readily identify with.

### Permaculture

The concept of permaculture which is short for permanent agriculture was coined by Bill Mollison as a *“conscious design of our infrastructure to emulate the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems, while providing our food, shelter, and other needs in a sustainable manner”*(Anon, May\June 2002;80). It’s a means of evolving a system of plants and animals to meet human needs and its goals include water conservation, local food production and regional self-reliance. Permaculture seeks to educate people about ways to reduce society’s reliance on industrial systems of production that are weakening the earth’s ecosystem. It has four underlying ethical principles including *‘Care of the Earth’* where living and non living elements and their needs must not only be considered but also provided with support and opportunities to flourish within the system. The second principle *‘Care of People’* whereby the system designed should be able to provide the people with basic needs within the system. The third and fourth principles *‘limitation of consumption and population and redistribution surpluses including time, energy and materials* ‘are ways of how to achieve the first to principles (Phillips in Mulvaney, 2010; 350-352). In Uganda, permaculture was introduced by Steve Cran[[8]](#footnote-8) under the *‘Green Warrior Karamoja’* project in Abim District. The permaculture adopters are referred to as Green Warriors and they are taught skills to grow their way out of poverty using their own resources in the most environmentally sustainable way. The green warriors are taught how to grow foods such as vegetables at the training centre and when they acquire the skills, they carry what they have learnt to their homes. Therefore permaculture has offered means for the average Karamojong to diversify his diet (since they were feeding on only maize) and improve their health using a small piece of land without relying on external inputs to improve the soil fertility. It has gained momentum in the sub-region and there are nearly one hundred green warriors many of whom are serving other inhabitants.

## Theoretical Considerations

In social science research, theory is regarded as one of the essential parts because research that undermines the importance of theory will end up with irrelevant data that falls into the trap of hazy and vague thinking, faulty logic and imprecise concepts (Neuman, 2007; 24).The theories and approaches used in this thesis will therefore give me concepts, basic assumptions as well as ways to make sense out of the data collected. The theories will be used to link the thesis topic to the data collected. The theory of Economic Growth by W.Arthur Lewis will be used because it explains economic development as well factors which inhibit growth that is necessary for poverty reduction. David Ellerman’s Helping People Help themselves approach will be used because it explains the role development agencies should play in development especially in the way they provide aid to developing countries.

### Theory of Economic Growth

The theory by W.Arthur Lewis provides a framework for analyzing and understanding economic development. Lewis introduced the dualistic model where an underdeveloped economy is made up of two sectors; a traditional sector also known as non-capitalist, pre-capitalist or subsistence sector that is over populated with zero marginal labor productivity. The method used for production is backward and the sector consumes all that is produced. The second is the modern sector also referred to as capitalist sector with high levels of saving, investment, technological progress and high productivity (Lewis in Skarstein, 1997; 52).In order to achieve meaningful economic growth in the economy, Lewis states that the two sectors need to work together. The modern sector reinvests a major part of its profits into the economy and it also draws labor from the traditional sector. The process is continuous until all the surplus labor has been absorbed in to the modern sector and this pushes the society forward. It is therefore vital to inquire into the relationship of these two sectors in any given country.

Lewis explains the link between growth and distribution of output and states that*,”output may be growing, and yet the mass of the people may be becoming poorer”* (Lewis, 1955; 9). Output is growing but there is no even distribution of wealth. The consumption level of people is also declining either because of an increase in the level of saving or the government is using the output for its own purposes. This is common in developing countries that are considered to be experiencing high rates of economic growth. According to Lewis, the prerequisites for growth are human behavior and natural resources. Poverty of natural resources affects growth of output per head and this explains the inequality that exists in and between countries. It is important to note that inequality can still be present when the amount of resources are the same and this requires one to look at the differences in human action that affect economic growth. This should be done because there are proximate *‘causes of growth’* and *‘causes of these causes’* (ibid.11).The proximate causes include the effort to economize which is achieved by reducing the cost of any given product or through the increase of the yield from any given input of effort or resources. This effort is seen in a number of ways such as experimentation, risk taking, geographical or occupational mobility and specialization. Economic growth will not occur if this effort is not made by the people either because the desire to economize does not exist or if their customs or institutions are against it. If the existing institutions are favorable, individuals’ willingness to make effort is encouraged and grows and if this willingness is strong, the institutions will be remodeled to accommodate it (ibid.57).The second proximate cause, increase of knowledge and its application has occurred all through history .The more rapid growth in output in recent centuries has occurred because of the rapid accumulation and application of knowledge in production. The third cause is that growth depends on the increase in the quantity of capital or other resources per head. The proximate causes are present in some countries due to the presence of institutions that favor growth.

Furthermore, Lewis states that people’s attitude to work, to wealth, to thrift, to having children, to invention, to strangers, and to adventure have an impact on economic growth and are different among communities (ibid.14).Growth is a product of human effort because*,”nature is not particularly kind to man; left to herself she will overwhelm with weeds, with floods, with epidemics and with other disasters which man wars off by taking though and action”* (Lewis,1955;23). Man accepts these challenges and is capable of extracting more products from nature with minimal effort. Therefore growth will take place in societies with men that have an eye on economic opportunity and are prepared to grab it. Nonetheless, the degree of seeking out and exploiting these economic opportunities varies between communities.

Economic growth requires an increase in the level of capital. Capital accumulation encourages growth in an economy but it important to have a law of property in place to promote capital accumulation. The government should maintain law and order in the country and this should include the law of property since it is a condition for growth. The law of property will ensure that public property is protected from private abuse and private property protected from public abuse. Societies decline in situations where the government fails to protect people’s property (ibid.61).

The growth of income in countries is encouraged by the level of economic freedom present in the country that is,”*freedom of the individual to change his social status or his occupation; freedom to hire resources and combine them in ways which increase output or lower costs; and freedom to enter trades in competition with other who are already established in those trades”* (Lewis, 1955; 78).But, economic freedom in the form of *individualism* is not the fastest road to economic development as collective action inform of government involvement always produces results in the shortest time. National unity is also a prerequisite for growth because when the people look to the leaders, the changes which growth requires are much easier to achieve than when everyone in the country is individualistic (ibid.79). In addition, economic growth depends on vertical mobility. The upper class in government, business and political sphere should be in connection with the lower class in the society because the upper class will degenerate both biologically and culturally. A strong upper class is one which allows its weaker members to fall into the lower class and recruits hardworking members of lower class into its ranks (ibid.84).

