



Agogong Akukuranut ka
Eyare angi Karachuna
alo Karimojong

Strength, Creativity & Livelihoods of Karimojong Youth

Agan Kizito, Akongo Mary Lilly, Angiroi Thomas, Emai Joyce, Logira Naputaria,
Lokuda Xavier, Lokut Paul, Lolepo Lotimo, Lomongin Michael Jackson,
Marczela Sire, Napokol John Gaston, Nakong Christine, Otiang Christine



We are a team of 13 Karimojong researchers, young men and women aged between 20 and 29, of the Matheniko, Bokora and Tepeth groups. We come from Moroto, Napak and Nakapiripirit Districts of Karamoja Sub-Region, Uganda. In November 2011 we set out to research the situation of youth in our area and this book is our findings and conclusions. Some of us have not been to school, some have been to school and some to university. This combination of people who read and write and those who speak and hear is the strength of this research – we have gained access to people, knowledge and ideas that would not have been possible otherwise.

Those who gave advice on how to do the research surprised us by insisting that we ask our own questions, take our own photos and decide what should be in this book. So the purpose of the research, the way we did the work and conclusions that we present are all from us. We are grateful to the team from the Pastoralist Communication Initiative, the Institute of Development Studies and community elder Logwee John Bosco for their guidance and advice. The work was commissioned and supported by the youth-led development agency, Restless Development Uganda, and funded by UNFPA and DFID.



We, the research team, chose the words and stories for this book.

We took the photographs and selected which ones to use.

The Research Team



Otiang Christine

Guardian of Respect

I am from Pupu village in Pupu Parish, Rupa Sub-county. When I grew up I found my people handling me very well. I did what my parents did, like brewing. This is how I make a living now.

I didn't go to school as my parents did not take education seriously, but I'm happy to be one of the researchers. I'm able to learn more from the educated people I'm working with and they're also learning more from me. Therefore we are able to create friendship together.

I advise youth to take life seriously and stay alert because even we are valuable in society, like what I'm doing now.

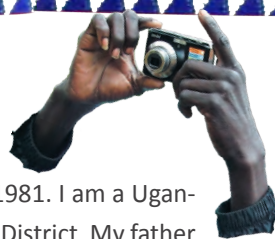


Napokol John Gaston

Photographer

I was born on August 15th 1981. I am a Ugandan Karimojong in Moroto District. My father died when I was still young, leaving the family helpless. We were four children. Our mother couldn't pay our school fees, so she took us to the Catholic mission. They only took me because of my disability and told our mother to take the other three children to someone else. The mission paid my school fees up to Senior 4.

There was no way to continue paying my school fees after that, but I had got a small Yashika camera from a relative. I started to take nice photos that people could buy. This helped my family. In 2005 I got a friend from Italy called Giovanni Paci. He gave me a good camera, which I use now. It helps me educate my children and feed them. I am married with four children: Helen, Henry, Franca and Sarah. The children are in school. I love my small family and my wife Angela. She is a housewife with no work outside.



TEAM

Naputaria Logira

Guardian of Security

While I was growing up my father kept cattle. I have also lived from those cattle up to now. Recently I got a wife and I used some of my cattle to pay the dowry. When I did that, they almost got finished, so I decided to try hunting to make a living. I used the little money I got from hunting for the family. After some time, I decided to go for digging murram. When the cultivation season started I was heaping the murram. I heaped it from the cultivation season until harvest. When the crops were ready and people were grinding them for food, I used the money from murram to buy cattle.



1 In that way even this research has helped my murram work because I can pay the people who help me dig murram. If I was at home I would have had to sell some goats to pay them, but I have stayed here peacefully and my goats stay there safely.

When I go home I will take care of those animals and look for another opportunity like this one. Then my life will be just fine.

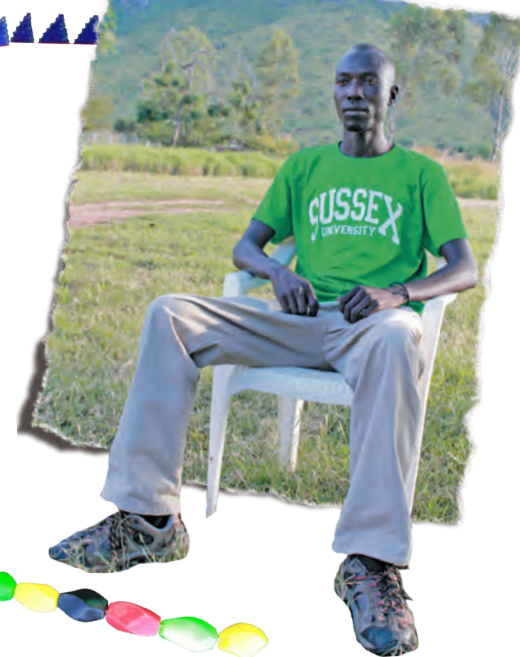
Lomongin Michael Jackson (Apalodou)

Guardian of the Purpose

I am born of Nathinyonoit village, Morulinga Parish in Napak District, Uganda. My dad died when I was still in Primary 3 and left me with my mum who did her best to make sure I reached a certain level of education.

After primary school, I joined the Airforce SSS military secondary school where I completed my O Levels and later Mbale SSS for my A level. I was then admitted to Uganda Christian University for a Bachelor of Development Studies. I am now in my third year.

I had ambitions of reaching university so I prayed hard to God to hear me. He fulfilled this



through one of my uncles who took responsibility to pay my fees.

I wish to work with development partners and local communities to empower both the illiterate and literate youth on life skills. I have taken part in various researches and surveys in our region which have exposed me to different communities in Karamoja.

I am married and blessed with one son and I am praying and working hard to have a happy life with my family, relatives, friends and the rest of the community. My hobbies are making friends, teamwork, sharing ideas and adventure.

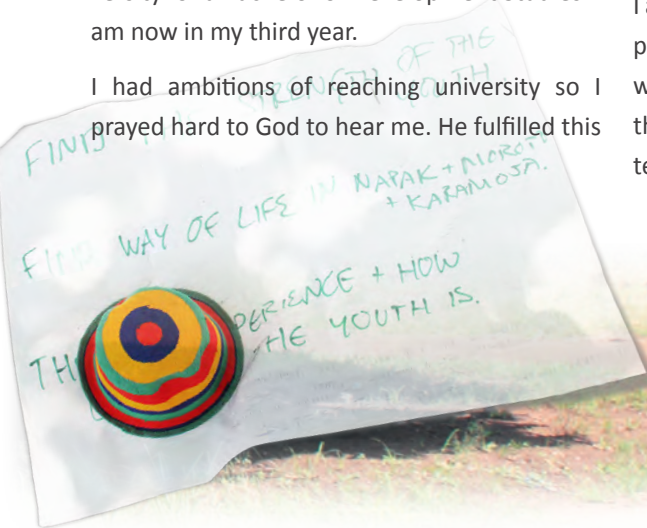
Marczela Sire

Guardian of the Analysis

My father was bewitched and died when I was still a young girl. My mother was making a living from brewing then. She took over the role of both parents and life was not so hard. All of us were studying in our family through the help of charity sisters and donors. We were a bit bright and we worked together to study as long as money was there. My brothers are at university and this comes from hard work and friendship with people. My mother is a friendly, flexible woman. She's determined and always advises us to work hard.