### Helping People Help Themselves

The *Helping People Help Themselves* approach of economic development by David Ellerman presents an alternative method that can be used by development agencies when providing aid to people in the developing countries. Development agencies including the World Bank endeavor to help people themselves however in the end, they only help people. Ellerman explains this further using the ancient Chinese saying that,”*if you give people fish, you feed them for a day, but if you teach them how to fish-or rather, if you enable them learn how to fish-then they can feed themselves for a lifetime”* (Ellerman, 2006; 2).Thus the best way to help people is to teach them rather than continuously giving assistance. Most development agencies continuously give aid to developing countries but with minimal progress in the end. According to Ellerman, the existing forms of development assistance have a tendency to perpetuate and exacerbate the problems of development. The existing situation requires autonomous development where the doers help themselves and are not coerced by the helpers.

The helpers frequently override or undercut the will of the doers and replace it with their own. The helpers in this case are the development agencies or NGO’s offering assistance and the doers are those receiving the assistance (ibid.3-4).

Furthermore, Ellerman explains the concept of development and argues that its goal is not growth or an increase in wealth but rather freedom or autonomy that is the ability of an individual to develop in a way he finds most suitable for him (Ellerman, 2006; 6).The most important question in the helper-doer relationship should be ‘how’ for the helpers rather than ‘what’ for the doers. The answer to the ‘how’ question is *autonomy respecting help* which means that the helpers should help in a manner that will respect, foster and sustain the autonomy of the doers (ibid.7). Helpers continuously use ‘giving-fish’ strategies that enable the continued need for them by the doers and not ‘learn-how-to-fish’ strategies that encourage the doers’ autonomy. Any form of help that does not respect the autonomy of the doers is unhelpful. *Unhelpful help* is defined as help that overrides or undercuts people’s capacity to help themselves. There are two forms of unhelpful help that supplant the doers will and prevent autonomy and self help including *social engineering* where the helper intentionally tries to impose his will on the doer .The second form of unhelpful help is *benevolent aid* where the helper replaces the doer’s will with his/her own will. Social engineering is*,”required when the doers are seen as going headstrong along the wrong path (perhaps for corrupt reasons) and too recalcitrant to follow what the helper see as the right path”*(Ellerman,2006;8) . Benevolent aid is*,”sponsored by the imagery of the doers or recipients as being helpless and thus unable to follow the right path”* (ibid.). The two forms of unhelpful help lead to the two Don’ts of Development Assistance (Ellerman, 2006; 8-15):

* The First Don’t: Don’t override self-help capacity with Social Engineering .This occurs when helpers supply a set of instructions or conditionalities about what the doers should be doing and provide carrots and sticks incentive inform of aid to override the doers own motivation. The provision of carrot and sticks incentive does not yield the required results because the doers own motivation is not present and yet the doers own motivation is very important when giving help.
* The Second Don’t: Don’t Under-cut self-help capacity with Benevolent Aid. This occurs when the helper under-cuts self help by involuntarily supplying the motivation for the doer to be in or remain in a position to get help. In the end, the doers incentive to help themselves is eroded and a dependency relationship is created between the doer and the helper. This type of help creates a moral hazard because the doers are given an easy way out of every situation instead of enabling self-help.

In addition, Ellerman introduces the Three Do’s that should be followed by the helpers in this case, the development agencies (Ellerman, 2006; 19-23):

* The First Do: Start from where the Doers are. This requires the helper to start with what the doers have on ground because the helpers disregard what the doers have and what to start everything from the beginning. The helpers should strive to start from where the doers are even if the doers have done it poorly and offer them more training.
* The Second Do: See the world through the Doers’ eyes. The helpers should see the world through the eyes of the people in the country especially the policy makers and offer guidance or advice but not telling the doers what to do.
* The Third Do: Respect the Autonomy of the Doers. This summarizes the goal of assistance offered by the helper as the doer should always be in the driver’s seat and learn to help himself without carrot and stick motivation from the helper.

Ellerman introduces the direct and indirect approaches in the helper-doer relationship. The direct approach is where the helper provides the incentives or motivation .It is explained with the *theory of agency* involving a principal and agent where ,” *a ”principal” can design contracts and organizations (or institutions) with the appropriate carrots and sticks so that by following their own interests the “agents” will do the principal’s bidding* (Ellerman,2006;26). The effect of the human source of motivation of the agent is neglected since the source of motivation is in the human will of the principal and not the agent. The principal believes that if the agent is left on his own, he will not work in a way desired by the principal so an incentive is needed to direct him the desired manner. The indirect approach is where motivation is not supplied to the doer but the helper finds and starts with the present own motivation of the doers and give help on this basis. This is further explained using *Theory Y* by Douglas McGregor where an employee of an enterprise is self motivated and has interest in the job thus the manager does not need to provide motivation or incentives. As an alternative, the manager can create an atmosphere that will encourage the employee to work harder and earn the rewards for the work done. Theory Y has five steps that should be followed in the helper-doer relationship (ibid.61-64):

* Starting from the Doer’s Problem
* Seeing the Problem through the Doer’s Eyes
* Helping the Doer Pursue Their Own Ends to Best Solve the Organizational Problem
* Helping the Doer to Implement, Test ,and Refine the Doer’s Solution
* Helping the Doer Gain Autonomy and Take Responsibility for the Solution

According to Ellerman, the intervention by the helper should not distort the original motivation of the agent or doer that is, it should be nondistortionary. Interventions by the helper are nondistortionary if they do not change what the doer would do if he had the required resources. The doer should be able to do what he wanted to do before but didn’t have the resources to do it. An example of a nondistortionary intervention is the *Common Pool Approach to Aid*. In this approach, the doer usually a government of a developing country designs a reform program that is in its own interest with no influence by the helpers and in this way, it retains its autonomy and ownership. There are no discussions about the amount of money from specific donors or helpers. The donors will then decide on how much to fund through a common pool. The common pool approach can be a many-helpers-one-doer model with many helpers giving money to one doer or one-helper-many-doers model where a one helper supplies a fixed amount of aid to a number of doers. The doers will then have to justify their need for the aid to each other and decide about the aid allocation. The distortionary intervention occurs when conditionalities are given to the doers by the helper before aid is given (Ellerman, 2006; 29-31).

# Chapter 4 Empirical findings

In this chapter, the empirical data collected from the interviews with the Karamojong will be presented:

## Data Collection

Primary data was collected from two districts in the region that is, Moroto and Abim .Moroto was chosen for the study because it is the largest district in the region with a population of 315,300 people (UBOS, June 2010; 98) and Abim with a population of 55,200 people (ibid.) was chosen because it is one of areas where permaculture is being practiced by the green warriors. The interviews were first tested with colleagues and later administered to the respondents with the help of an interpreter. The data was collected from a total of twenty households (ten from each district) and care was taken to include households headed by females.

## Limitations of the study

* The security situation in Karamoja is not good. The region borders Northern Uganda and has only just pulled through from 20years nursing the Lord’s Resistance Army rebel group. The cattle raids are a security threat because the Karamojong are armed with guns. The security situation was the reason why the researcher used only two weeks to visit both Moroto and Abim and because there were continuous rumors of attacks and therefore the researcher could not stay longer.
* Secondly, the researcher did not speak the respondents’ language and had to depend on the interpreter in cases where the respondent could not speak English during the interview.
* The Karamoja sub-region is very large and it was therefore impossible to carryout interviews in the whole region and this is why the researcher narrowed it down to Abim and Moroto districts. The two districts were chosen for the research because the respondents from these districts have relevant information for the study.
* Some respondents were hesitant to participate in the interview because they thought the researcher was gathering information for a government institution like the tax institution.
* Some of the questions asked especially about poverty were sensitive to the respondents therefore a lot of care had to be taken during the interview so as not to cause any anger among the respondents. Therefore the interviews had to begin with the less sensitive questions about livelihoods and food before the sensitive questions about poverty and role of the government.
* The poor road network made moving difficult and a lot of time was spent connecting from one point to another.
* The respondents expected money or food before the interview was carried out and this created a problem for the researcher.

## Profile of the Respondents

The Age of the respondents was between 18 years to 60 years and although the sex of the respondents was not an important factor for the study, it was noticed that it was mostly men who came out for the interviews. This is because Karamoja is a traditional society with men considered the household heads. There were two female headed households bringing the number of female respondents to four. In terms of livelihood, 20% of the respondents were agropastroralists, 10% were small scale traders, 35% were unemployed, 20% were green warriors practicing permaculture, 15% were local leaders in the districts and none was practicing full scale agriculture as shown in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Source of Livelihood** | **Abim** | **Moroto** |
| Agro Pastoralist | 1 | 3 |
| Green warrior (Permaculture) | 4 | 0 |
| Trader | 0 | 2 |
| Public Servant | 1 | 2 |
| Agriculture | 0 | 0 |
| Unemployed | 4 | 3 |
| **Total** | 10 | 10 |

**Table 4.1 Sources of Livelihood**

In regards to the household size, 45% of the respondents had a household size of between 5-10 people. This household size is because Karamoja has a high birth rate of over 6 children per woman and most of the homes are extended families as illustrated in figure 4.1 below.20% represents respondents with household size of between 1-5people and 35% represents respondents with a household size of between 10-15 people.

**Figure 4.1.1 Household Size**

## Education Level of Respondents

The majority of the respondents had at least primary education followed by ordinary level education. 55% of the respondents are from households with children going to primary schools and 35% of the households also have children going to secondary schools .This has mainly been due to the introduction of Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary education by the government respectively. Only 10% of the respondents interviewed are from households with children going to tertiary institutions and no household has a member in any university. The reason given by the respondents for low number in tertiary and none in university was the high tuition fees charged by the institutions. It was observed that households with heads having some form of formal education have more children attending primary or secondary schools than households with heads with no form of formal education. Although there is no particular pattern to indicate that the higher the level of education of the household head, the more food secure the household will be, it was observed that households with household heads with some form of education were more food secure than households with heads with no formal education at all. Some level of education is thus vital for household food security but its contribution beyond primary education is very small. It is therefore imperative to introduce education of permaculture into the curriculum of the younger generation because households practicing permaculture are more food secure in this sub-region.

## Sources of Household Food

The respondents were asked about the foods they consume and the sources of this food. According to the respondents, a typical meal is composed of posho and beans. In both Moroto and Abim, respondents gave food aid as a source of food. The agro-pastoralists said they also depend on food aid during the dry season because they cannot grow any crops and their livestock die because of lack of water and pasture. The unemployed respondents sell their labor in exchange for food and money. Respondents also pick wild fruit and vegetables. Only 20% of the respondents relied on food from their personal gardens and there were mostly the households with green warriors practicing permaculture. 30% of the respondents depend on food aid as a source of food, 10% buy food from the market and 15% sell their labor in exchange for food and money.15% of the respondents pick wild fruit and vegetables and 10% receive food from relatives as illustrated in figure 4.1.2 below.

**Figure 4.1.2: Sources of Food**

1-Personal Garden (20%)

2-Food Aid (30%)

3-Market (10%)

4-Pick wild fruit and vegetables (15%)

5-Receive food from relatives and friends (10%)

6-Sell labor in exchange for food and money (15%)

## Causes of Food Insecurity

According to the respondents in Abim and Moroto, weather related problems especially the unpredictable rainfall is the biggest cause of food insecurity in the sub-region. This affects the agro-pastoralists who grow crops on small scale and keep cattle. Pests and diseases such as rinder pest which affects the cattle was another cause of food insecurity. Other causes mentioned by the respondents include the conflicts and cattle rustling. When this happens, all the food that has been stored is looted and people have to keep moving in search of stable areas to live therefore it is difficult to grow crops. The respondents also gave soil infertility as one of the causes of food insecurity since crops cannot grow. Some respondents are interested in crop farming but they lack agricultural inputs such as hoes, ox-ploughs and seeds .The percentage contribution of each cause of food insecurity mentioned above is illustrated in figure 4.1.3 below

**Figure 4.1.3 Causes of Food Insecurity**

1-Unpredictable weather

2- Insecurity and conflict

3- Pests and diseases

4- Soil Infertility

5-Lack of agricultural inputs

## How households cope in times of food shortage

When respondent were asked how their households cope in times of food shortages, majority of the respondents said they now have only one meal a day (35%). 20% depend on their own produce and this is the permaculturalists, another 20% money sell their labor in exchange for food or to get money to buy food. 15% of the respondents said they sell their livestock and 10% beg for food from relatives or friends.

## Definition of a poor person

Majority of the respondents defined a poor person as one who has no money to take care of his daily needs and family. In this case, all the respondents regarded themselves as poor because they have no money and for those who have money, it is not enough to take care of their daily needs and families. Another definition of a poor person is one who cannot afford basic necessities such as clothing, food and housing. However, when defining a poor person as one with no clothing, there was an argument by one respondent that some people in the sub-region prefer to dress in their traditional attire and not ‘western clothing’. Therefore not everyone who dresses in traditional attire should be regarded as poor because this is done by choice and not because the person. A poor person was also defined as one who has no food and can spend a whole day without having a meal. With the introduction of UPE which is tuition free, a poor person according to the respondents is one who cannot send his children to school because he cannot afford to give them school requirements such as books, pens ,or afford to buy the school uniform.