The only challenge we faced in our family is that when our father died, all our relatives disappeared. Only now are they coming slowly and introducing themselves to us. They come and say, "I'm your auntie" – unlike before when they couldn't even throw a coin of 500 for a pen or book.

I managed up to Senior 4 level because my mum told me to wait for my brothers to complete so they can help me to continue with my education. I make beads at home when I am free and I also go for jobs when they call them.



Lokuda Xavier

Guardian of the Analysis

I am a Karimojong by tribe, born of Nakapiripirit District, Pian County, Nabilatuk Sub-County.

I was born to Lomongin Andrew Thom and Adisa Matama. I was a shepherd up to the year 1997 when I started my primary education. I finished Senior 6 in 2007. I then got a scholarship to pursue a bachelor degree in Development Studies at Makerere University of Kampala.

I will never forget in life the day I was one of the lucky students within our district to be identified as a beneficiary of the state scholarship at university level. Thanks to God for helping me meet friends who always guide me and advise me on my future.

I love my culture, reading books, community participation in development issues and listening to media on global and local updates.

I loved my course and I wish to get more knowledge and use it for addressing the issues of disparities causing poverty to our communities

and to Uganda. For quite a long time I have had a dream to learn more about development around the globe and here in Karamoja.



Agan Kizito

Photographer

I am from a humble family. While I was growing up most of our young people and energetic elders were living by raiding and cattle rustling. I also joined them.

My first time to go for a raid was good. I came back with a good number of cattle. My parents were happy. We kept these cows for a short time before enemies came and raided them back from our kraal. They also took our cattle that we had had before.

I decided to go and get those cattle back. But most of my friends were killed in that raid and I was wounded. The few that survived came home with just a few animals. After that, I started a business selling animals. I bought waragi (distilled alcohol) with the money I got



Lokut Paul

Guardian of Logistics

I was born on 4th February 1989. My mother is my only parent. We had a lot of cattle and I was responsible for taking care of the animals. When the cows were raided away I started hunting for wild rats to earn money for our family. At that time I also copied my friends and neighbours' children and followed them to school. I started at Primary 1 and continued with education up to Senior 4.

I am now digging murram to sell. I sell murram to feed myself and my family members and to pay for my young sisters' school fees because I'm the first born. At the end of the term, my sisters brought good results. That gives me morale to help. I give them advice to work hard and when they are free they collect murram as well or fetch water for people to buy.



and sold it on. But this business of selling local *waragi* was illegal by the government. I was only smuggling the profits.

Later my friends and I again mobilised a raid to Turkana in Kenya. We sent spies ahead of us, but when we reached the place, fighting started and I was shot on the shoulder. Some of my friends were killed. I was brought home and taken to hospital where I stayed for nearly three months. After that I didn't cope well with life, so I followed my friends for another raid just to get something to live on. This was the worst of all raids. Our great leaders were killed first. I survived narrowly and returned home unsuccessful.

I again turned to the business of buying and selling cattle. This business went well until I bought some cows bearing the mark of the neighbouring area. They had been stolen and I hadn't realised. The government returned all of them from me and the people I had bought them from disappeared. From there my struggle for life is quite challenging but I will never give up.



Nakong Christine
Guardian of Respect

While I was growing up, my parents were helpless and could not even manage to feed me well. So I looked for work in town. I used to fetch water and when I got tired of that I returned home. At home I laboured for people in their gardens.

I also started selling small fish called *omena*, but that business failed. My mother then lent me some money she got from her group and I started making and selling local brew.

I left brewing to do this research. So when I go back home I will start that business again. That is the work that helps me very much.

Angiroi Thomas
Guardian of Logistics

I was born in 1980. My parents did not send me to school while I was growing up. Instead, I joined my friend mining gold. We mined

gold in Musupo Parish, working with a certain Muhindi. I used the money I got from the gold for a new business buying and selling goats. I did this business at Lia Primary School, where I got another friend called Lomer who was a teacher. He influenced me to go to school. But by that time I was already grown up. And when I reached P3 I left school because I was used to business and couldn't settle there.

I then started trading goats in Singila. Later I did some quarrying. Then the government came to the village and made us form groups for NUSAF for saving money and for opening any other business. You get money for your business. You put aside the profit and then you pay it back. But the profits were mishandled by the treasurer and the chairman, so I left the group.

The NGOs came and encouraged us to form peace-making groups and they always gave us money for that. I used that money to start my new business of slaughtering goats.

I connected with this research from hearing about it from friends. When we have finished I will go back to my business.

EWANI 2





Lolepo Lotimo
Guardian of Security

I am a cattle keeper. My parents are also cattle keepers. When I was young I thought I would remain a cattle keeper, but the animals started disappearing bit by bit. When that happened, I joined the raids, but the government came when we were on a raid. They arrested us, beat us and took our guns. I decided to leave that life and I started cutting firewood for the trucks to come and buy. I get money from that to sustain myself. I don't only rely on that - I sometimes dig murram, but I get more money from firewood. When a big lorry comes I can get even 100,000 shillings, so I do that if I can.

I still have cows but I don't have many like before. I don't want to sell them so I am digging murram and collecting firewood to buy things and to join with my friends to buy more cattle.

Akongo Mary Lily
Guardian of the Purpose

I lost my father in 1989 and my mother in 2000, just as I finished Primary 7 at Kangole Girls' Primary School. I struggled to join Senior 1 in 2001 with the support of one Sister Rosaria. She promised to sponsor me up to Senior 4 providing I join tailoring school after that. But this was not my dream. I wanted to finish Senior 6 and join university.

When I finished Senior 4 I looked for someone to sponsor me up to Senior 6. Luckily I got Father Rene Brozzord who, seeing my good results, agreed to support me if I paid for the transport to and from school. I was so pleased. I went to St Paul's college in Mbale, a missionary school, which I liked very much. I borrowed money from my aunt and started a business making doughnuts to save money for transport.

I passed the Senior 6 exams well but had no-one to support my university studies. I told my situation to a friend who gave me her father's contact.



She said he might recommend me for the State House Scholarship, as he had done for other needy Karimojong students with good results. He told me to write to His Excellency for the State House scholarship explaining my situation. He also told me to travel to Kampala to meet him. I was lucky and got a positive response. I joined the Uganda Christian University for a degree in social work and social administration in 2008. I graduated on 1st July 2011.