## Causes of Poverty in the sub-region

The following were the responses when the respondents were asked about causes of poverty in Karamoja:

* According to respondents, the biggest cause of poverty in the sub-region has been climate of the area, long dry seasons and heavy rains which cause flooding. This has made it impossible to grow crops which would solve the problem of food insecurity enable them earn a living by selling the surplus.
* The second cause of poverty according to the respondents has been insecurity and conflict in the region. One of the respondents argued that insecurity has kept them poor because they are always moving in search for safety and therefore cannot carry out any income generating activities. Secondly tribal conflicts and cattle rustling have made it impossible for people to unite and start up income generating activities.
* The respondents claim that the financial institutions charge high interest rates on loans and ask for collateral which they do not have. It is therefore impossible to get loans to start up income generating activities.
* Respondents said political divisions in the area have caused poverty. This is because people only help those who belong to their political party especially those in the ruling party of the country for example one can only lend money to another if they belong to the same party and if any poverty eradication program is introduced, the person in charge will only inform his relatives, friends and those who belong to his political party about the program. An example given by the respondents is NAADS which has excluded most of them.
* Furthermore, illiteracy was reported as a cause of poverty in the region. Despite the introduction of UPE and USE which are tuition free, parents still don’t send their children to school .Parents would rather have children remain at home and help with household duties or move around and look for food. According to one of the respondents, the high disease prevalence in the sub-region is because people are not educated about the basic sanitation and nutrition skills.

## Persistence of Poverty in the sub-region

* Among the reasons given by the respondents for the persistence of poverty in the Karamoja sub-region is district is continuous insecurity in the sub-region. The respondents say that this has scared away investors from the sub-region, led to loss of lives of productive youth and destruction of property of property.
* Another reason is ‘favoritism’. The respondents argue that certain regions and districts are favored and therefore more resources are invested there than in other regions. An example given by the respondents is the western region because most members of the ruling party and those in government are all from this region.
* Lack of productive assets is another reason because the respondents cannot get loans from banks since they have no collateral. Although some of the respondents own cattle, they state that the cattle are of poor quality and cannot produce enough meat or milk that can be sold.
* The respondents also claim that their land is being grabbed by individuals in the government and they are therefore left with no asset to help them move out of poverty.
* In addition to the above is the climate of the sub-region. The respondents say it has not favored their movement out of poverty because they cannot carryout income generating activities such as agriculture like other regions of the country.
* The high level of illiteracy in sub-region was another reason given by the respondents. Although the government introduced tuition free primary and secondary education, parents in the region cannot afford the school requirements such as books and uniforms. The respondents say they cannot send children to school on hungry stomachs and although they send the children, some children do not reach the school because they are embarrassed to go to school with no shoes or uniform and some just move throughout out the town the whole day until it’s time to go home. Thus the respondents argue that they are not able to compete in the job market with people of other regions who are better off.

## Role of the Government in Poverty Reduction

When respondents were asked if the government is helping to reduce poverty in the sub-region, majority of the respondents (80%) said the government is not helping. Respondents said the government is instead taking away the little they have (land, minerals).The respondents feel that the government has abandoned them and is only focusing on other regions. They claim that government officials only remember the region when its election time and they are looking for votes. The respondents were asked what they government should do to help the region out of poverty and the following were the responses:

* The government should prosecute all the corrupt officials both in the sub-region and the country as a whole.
* The government should rehabilitate the transport system of the sub-region. The respondents claim that the poor roads are making them lag behind in terms of development because they cannot travel to school, hospitals especially when the rain season sets in.
* Protect them against cattle rustlers because not all of them take part in the raids but they lose their cattle and gardens are destroyed. The government should increase the number of the army and police in the sub-region.
* Government should provide free drugs or make them very cheap so that everyone can afford especially the anti-malarial drugs.
* Government should give them income to start up income generating projects because they cannot borrow from the banks due to the high interest rates and need for collateral.
* Stronger laws against certain cultural practices especially FGM because many girls are losing their lives .Women especially widows should also be given attention since they suffer a lot when husbands die and their property taken or forced to marry husbands brother if she wants to remain in the family and with the property.
* There is need for educative campaigns to sensitize the people especially about health and sanitation and ways to improve their livelihoods.

# Chapter 5 Analysis

In this chapter, the third question mentioned in the problem formulation will be answered that is why some regions (in this case Karamoja) fail in reducing poverty:

### Attitude of the poor in Karamojong

The attitude of the poor in Karamoja is an impediment to moving out of poverty. People in Karamojong believe that they are meant to be poor because they were born into poor households. According to Lwanga Ntale & McClean this is known as ‘*Intergenerationally Transmitted Poverty’* and it occurs when poverty takes a long duration and is continuous between generations. While interviewing the Karamojong, there was a sense of resignation to poverty among the respondents and this has become a psychological barrier since they are not willing to make an effort to move out of poverty.The youth argue that their parents do not own assets such as land therefore there is no transfer of assets from their parents to them. The youth claim that this has locked them in poverty and there is nothing they can do to change this situation. Many of the able bodied youth have a negative attitude to work and in particular farming and want to make *‘quick money’*. This has resulted into many of them moving to towns where they fail to get jobs and resort to theft. This attitude has had a negative impact on growth in the sub-region because Lewis argues that growth takes place in societies with men that have an eye on economic opportunity and are prepared to grab It (Lewis ,1955;14-23).

### Poverty of Natural Resources

According to Lewis, poverty of natural resources limits the growth of output per head which is essential for poverty reduction (Lewis, 1955; 11). Different regions of Uganda are blessed with various natural resources such as good weather, fertile soils, forests, and water. These natural resources have an effect on the level of development. However as mentioned earlier, the Karamoja sub-region has dry, hot and extremely variable climate with rainfall that is seasonal and geographical, very long dry seasons and infertile soils due to the continuous over grazing of cattle which leaves the soil exposed to erosion. This has affected the level of productivity in the sub-region since agriculture cannot be carried out as it is done in other regions of the country. Agriculture is the back bone of Uganda’s economy contributing a large share to the GDP and from 2001\2 to 2005\6, the sector contribution 37.7% of GDP (UNDP Report,2007;74).Therefore regions that are agriculturally productive such as the western and central region are benefiting more from agriculture than Karamoja. Although the sub-region has a lot of land and mineral deposits of gold in the Matheniko county belt stretching from north to south of Karamoja, copper in the Jie County and silver, the land and minerals have not been fully exploited by government and the people of Karamoja to move out of poverty. Private individuals and companies are currently mining on a small scale. The prices and quantity of the minerals are determined by traders each with their own scales and standards. The local government has given freedom to these companies to mine as they desire and also decide the amount to pay to the local government. There is no transparency and accountability in the management of the revenue from these minerals and the Karamojong who try to mine and sell minerals to these companies are exploited and not paid[[9]](#footnote-9). The Karamojong residents further allege that their land is given out to private individuals and companies without their consent for example huge chunks of land in Moruita sub-county were leased to a private company for 45 years. The inhabitants have been left with no land to carryout economic activities such as agriculture to improve their lives. The government is failing to protect the local people against exploitation by the private individuals and companies. Lewis argues that absence of government involvement is unfavorable for growth and poverty reduction. Collective action including both government intervention and private individuals is necessary for growth because the government is supposed to protect the poor against exploitation (Lewis, 1955; 78-79).