Emai Joyce

This is a true life story of a Karimojong child in north eastern Uganda. Read it yourself and don't let another person narrate it to you.

I am born from an uneducated family. My parents decided to take me to a missionary sister called Sister Lucia and ask for sponsorship. She accepted, but she died when I reached Primary 6 and the children she was sponsoring were delegated to a nun called Sister Rosaria, who took care of me up to Senior 4. My mother earns a living from brewing local beer (*ekwete*). In holidays I work with her in brewing in order to get something for survival and school requirements.

In 2005 I completed Senior 4 and I went back to Sister Rosaria to request sponsorship for Senior 5 and 6, but she suggested I go for a course I had not dreamt of. I went home disappointed. In the night, I thought of a friend whose dad was an MP. I went to see the MP in Kampala. I showed him my results and explained my situation. He promised to pay my fees upto Senior 6. When results from Senior 6 came, I went to the priest



in my parish and he promised to sponsor me through university. Life on campus was different and challenging. I did not have enough money. I started making liquid soap and jewellery to sell to other students. That is how I managed.

Just before the start of the second semester of the second year I met Sister Rosaria and she asked how I went to university. I told her the parish was sponsoring me. Then when I went to the priest to get money for the new semester, he surprised me saying he had no money and I should go to Sister Rosaria since she is the one sponsoring students. He suggested I return the next day. When I returned I found the sister with him. She said, since I refused their original decision, they don't have big amounts of money for university students. This situation was like a driver offering someone a lift and then ordering them out on approaching a

lonely and risky place. It was a difficult moment. I did not want to talk to anyone, but my mother told my uncle what had happened. He visited me and found me crying. He agreed to lend me the money to complete my studies.

That is how I attained my BA in the Institute of Ethics and Development Studies at Uganda Martyrs University. I wish to work with community development now. This research has helped shape my career as a development advocate.

Logwee John Bosco

Team Elder

I was born in 1968 in Kwamong Village, Rupa Sub-county. I went to primary school in 1976. After my father died of cholera, my mother could not manage all that was needed for me at school. In 1987 I was in Senior 2. I came home for the holidays to find life in the village had changed. All the families that were poor had acquired riches (cattle) and many were doing business. All the youth in our village and around had engaged themselves in raiding Teso and Acholi and had acquired the cows without resistance. Some had got involved in gold mining and others in cattle and skin trade to Kenya. Only our family remained in a bad state. The boys and girls in the village laughed at me and called me a coward who cannot defend his family. They considered school a waste of time.

The next morning I woke up, went to our small vegetable garden, uprooted some green



vegetables and followed those who were going to the gold mine. On reaching Nakabaat, my sister and her husband welcomed me and in the morning took me to dig some gold sand and told me to carry water. In seven days I had some gold, which I went to sell at Lokirama, the Kenya border. I got some Kenyan currency and bought some items to sell in Moroto.

The next day I learnt that some traders of Acholi were going to buy cows and skins from Matany and Nyakwae. I asked my mother to ask if I could join them. They accepted. They bought cows and I bought skins because my money was little and then I sold them at Lokirama. I continued with this business. My money increased so I began to buy gold. I bought a weighing scale and I completely forgot about school. I got married, produced children. Later I decided to go back and continue with school and I am now pursuing Bachelor's degree in Democracy and Development Studies at the Uganda Martyrs University.





Research Method



Action research catches people's own voices. Its purpose is to be useful to communities. The researchers should come from the community and they should ask their own questions and find their own answers. The findings must be returned to the community so that people can use them, and they may be spoken or written.

We are youth from different groups in rural and urban areas of Moroto, Napak and Nakapiripirit. Some of us have been to school and some have not. We have experience of mining, quarrying, digging murrum, raiding, peace work, brewing, herding, growing sorghum, photography, making doughnuts, granaries, soap and jewellery, hunting, business and NGO work.

We were guided by Alastair and Sarah from the Pastoralist Communication Initiative and elder Logwee John Bosco. Restless Development Uganda supported us, led by Natalie. We began our training in designing action research by telling stories about our lives, which let us understand each other's experiences and interests and make friends with one another. We identified our topic from our stories, 'the livelihoods and strengths of youth' and worked out four questions and a method of asking and recording. We made our questions open, so that people could tell us as much as they wanted. We agreed on rules for cooperating and learning: listening, respect and open-mindedness.

Then we made a map and selected six sub-counties that show the livelihoods. We wrote the names of all the parishes and picked 16 at random from one of our hats. We agreed how to approach people in a respectful way and how

to explain our purpose. We planned our routes, and worked out security, logistics, timing and communication by cellphone. Our transport and allowances were given by Restless Development. We prepared letters of introduction. We divided into two sub-teams and appointed guardians of the purpose, community respect, logistics, analysis, photography and security. Finally we tested our approach in one community. We found that our rules of respect, listening and open-mindedness worked well.

In each parish we divided into our teams and went to different places. We started by going to the village leader or the LC1 to introduce ourselves. We worked in pairs, one person to ask questions and one person to record. We looked for young people and introduced ourselves. We gave snuff as a traditional gift. We gave respect to mothers and older people. We spent a little



This thing has brought unity among us. It has created friendship. We have learned from each other.



Then they saw the warriors taking snaps, they were surprised! Who trained them?





When I was interviewing, I asked Agan to tell his story of being a raider. Then the warrior spoke too.



Sometimes people ran away. Then John Logwee gave us advice as to how to approach them. Respect and greetings.



time just chatting and helping them with whatever work they were doing, to be relaxed. Then we asked our questions in a soft way: 'How are you making a living?' 'What makes it good?' Then we asked people to tell stories from their lives. We recorded 378 interviews and stories on voice recorders, so we could hear people's true voices. When we came back to Moroto, we wrote the stories into record books. Each sub-team appointed one member to be a photographer and we took hundreds of photos around the parish. The photos told their own stories. Every third day we analysed and discussed what we had heard and seen, improving our approach and questions.

Some people we met expected to be given rewards, while others were unwilling to talk to us. But we were determined, and mostly we were able to make friends. We used the golden rules, respecting their culture. We made sure we

dressed in a respectful way. We were careful not to make promises we could not keep. We promised only to return with the book of the research.

After 18 days we came to Moroto for analysis with Sarah, Alastair and Logwee. Natalie joined us to listen and helped with many things. We were also joined by Patta from the Institute of Development Studies. We began by telling what had surprised us. Then we identified the main kinds of strength we had seen and heard. We made sure that our Karimojong words were translated into English correctly. We agreed that the research is for the people in the communities and also to help communicate between our world and the outside world.