The weather related problems in the sub-region have also exacerbated food insecurity among the households. The erratic rains, dry spells coupled with pests and diseases, limited farming and livestock improvement, limited water management skills, poor pasture, weak post-harvest handling practices, lack of access to agriculture and livestock inputs, persistent cattle raiding and conflict have all contributed to people’s high vulnerability to food insecurity. The food insecure households are more prone to disease outbreaks which make members weak and unable to carryout income generating activities thus pushing them further into poverty.

### Prolonged Insecurity and Conflict

The Karamoja sub-region has been affected by prolonged years of insecurity and conflict. For the past two decades, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony has caused destruction in the sub-region. Although the LRA are no longer active in the area, the effects of the insurgents are still present in the sub-region. The sub-region has also been affected by conflict between the different clans and tribes including the cattle rustling by the Karamojong in Teso region. The Karamojong-Teso conflict has been in existence since 1952 and the causes of this conflict include underdevelopment of the Karamoja sub-region which has made it stay backward. Secondly, the innate culture of cattle rustling as the Karamojong believe all cattle belongs to them and they see rustling as a source of livelihood, bride price and pride. The third cause is access to illegal modern weapons which give them more zeal to raid cattle. Lack of water and pasture to graze their cattle in the sub-region is another cause and they have to fight to gain access to water and pasture in other areas. Lastly is the feeling of hatred towards the Karamojong by neighbors and raids to stock and restock cattle herds by ethnic clans (Akonyu, September 2005; 7). The effects of the prolonged insecurity and conflicts are devastating with loss of lives and livestock, theft of livestock, food insecurity, collapse of social and development services like health and education, and spread of diseases especially HIV\AIDS since women are raped. The LRA abducts young girls and boys to become wives and join the army respectively. There has also been an increase in the number of widows, orphans, child headed households and single mothers (ibid.).

The Cattle rustling has created an environment of cyclical revenge attacks and as a result people are forced to move to Internally Displaced Peoples Camps (IDPs) for safety. While living in the IDPs, the Karamojong depend on assistance from the government and humanitarian agencies such as the World Food Program. Some of the Karamojong ran to neighboring towns for safety and this can be seen by the increased number of homeless people and street children in Kampala. This movement for safety has created a burden in the town because the Karamojong have started committing crimes such as theft to survive in the city. The insecurity has also kept humanitarian agencies away from the sub-region as seen with Oxfam withdrawing from the sub-region in 1999 after the shooting of the Program Manager of Oxfam’s Karamoja Project a few meters from his house and the project offices in Kaabong (Oxfam Report, December 1999; 7). This incident shows that no development can take place in the absence of security and peace thus leaving the sub-region in the poverty trap.

The possession and use of illegal guns by the Karamojong has led to xenophobic feelings and related intolerances against the Karamojong by their neighbors. The government using the Ugandan army, the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) decided to carry out a disarmament programs in 1945, 1953,1954,1960,1964,1984,1987,2001 and 2006-7 to remove the guns from the Karamojong warriors. However none of these achieved a reduction in armed violence in the sub-region because out of over 30,000-40,000 firearms in the hands of the Karamojong warriors, only over 10,000 arms were collected (Powell, March 2010; 11). Secondly there was an abrupt redeployment of the army from Karamoja to Northern Uganda to deal with the LRA in 2002.The Karamojong also have unrestricted supply of guns from the neighboring countries of Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. According to Mwaura, the state response to conflict in pastoral communities has been characterized by an indiscriminate and aggressive military response that has alienated the communities (Mwaura, 2005; 2). The disarmament has provoked resentment and hostility towards the government and the army. The inhabitants claim that the army is forceful in its methods of disarmament and has committed atrocities against the Karamojong communities. The Karamojong are tortured and women were forced to eat the beads on their traditional dress as way to force them to adopt western civilized dressing. The army has also been accused of killing a priest who was compiling reports on the atrocities committed by the Ugandan army in the sub-region[[10]](#footnote-10).All these factors have made the Karamojong hostile and therefore outsiders have avoided investing in long term social and technological development hence keeping the sub-region persistently poor.

### Continued Dependence on aid

The Karamoja sub-region has been dependent on aid for many years but this has not produced any positive results. There is a big aid industry in the sub-region with organizations including the World Food Program (WFP), Mercy Corps, Caritas, World Vision, UNICEF, and Save the Children. The sub-region has been on food support since the 1960’s. In 2009, over one million people needed emergency help thus making the residents dependent on this food and not able to find ways of producing their own food. Due to the current financial crisis in the world, the aid organizations are tightening their budgets and are therefore changing their policies. For example the WFP has introduced a new policy where food aid is only given to the most vulnerable especially the children and the rest are supposed to fend for themselves .Parents are now keeping their children malnourished so as to qualify for aid and others who have no food for their children, feed them on goat skin as reported by Humphrey Hawksley of the BBC[[11]](#footnote-11). Karamojong warriors are also crossing into neighboring Kenya for relief food due to the famine being faced in the sub-region .According to David Ellerman, this type of aid is unhelpful because it has created a dependence relationship between the Karamojong and the aid agencies. It destroyed the incentive, energy and commitment the people used to have to sustain their livelihoods thus keeping them poor and unable to escape the poverty trap (Ellerman, 2006; 8-15).

### Poor governance and Government Policies

One of the reasons for the persistence of poverty in the Karamoja sub-region has been poor governance. The institutions of accountability, planning and law and order in the country as a whole and in the sub-region are poor and this is seen with the high level of corruption and embezzlement of funds. The residents claim that corruption by the local government and some NGO officials is preventing aid from reaching them. According to the Monitor, a Ugandan newspaper, the Karamoja sub-region led in the embezzlement of funds of Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) with 1.7billion shillings missing[[12]](#footnote-12). This money was meant to construct dams, wells and reservoirs in the sub-region. Decentralization as a poverty reduction strategy was introduced by the government in the sub-region but it has been marred by corruption, poor information flow and lack of consultation with the locals by the local leaders. There is corruption in public service delivery for example vulnerable groups like the disabled and widows do not get fair justice and this was reported by one of the respondents in the study who was a widow and said all her late husband’s property was taken by his relatives after he passed away and the local leaders could not help because they had been bribed by her husband’s relatives. Lewis argues that economic growth cannot occur in such an area because the institutions are unfavorable and the people’s willingness to make effort to develop is discouraged thus keeping them persistently poor (Lewis, 1955; 57).

Practices such as improper tendering, nepotism and favoritism have also frustrated the sub-region’s ability to reduce poverty. The local government gives out huge chunks of land rich in minerals to private individuals without consulting the owners of the land and this leaves them with no asset. The residents also claim that their area is neglected by government when distributing development programs and other regions are favored because they are home districts to government officials and leaders in the ruling party. Output in Uganda is growing but the wealth is not being distributed evenly because officials in charge use the output and money for private purposes and neglect the sub-region. These acts by the government officials and leaders have created disgruntlement among the Karamojong people, resentment towards people from other regions and this is why Karamojong are hostile to outsiders. The resentment and hostility has led to disunity between the Karamojong and other tribes. Lewis argues that disunity is an impediment to growth since the changes which growth requires are much easier to achieve if people are united and look to the leaders. This is not the case in Uganda since Karamoja has become an ‘island’ on its own and this has further made efforts to reduce poverty impossible in the sub-region (Lewis, 1955; 79).