We loaded all the pictures on to a computer and brought the recorders and notebooks with the stories and spent three days reviewing them

and choosing the most appropriate pictures and stories from each place. We explained why each one was being chosen and recorded our explanations. We began to put this book together on the computer. We drew a map of the two districts and marked the livelihoods we had found in each place. We analysed all our material for livelihood patterns and strengths. Which livelihood is most common, which one do people like and dislike? How did this livelihood pattern come to be? What strengths did people speak of? What did we see and hear? On the fifth day we decided on our main messages and conclusions. Finally we reviewed the method we had used from beginning to end and discussed how we will take the books back to the people and discuss the findings with them, to keep our promise.

If you would like to read a detailed description of our research method, please read the separate method paper, available on

www.restlessdevelopment.org and
www.pastoralists.org.

When people saw us together - a mix of trouser and sheet, they got courage. They spoke free. They told their stories.





Introduction



We begin with some background to why things are as they are for young people in Karamoja. Peace is returning after years of insecurity. Most of us lost all our cows in the unequal disarmament that began in December 2001. One group was disarmed while another was not. Those who still had guns came and took all the animals and all we were left with was poverty. So young people have resorted to hard and risky work to earn money to buy animals again: quarrying stone, mining gold, digging murram and burning charcoal.

We feel that people who come from the outside think that they know more about Karamoja than those who live here. Using only what they have read in books, they do not want to be challenged and they want to eat alone. But officials appointed by government or NGOs from outside places cannot unite the people. NGO officials decide for Karimojong instead of Karimojong deciding for themselves. Most bring their own people from outside and employ educated Karimojong only as casual labour. They ignore the people in the villages who have not been to school, as if they do not know anything, yet

they have so much knowledge. Our young people have not been given fair access to education; instead politicians put their own children on the lists for sponsorship.

Our research is against this disrespect. It shows young people living with courage and ingenuity. Now rains and peace have come again and people are able to move from district to district securely, young people are working hard to earn money, buy animals, get education and make peace.

In this book our team of 13 researchers will take you on a journey through six sub-counties of Moroto and Napak Districts, to 16 settlements and kraals, where we conducted 378 interviews and met and discussed our questions with more than 500 people. We chose the sub-counties to give us urban and rural, and traditional and alternative ways of making a living. Heavy rains put some places out of reach, but they also brought herders close to the main settlements so we could meet them. Also people had sorghum, beer and milk. They were in an optimistic mood. We met mostly young men and women and we asked them how they were making a living, what was influencing it, what (if anything) made it good, and how it had come to be so. We also met older people, as well as some officials, and they told us how they guide youth in their lifestyles and livelihoods.

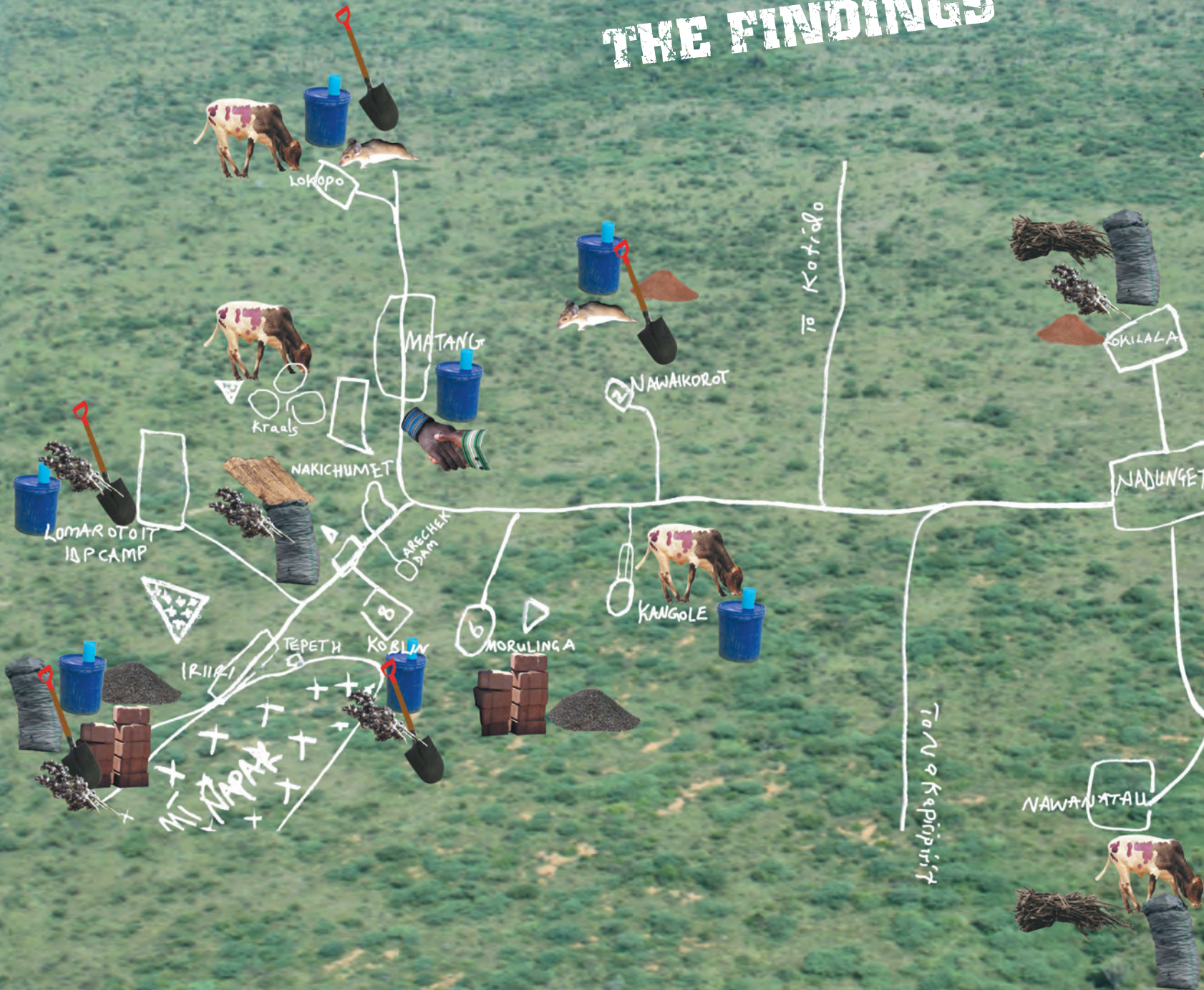
People answered our questions and told us stories of their lives. We caught the interviews and stories on voice recorders and took many

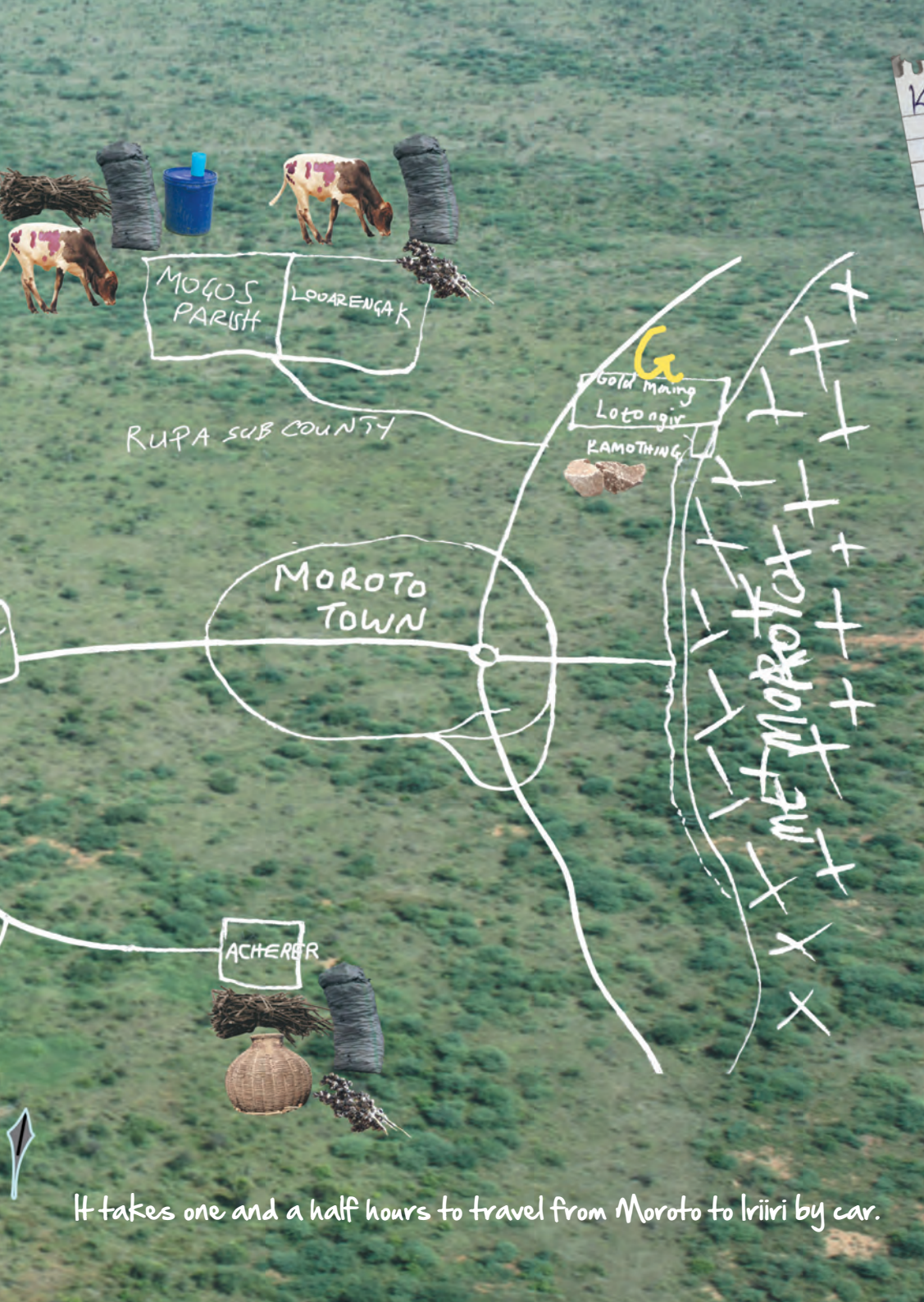
photographs. We wrote the stories down in English. Approaching the people we met with courtesy and respect, we made friends, helping them with whatever they were doing, telling them about our purpose and answering their questions. We will bring this book to them once it is finished. We want to return to discuss what we have found and build our friendship. We asked them to agree that we could also give the book to those outsiders who want to understand how life is for us today.

We advise that in reading this book you should give attention to the strengths of the young people of Karamoja: our respect for others, strength of mind, flexibility, carefulness and respect for law and tradition. We also remind you to look out for where the evidence shows how we are managing, slowly by slowly, to overcome old problems of insecurity, poor treatment and lack of opportunity.

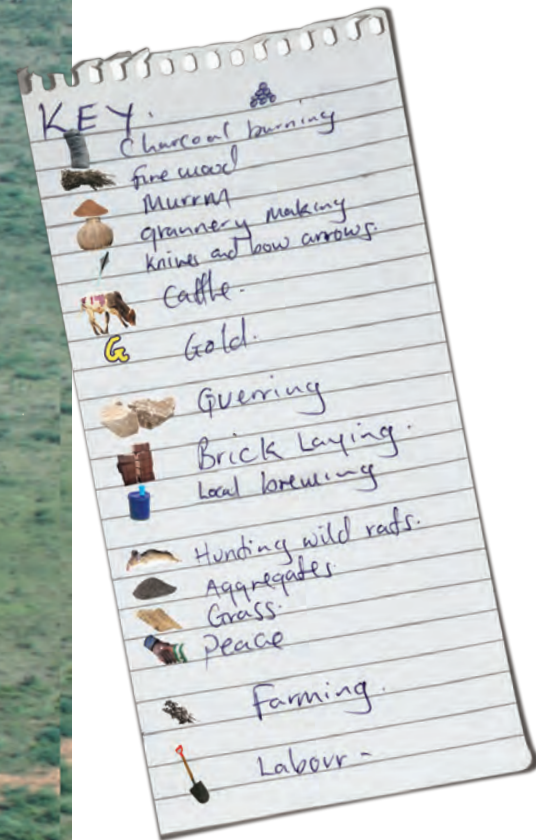


THE FINDINGS





It takes one and a half hours to travel from Moroto to Iriiri by car.



This map shows Napak and Moroto Districts. It is a sketch of the places that we went to. When we met people, we asked them about their livelihoods. The most common ones for each place are shown on the map. We found people farming crops in every place, so we have put farming on the map only for the places where there is a lot of it. The list is not complete, but it gives an idea of how people are living in this area.

Now we will travel with you to the sixteen communities, starting at Lokilala village. In each place we have picked a few stories and photographs that we think show best what we learnt.





"When we had cattle, we had a lot - milk, butter, meat, skins. Come and sit with me and feel how good the skin is!"





On our first day, we travelled to Lokilala village in Nadungyet Sub-county. We were testing our questions and perfecting our respectful approach. We sat with these women and prepared cucumbers with them. Cucumbers are for eating at home, so there's no need to buy food from town. They told us of all the different uses for cucumbers. The seeds can be sold. They are very important for our culture - we mix them with sorghum, milk and butter for ceremonies. If a woman needs to prepare traditional food and does not have cucumbers, she can borrow them. It means that she is a close friend. Cucumbers are good because they grow during the rainy season when there is plenty of milk. They are ready to eat during the dry season when we have less food.