Furthermore, the government is focusing on developing urban areas and towns than rural areas where the sub-region falls. This approach to development has led the sub-region to lag behind in terms of development and poverty reduction. More investment in infrastructure has been carried out in the central region than in Karamoja. This is because the money meant to be used to construct and rehabilitate the transport network is diverted for other non-priority areas .The roads and bridges are poorly constructed and are washed away by floods for example in April 2012; the floods washed away the Kaabong-Kitgum road which connects Kaabong to Karenga sub-county. Most of the bridges were built in the 1950’s and cannot manage the current laden weight of trailers that move on them. Some bridges are also vandalized by scrap dealers and this is made worse by the fact that the bridges are rarely inspected to detect deterioration. The poor infrastructural condition of the sub-region makes it inaccessible by investors and people living in the sub-region cannot easily access services and services cannot access them. For example the floods washed away the roads in May 2012 therefore HIV/AIDS patients could not easily access medical services and drugs that were found about 50km from Napak district as reported in the Monitor Newspaper of May 2012[[13]](#footnote-13).The remoteness of the sub-region and the poor transport system result in high transport costs .This leads to doubling of prices of commodities in the sub-region because the roads connecting the sub-region to towns of Sironko and Mbale which are the major towns that supply food items to Karamoja are affected during the rainy season. The high prices of commodities especially food result in food insecurity among the poor Karamojong because households cannot afford to buy food at such prices and this pushes them further into poverty (Haughton & Khandker, 2009; 147).

In addition to the above, the sub-region has also been neglected in terms of social service delivery with few health facilities and schools. The health centers and schools are under staffed mainly because professionals such as teachers, doctors and nurses are not attracted to work in the sub-region due to the unfavorable living conditions. Lewis argues that people value other things such as company of family and friends other than material wealth and this explains why these professionals have a negative attitude towards working in Karamoja especially if they are not Karamojong by tribe (Lewis, 1955; 32-33).The Health centers and schools lack supplies such as drugs, teaching materials and are located far from where people live. Absence of health centers is made worse by the high prevalence of diseases in the sub-region such as malaria, cholera and HIV/AIDS. HIV\AIDS prevalence has increased by over 75% in less than five years mainly due to lack of knowledge about the disease as most Karamojong think the disease only affects urban dwellers. These diseases affect households and result in disproportionate reallocation of resources from household consumption to health care. Families have to sell the few productive assets they own like land or cattle to pay the medical bills. The AIDS scourge has affected many households in the sub-region with breadwinners of the households becoming too weak to engage in productive work. The death of the breadwinner increases the poverty level in the household since there are no productive assets available. The elderly in the sub-region have lost many of their children due to the AIDS scourge and are thus left to look after the grandchildren. According to Lawson, the AIDS scourge has pushed households in the sub-region further into poverty since it affects the productive capacity of individuals (Lawson, 2004; 9-20).

### Cultural Traditions and Customs

In the Karamoja sub-region, there are certain cultures and customs that have not promoted development mainly due to the fact that they advocate for men over women. This was evident during the study carried out in Abim and Moroto. The wives were always home and the husbands out but the researcher would have to wait for the husband to come and be interviewed .If the wife was interviewed and the husband left out, this would create a problem in the household. This showed that men are put at the fore front and women are not allowed to have a say or participate in any development issues because their job is to take care of the household and give birth. However in some households, the woman is the breadwinner and sole provider either because she is a widow or her husband is unable to provide for the family due to illness or alcoholism. Alcohol abuse is on the increase in the sub-region and has resulted into domestic violence and pushed households further into poverty (Bird & Shinyekwa, 2005; 71).

One of the cultural practices in the sub-region is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) performed on girls. FGM comprises any procedure that involves partial or complete removal of any part of the female genitalia and it is used to prevent girls or women from feeling the pleasures of sex. It is a deeply rooted tradition and girls are raised into accepting that it is a rite of initiation into womanhood and a condition for marriage. Young girls are forced by their parents to do this so as to get married because without doing it, a woman will be considered a young girl for the rest of her life and will not be able to get married. Some women who refuse to undergo FGM are forcefully cut by birth attendants while giving birth. It is done with no care about the girl’s health and results in disability, spread of diseases such as HIV\AIDS and death due to prolonged bleeding. Okidi and Mugambe argue that this marginalization of women is unfavorable for development in the sub-region as women are the primary agents of production and reproduction which are prerequisites for poverty reduction (Okidi & Mugambe, 2002; 8).

Another cultural practice that has played a role in the persistence of poverty in the sub-region is cattle raiding so as to pay bride price or dowry and also provide for the family.Women in particular play a role in fuelling conflicts by encouraging cattle raids and theft as way of raising their household position. Women scorn the men by singing songs, reciting poems and beat their children for asking for milk which they cannot provide since their husbands are seated at home while other men have gone to look for cattle. Men are under pressure to pay high bride of cattle and find ways to take care of families so they resort to cattle raiding to acquire cattle. These cattle raids have led to conflicts between tribes and clans where lives are lost and productive assets destroyed thus keeping the region in poverty.

Polygamy is a cultural practice that has also kept households in the sub-region in persistent poverty. Polygamy is where men marry more than one wife and the result is many children whom he cannot adequately provide for in terms of medical care, education and feeding. Lack of knowledge of family planning among the couples has also led to an increase in population in the region. The women do not have knowledge about any family planning methods and according to the respondents the method that has been practiced is whereby a husband moves out of couples hut into the kraal when the woman gives birth. When the child is 3years old, he moves back into the hut and re-unites with his wife. Such practices according to Lewis have resulted in a rapid increase in population, famine and kept households in the poverty trap (Lewis, 1955; 102).

Culture has also affected the Karamojong in terms of health .For example it is considered a taboo to use the same pit latrine with in-laws and pregnant women are not allowed to use latrines because it is believed the baby can come out anytime and fall into the latrine. Individuals use the bushes as latrines in such situations and this has led to outbreak of epidemics such as cholera. In this case, cultural beliefs are seen to hinder sanitation which affects poverty reduction because all resources are diverted to fight the epidemic and control its spread to other parts of the country.