We came across a man under a tree and asked him about his livelihood. He was waiting while his animals took water and he told us, "Now the grass is near, the water is near, everything is near so I shall just stay within this place and rotate around here. The animals give me milk and meat and I can keep near my family." He is strong because he is living from animals.

Then we met an old man who was so happy because he is getting food, school fees and medicine for his children from selling his sorghum. The harvest has been very good this year and just looking at his field of sorghum made him feel good.

If your animals get a disease you need to be creative. The sheep on the left (below) has been isolated so it doesn't infect others. Its owner dug murrum to earn money so he could buy medicine for his animals. You can also go to the bush and collect *aloe vera*, mix it with water and feed it to them. But this will not cure everything.



Many people make a living from firewood here. In Lokilala we met young women coming home from the bush carrying wood. This woman is taking it home where she will rest for the night. Early tomorrow she'll take it to the market centre to sell. Then she will use the money to buy food.



"I dug murrum and bought these three cows one by one with the money I earned. Here they are on green pasture. When there is peace, even just a young boy can herd them safely. I plan to increase their number."



Lokilala
Nadungyet Sub-County

Tookitela

Nawaikorot Parish



This man used to be very rich. He had many cows. Now he has none and is reduced to catching and selling rats for a living.

This ivory bangle is a sign of a rich person. It is worth one bull.

In Tookitela village in Ngoleriet Sub-County we found many people digging murram. One young man, Kudo John Bosco, explained that he pays his school fees with the money he gets from digging murram. He digs murram mainly

during the holidays. He makes a big pile and whenever a truck comes needing murram he sells a load for around 30,000 Uganda shillings. The school fees are 200,000 shillings per term.





The murrum sites are communal, but when you dig a pile it is your own. Sometimes youth work together to dig murrum and share the proceeds.

We met Lojore Veronica who told us this story about her life:

“When I grew up, people were really in a state of hunger. My mother was earning a living through collecting and selling firewood. One time a certain old man proposed to me and as he was a wealthy man, I accepted him. After giving birth to the first child, he abandoned me. I

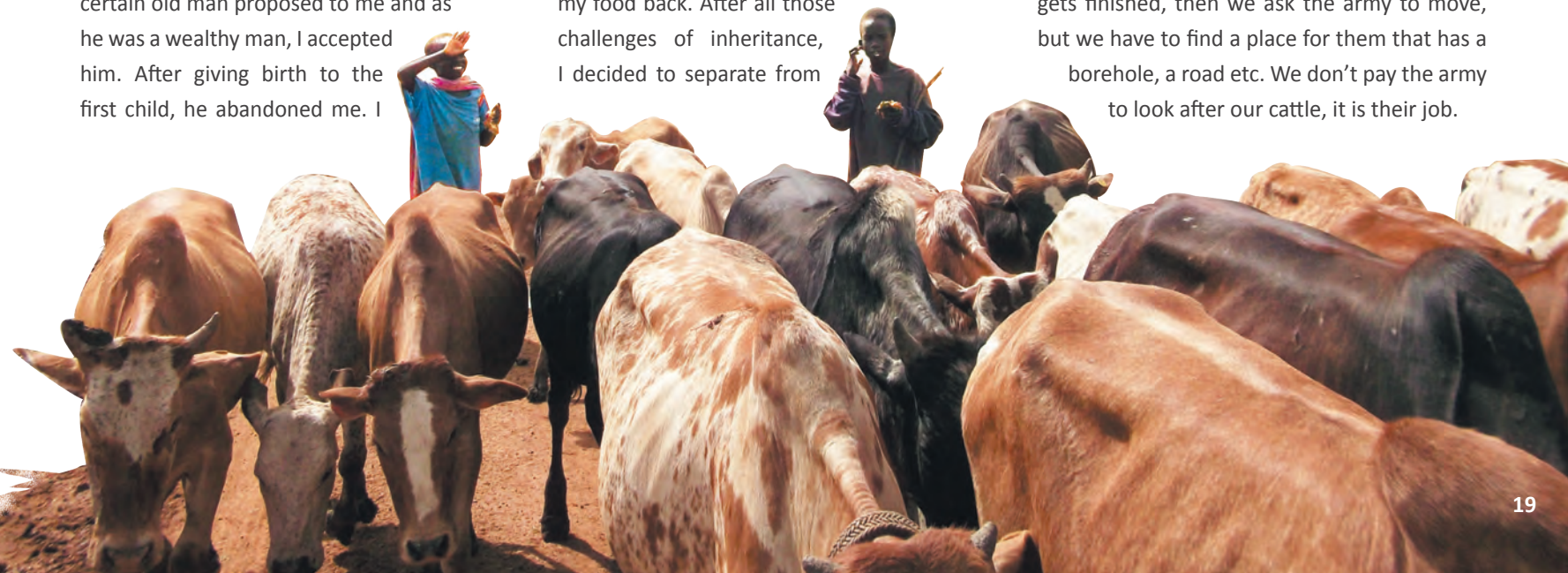
struggled alone with the child. That first husband died and my relatives and friends encouraged me to accept to be inherited by his son. I accepted, but he mistreated me like his father had. I was his second wife, and we were both abandoned in preference for the young beautiful ladies. Unfortunately he contracted yellow fever from them. He was taken to hospital and died. Shortly after his death I gave birth to one child. I continued struggling with my own life. I would go to town for casual labour and selling firewood. A year later I was persuaded to marry the second son of my first husband, which I accepted due to my parents’ encouragement. Immediately I conceived he disappeared. This time I was really helpless with these three children. I started cultivating beans, maize and sorghum to get a living. When I got a good harvest, the husband came and grabbed the whole of it. I had no one to help me claim my food back. After all those challenges of inheritance, I decided to separate from



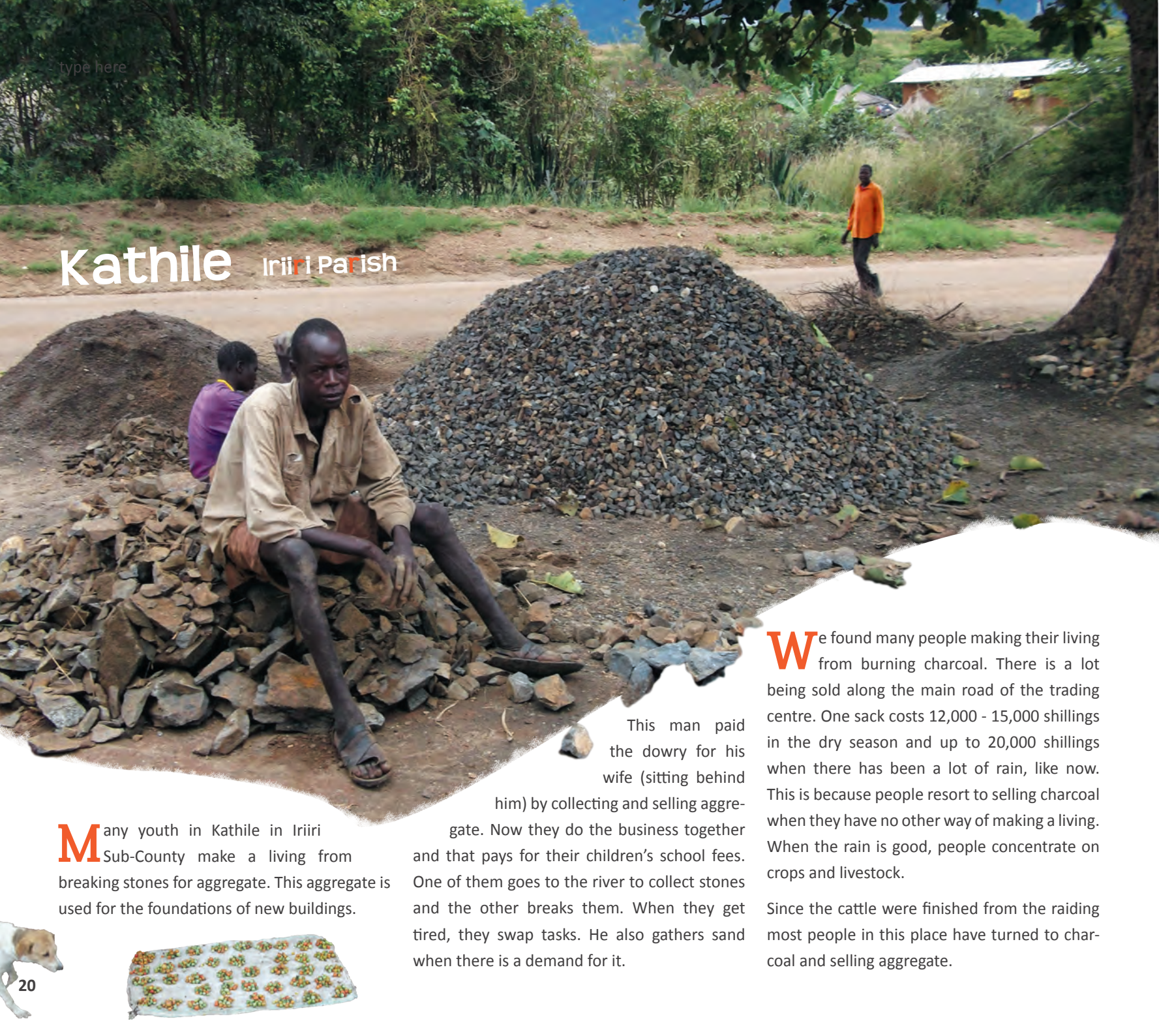
This woman and her children are waiting to buy brew for food.

him and changed my way of living to digging murrum. I can protect the money I get from digging murrum and use it for myself and my children. That’s the life I am now living.”

It is morning and the cattle (below) are coming from the protected kraals to where their owners are. They are first milked and then they go for grazing. The protected kraals are a kind of barracks surrounded by army. Since we were disarmed, we have nothing to protect our animals with, so the animals spend the night in the protected kraals. If all the grass near the kraal gets finished, then we ask the army to move, but we have to find a place for them that has a borehole, a road etc. We don’t pay the army to look after our cattle, it is their job.



Kathile Iriiri Parish

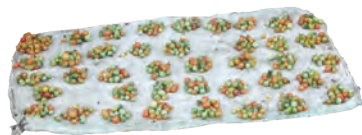


Many youth in Kathile in Iriiri Sub-County make a living from breaking stones for aggregate. This aggregate is used for the foundations of new buildings.

This man paid the dowry for his wife (sitting behind him) by collecting and selling aggregate. Now they do the business together and that pays for their children's school fees. One of them goes to the river to collect stones and the other breaks them. When they get tired, they swap tasks. He also gathers sand when there is a demand for it.

We found many people making their living from burning charcoal. There is a lot being sold along the main road of the trading centre. One sack costs 12,000 - 15,000 shillings in the dry season and up to 20,000 shillings when there has been a lot of rain, like now. This is because people resort to selling charcoal when they have no other way of making a living. When the rain is good, people concentrate on crops and livestock.

Since the cattle were finished from the raiding most people in this place have turned to charcoal and selling aggregate.



The men in the picture below used to be raiders. One of them told us his story.

"I used to be a raider and I also had a small shop. I raided very many animals, but then someone reported me to the security people and soldiers came and wanted to arrest me. I resisted and I was shot with six bullets and taken to hospital. I used all the money from my shop to pay for the medication.

When I was cured, I started burning charcoal together with my friends, but when the trees became scarce and the government told us to stop cutting them, I left that work to the women.

The money we got from burning charcoal was enough to buy a piece of land. It is this piece of land and we are using it to make bricks. We sell these bricks to contractors who come and collect them from our site. There are many contractors coming to this area so now we are just waiting for customers!"



Most people here are living from charcoal. This has only been the case since the cows got finished.



A local organisation called SVI owns these oxen. They carry things for people and we pay just a small amount to the herder. This provides a very good service.





The youth from this area have organised themselves into a peace group. We met them in Napeipelu village, also in Naki-chumet Parish. They used to be raiders, and formed this group after the disarmament. Every

Saturday they sit and discuss things pertaining to peace. When people steal cows they go and talk to their people so that the stolen cattle will be returned. They travel to many different places in the district to try and stop the fighting.

We think groups like this are very effective. They are recognised by the government and they are recognised by people across Karamoja. They are not paid. Instead they have their own ways of collecting money. There are also well-wishers, like the leaders of the different villages and some organisations who donate money to them as a token of appreciation. The group deposits the money in their account and uses it when they need to sit or go somewhere for the work of peace.

The people in this picture are from the group and represent every side of Napak District.

We went to the kraals at Lorukumo in Matany Sub-County. Most of the youth here are herders. Onyang Atucho is one of them. He told us,

“I rear cattle. I have built up these animals from the few that we managed to save from the raids. My brothers also have animals. At the moment our animals are so healthy because there is enough grass and water. We are getting plenty of very good quality milk and blood. If I need veterinary drugs for ticks or something else, I can sell one animal or sell charcoal to get them from the market. These animals also enable me to pay dowry.”