### Lack of Education and High Illiteracy rates

As mentioned earlier, the Karamoja sub-region has been neglected in terms of social service delivery including education. The sub-region has few schools which are kilometers apart with no teachers and teaching materials. Although the government is partly blamed for the high level of illiteracy in the sub-region, the Karamojong are also responsible for this. This is because since the 1930’s the Karamojong have refused to accept formal education because it is considered foreign. This is shown by the act of burying a pen that was done by the group because it was believed that a pen was a bad omen as it had been used in the Second World War to conscript men into the army. Anyone who let their children join school was banished from the community and declared an enemy[[14]](#footnote-14). This belief is still present among the Karamojong and it partly explains the high levels of illiteracy. The government introduced tuition free education through UPE and USE but the poor cannot afford the additional items like books, uniforms and shoes.

Parents in the sub-region do not send children to school because most of them have no food therefore children cannot go to school on hungry stomachs .Some children leave home to go to school in the morning but do not get to the school because they are embarrassed to go to school with no uniform, shoes or food. Parents also find sending children to school useless since most of them did not go to school either and they would rather stay at home and help with household chores and looking for food. This is mainly done to the girls because it is believed girls are assets to the family who will be married off in exchange for wealth hence no need for them to get an education. Girls are sent to towns to become housekeepers and earn money for the family back home. The current adult literacy education in the sub-region provided by the state and non state actors is constrained by inadequate technical, material, human and financial resources. This has resulted into absence of human capital in the sub-region in terms of education, literacy and skills. Therefore the Karamojong are not in position to compete with other Ugandans for the jobs available and when they get jobs, they are usually underpaid and overworked due to their ignorance.

### Lack of Income and Productive Assets

During the study, it was noted that people in the sub-region lack income since there are no income generating activities and the only asset that most of them own were cattle. The land has been given out to private individuals so the poor cannot access it and use it. This has hindered income generation and the ability to take up development opportunities that require an asset base for example for one to get a loan from any financial institution; one is required to present an asset as collateral before the loan is released. The Karamojong who have land do not have the means to make use of it for example money to buy or hire hoes ,ox-ploughs and tractors to cultivate the land, fertilizers, pesticides or irrigation equipment since the region is dry.

Uganda does not have a land policy that is supported by land legislation to ensure land access and ownership rights and this explains the grabbing of land from the poor in the sub-region. Lewis states that there is a difference in the willingness to make an effort to develop between people and this explains why some people will acquire assets for prestige and social status but not to develop while other people will acquire the assets to develop and improve their lives. This explains why the Karamojong pastoralists keep large herds of cattle not to help them develop but as a sign of prestige. The cattle are not kept for production of milk or meat that can be consumed by them or sold to earn income as done by similar pastoral tribes in the western region who make an effort to develop by using their cattle to improve their livelihoods. This is one of the reasons why the sub-region has high levels of malnutrition because instead of consuming cattle products such as milk and meat which are good for health, they will only consume the blood and cow dung from the intestines of the cow when it’s slaughtered. The Karamojong are therefore not making an effort to develop by using the cattle they have and unable to move out of poverty. (Lewis, 1955; 24-26).

# Chapter 6 Conclusion

In this chapter, recommendations on how to eradicate poverty in Uganda particularly in the Karamoja sub-region will be presented:

One of the major reasons why the sub-region has remained poor has been the prolonged insecurity and conflict. The major cause of this insecurity and conflict has been pastoralism as a production and land use system. It has been difficult to reconcile it with other competing land use and production systems in the sub-region. It is therefore important to understand the rationale of pastoralism, the dynamics that inform the pastoral production and change, as well as the process by which pastoral production can be incorporated into a modern national economy. Secondly, the government should train army officers and police specifically for the disarmament of sub-region so that they are aware of the environment in which they are going to operate. The on-going disarmament of the Karamojong warriors by the government should be supported and it should be backed by sensitization of the communities about the advantages of disarmament and the role of the army. If this is done, the trust that has been lost by the communities towards the government will be regained. The warriors should be sensitized about the effects of possessing illegal guns and know that it is illegal to own a gun without a license and it is punishable. It is also necessary to encourage dialogue between the conflicting clans and tribes so that peace agreements can be made between the parties involved to bring an end to the conflicts. Communities should also ensure that they keep their bargain met in the peace agreements (CECORE, June 2011; 30-31). Peace and stability in the sub-region will attract investors who will set up various businesses in the area such as factories that will provide employment to the Karamojong.

To prevent theft of cattle and encroachment of land belonging to one tribal group by another which results in conflict, the government and local leaders should properly gazette each tribal area. This will make the different tribes and communities aware of their areas so that none encroaches on the property of another. As a result of the LRA insurgency and the conflicts in the sub-region, many people were forced into IDP camps for safety. However the living conditions in these camps have been poor with no toilets or latrines, spread of diseases like malaria, cholera, pneumonia. The humanitarian agencies and the government should construct latrines and better housing in these camps to prevent the spread of diseases as well as educate the people about proper hygiene practices.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the sub-region has dry, hot and extremely variable climate that does not encourage agriculture. However as discussed earlier, the green warriors practicing permaculture are benefiting from it and their households are better off in terms of food security. It has given the green warriors an opportunity to diversify their diets and improve their health with small amounts of land without relying on external inputs to improve soil fertility. Therefore the government should encourage and promote permaculture among all households in the sub-region because apart from providing food security, it is also environmentally friendly. This can begin with its incorporation into the curriculum of schools so that children learn the skills right from childhood.

A secure land ownership system should be developed to encourage the efficient and effective use of land as a productive asset to lever human development. The economic opportunities of the poor in the sub-region should expanded by helping them to build up their asset and improve their ownership and access to land. The land belonging to the poor should be protected because this is private property that can be used for development activities. Lewis states that a law of property is vital for capital accumulation which leads to economic growth and should therefore be put in place to protect private property. Private property of the poor such as land should be protected from public abuse and public property from private abuse (Lewis, 1955; 60-61). This will ensure that the Karamojongs land is not grabbed from them and they will therefore be able to use it to carry out farming which will help them start a move out of poverty.

Furthermore, government involvement in the exploitation of minerals in the sub-region is important for the development of the mining sector in the area. The current management of the mineral sector in the sub-region by the local government is not producing any positive results and the poor are instead being exploited. Collective action between the government and the private mining companies will therefore ensure proper accountability, transparency and collection of revenues that will be re-invested in the sub-region. Mining activities should be reorganized in the sub-region with minimum and maximum pay rates for the inhabitants who mine and sell the minerals to the private individuals. The companies interested in mining in the sub-region should also go through the right procedure to get access to the mining sites because most of them are benefiting and not paying any fees or taxes.

The major cause of food insecurity in the sub-region is the unpredictable weather. Therefore the government should facilitate the emergence of a private market in weather indexed insurance. This can be provided either by the private sector or private public partnerships between the government and private individuals or companies. Weather insurance would entail strengthening of the country’s capacity in weather measurement and forecasting in addition to the construction of more weather stations. The poor farmers in Karamoja would therefore be informed about the change in weather patterns and be more prepared for them than now when the weather changes abruptly and destroys all their crops (MoFPED, May 2012; 88-89).

The sub-region has been dependant on aid since the 1960’s but this has not helped in poverty reduction. According to Ellerman, benevolent aid erodes the incentive of the doer to help himself and creates a dependency relationship. The continuous dependence on aid in the sub-region has created a *‘moral hazard’* because it has destroyed the incentive, energy and commitment of the people to sustain their livelihoods (Ellerman, 2006; 8-15). Instead of continuously providing food aid, the humanitarian and development agencies should help the Karamojong to help themselves by focusing on the two major livelihood options that they find viable that is livestock and crop farming. This can be done by providing them with necessary inputs including hoes, ox ploughs, irrigation equipment, pesticides and construction valley dams to water the livestock. This will make the Karamojong independent and able to sustain their own livelihoods.

Secondly, there is need to improve the absorptive capacity of the financial aid flowing into the sub-region. Large amounts of aid are being allocated for development of the sub-region but due to poor accountability and transparency, it is not being put to use. According to Renzio*,”aid delivery mechanisms should take absorptive capacity constraints into account, putting an emphasis on strengthening (or at least not undermining) country systems and institutions”* (Renzio, 2007; 2). Therefore, the donor agencies should respect the institutions present in the country and in the sub-region but they should also demand for accountability of all the aid given.

In addition to the above, there is need to address the poor governance and government policies. The institutions of accountability, planning, law and order are marred by corruption and embezzlement. The respondents’ claim that corrupt officials in the districts are not prosecuted and they have lost trust in the government. The civil society should be strengthened such that they can speak up aaginst acts of corruption because they are the voice of the poor. The corrupt officials should be prosecuted because this will act as a warning to everyone and stop the misuse of government financial resources. The vulnerable groups especially widows should be protected through the strengthening of law and order in the sub-region. Widows are left helpless after their husband’s death because relatives bribe law enforcers who grant the late husband’s relatives ownership and access to property at the expense of the widows.

The government should review its approach to development in country. There is focus on developing the urban areas at the expense of the rural areas including Karamoja yet these have the largest proportion of the population. The Infrastructure of the sub-region should be developed and rehabilitated because most of the roads and bridges are of poor quality and easily affected by floods. The poor road network is one of the main reasons why the sub-region has been isolated from the rest of the country and this should be worked upon. The social service delivery in the sub-region should be improved and increased. There are few schools and health centers and this has kept the sub-region behind in terms of development. The health centers should be stocked with free or cheap medical care that the poor can afford so as to reduce the prevalence of diseases in the sub-region.

A mind- set change program should be introduced in the sub-region because the Karamojong are disgruntled with the government and this had led to resentment towards people from other regions of the country. This has led to disunity between the Karamojong and other tribes and according to Lewis, this is not favorable for growth because growth is much easier to achieve if people are united (Lewis, 1955; 79). The mind set change program will therefore help the people to regain the sense of belonging and hence encourage unity. A national Patriotism drive[[15]](#footnote-15) was introduced by the President Museveni to enable Ugandans develop love and pride for their nation. Patriotism clubs have been introduced in schools however these are mainly in the central regions and there is need to introduce them in Karamoja.

Various programs have been introduced by the government to help the poor however these have not been inclusive. During the interviews, the respondents said that district officials in charge of NAADS program only include family, friends or people belonging to the same political party in the program activities or when receiving agricultural inputs and yet it is meant for all poor subsistence farmers. The program should therefore be made more inclusive with frequent monitoring and evaluation of its activities in the sub-region.

The cultural traditions and customs of the sub-region have had a negative impact on poverty reduction. Cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), widow inheritance and polygamy need to be addressed because they lead to marginalization of women which is detrimental to development. Although numerous campaigns against FGM exist in the country, the practice is still present. It is therefore important that strong laws against the practice are put in place and those found forcefully carrying out FGM on girls and women should be prosecuted. Communities should also be educated about the disadvantages of polygamy to household well-being and poverty reduction. Couples should be educated and advised about family planning methods because many women in the sub-region do not have knowledge about it and some people think family planning is not good for a woman’s health.

Cattle rustling is a culture that brings pride to men and also source of livelihood but it has more disadvantages than advantages. The youth also resort to cattle rustling because they are idle and have no source of livelihood. It is therefore important to find ways to keep them busy but also be able to earn a living for example promoting vocational education in brick making, carpentry, tailoring, hair dressing and metal fabrication.

There is need to address the lack of education and high illiteracy rates in the sub-region. This is because undeveloped human capital inhibits the attainment of individual and collective well-being. Parents in the sub-region do not send children to school because they have no food to give the children to carry to school. The government is providing tuition free education but there is need to provide funding for school means so to increase school attendance in the sub-region. Extra-curricular activities such as sports, music, dance and drama should be encouraged in all schools. The activities will inspire children to enroll, attend and complete school. The Sports for Life in Karamoja initiative supported by UNICEF was introduced in the sub-region in 2008 to encourage children especially girls to stay in school. Since its introduction the completion rate in the sub-region has risen from 1.3% in 2008 to 10% 2011 (UN Newsletter, June-September 2011; 3). This initiative should therefore be supported and introduced in all school in the sub-region.

Mobile classes should be introduced in the sub-region so that all children can get an education. The government should introduce a policy of flexible teaching hours so that children can go to school and still have time to help parents with the home chores and farming. Contract teachers should be hired to give remedial classes as way to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills and reduce the dropout rate in the sub-region (MoFPED, May 2012; 91). In addition to the education received in school, there is need for skills training in schools. The desire for money generating skills is overwhelming and surpassing the visible need for life skills such as hygiene, sanitation, food nutrition and environmental conservation. These skills should be taught as long as the normal school curriculum because they are vital a person’s well-being.

The Karamojong lack income and productive assets to enable them move out of poverty. There is need to widen financial access to the poor in sub-region and this can be done by developing innovative financing packages that are suitable and flexible for the poor in the sub-region. Financial services should be decentralized as a way to ensure lower costs in processing, monitoring and enforcement of the loans. The Karamojong should be encouraged to form Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCO) among themselves where they can save and borrow from each other at reasonable interest rates.

As mentioned in the analysis chapter, the Karamojong have land but not the means to fully exploit this asset. It is therefore necessary to provide them with the means to exploit this land such as agricultural inputs (hoes, ox-ploughs, irrigation equipment, pesticides, and fertilizers).Small scale farming will be encouraged and this will be expanded to full scale agriculture.

Finally, it is important that the Karamojong know that the condition they are in is a result of both internal and external factors and they too have the potential, responsibility and obligation to change the situation. Secondly, addressing poverty in Karamoja will not only benefit the Karamojong but the country as a whole. This is because the problems faced in Karamoja affect the development of the country as whole as seen in the discussions above. The government should therefore make Karamoja a top priority its poverty reduction and development agenda.

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