Onyang lives very close to the barracks so he doesn't need to take his animals to the protected kraals each evening. The army is so near to his place that if there is a raid they will hear and come and help protect them.

Lorukumo
Nakichumet Parish





This old man is showing the youth which direction to take the animals for the best pasture. He tells them to go and come back at the end of the day. The animals belong to the

old man and he instructs the youth how to look after them. It is the elders who have the best knowledge on where to go for pasture and how to look after the animals well. The youth look

after the animals during the day, but they work with the elders to make sure the animals do well.



Lomarotoit

Iriiri Sub-county

Lomarotoit Resettlement Camp is right on the edge of Napak District. The people that live here are called *Kampalans* because they were brought back to Karamoja from Kampala.

The road to Lomarotoit is very bad. When it rains, you can't even take a bicycle along this road. If it rains while you are travelling, you have to hide your bicycle in the long grass and come back for it once it is dry again.

We heard many stories from the people in Lomarotoit about their past life in Kampala and about how they are living now they are back in Karamoja. Here are a couple of their stories.

“My father was very rich. But his cows were all rounded up and taken. So he resorted to cultivating. But cultivating became difficult due to the killings, which meant we could only cultivate places close to our home.



So I decided to go to Kampala with my wife and two children. But in Kampala life was also difficult. We had to pay rent of 500 shillings per adult and 300 shillings per child every night. My wife and I would go in different directions to look for work each morning.

I had the idea of trapping rats. I made my own traps and I found I could sell the traps, since rats were disturbing people in Kampala. In the morning my wife would take the children under the hot sun down the streets and place them at intervals to beg. She collected chicken heads and feet, or she went to the slaughterhouse and collected the reject pieces like the testes and hooves to bring home. So we found that the life was very, very difficult there and we decided to come back.

When the British Queen was coming we took that opportunity to return to Karamoja. We were taken to a place called Lopei in Napak. We stayed in the camp in Napak while the government was trying to locate a big space for us. Then the government found this place. They shifted all of us, gave us plots. We began cultivating. It was difficult. When we first arrived

there was nothing at all. We were dropped here and it was bush with tents. There was nothing. We wondered how we would eat when we woke up the next day.

Some NGOs like GIZ helped us. There are others that came and made promises to us but they still haven't returned. We are right on the border of Napak District and we don't have schools and water and medical services here.

But it's much more comfortable than Kampala and I don't want to hear about Kampala any more. I have my house. No one demands for payment. Now we just want other services like a school, water, medical services etc.”



We also talked to Arukol Margaret and this is what she said.

“I heard that people were going to the west, Kampala. And I also went there, but when I got there I found life difficult - much more challenging than in Karamoja. Everything needed money, the latrine was money, going to sleep was money. While in my home Karamoja I could go to the bush, sleep in my own built house and even bathe freely. Life was terrible there.

When the Queen of Britain was coming to Uganda, officials said, ‘Go home! You are making Kampala dirty!’ Buses came and picked us up from the streets. I realised all this was shame and I decided to return home. When we got to Karamoja we were put at first in Kapengriza, a place like a prison. But now I eat depending on how much I have stretched my own hand to grow my garden.”

Below are a couple of pictures from Lomaratoit. The first is a basket. During the day it is used for winnowing and during the night it is used as a door to the house. It is very important in Karimojong culture and is also used to serve meat. People who make these baskets sell them to others, since not many people have that skill. The second picture shows some banana plants - this place is fertile.



We found these women celebrating in Tepeth village. They have put oil on their necks. They were celebrating the joining of a boy and a girl after the dowry had been paid. The dowry was 10 goats and 2 cows. This picture shows our culture.

From Lomaratoit Resettlement Camp, we went to Tepeth village, where Akuu Alice told us her story.

“I am 18 years old. Ever since I grew up my life has been cultivating. But sunshine and floods destroyed my harvests. I didn’t want to give up because I have to look after my children, so I turned to charcoal and brewing. I like brewing so much because my children can eat the residue from making brew. At the same time the business brings in money, which helps me take my children to hospital if they fall sick and enables me to buy more sorghum to widen my business.”



Nakoreto

Murulinga Parish



Murulinga Hill in Matany Sub-County provides many people with a good livelihood. As well as grazing animals, many young people collect stones there and dig murrum

at the foot of the hill. One young man we met told us that he had managed to pay the dowry for marriage from the stones he collected on Murulinga Hill.

Murulinga Hill is a ritual place for the Bokora community. The First Lady built a house on the hill too. The people living in that area get special attention from her since she has a house in their place.

Here are three stories from Murulinga. The first is from Lokawa Angelina.

“I live from this very hill. Even if I sleep without food I know that I can find something on the hill. I can go to the hill and fetch greens

longer pay the school fees so I came back from school to help my parents.

From there I decided to go to western Uganda to look after people's cattle for payment. Whenever I got



(ekorete) and come home and cook them and eat them. I go to the hill to collect and break stones. I heap them until someone comes to buy them. If my heap isn't bought and the customer buys someone else's stones, I borrow money and pay it back later, even if it's after six months. And if I get completely nothing for a long time, I go back to collecting greens again.”

We also met Leema Loduk. He talked about how he is earning a living.

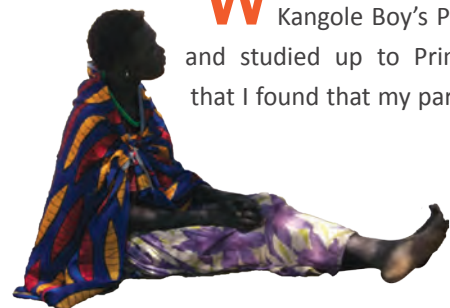
“When I was growing up I joined Kangole Boy's Primary School and studied up to Primary 3. After that I found that my parents could no

paid I sent the money home to my parents so they could buy food and other things. After some years I returned home. Here I found I could make a living from burning charcoal and fetching water for people and laying bricks.

What helps me here is the availability of customers. I burn charcoal, take it to town and sell it. I can then buy food for the family. We are paid for the bricks we make and we are told that there are very many constructions coming to our place. But at the moment charcoal is what I'm getting most of my money from.”

Finally we talked to a group of youth who were busy making bricks. This is what Angella Emmanuel and Onyang John told us.

“We survive through brick making. When the government came here to construct the medical HQ, they brought a machine and people who knew how to operate it. We were mobilised as casual labour. We agreed to be paid weekly, 3,000 shillings per day, totalling to 18,000 shillings per week. The little payment we get, we use for buying goats to rear, since peace is there. One of us is a student, the other is a warrior whose father's cows were all raided. I am working to pay my school fees. These goats are a source of our food. There are veterinary services here for our goats. That's why we are sure of our goats' life. We are enjoying this work because we need something for survival. It's better than stealing and being idle.”



Arechek Dam

Nakichumet Parish

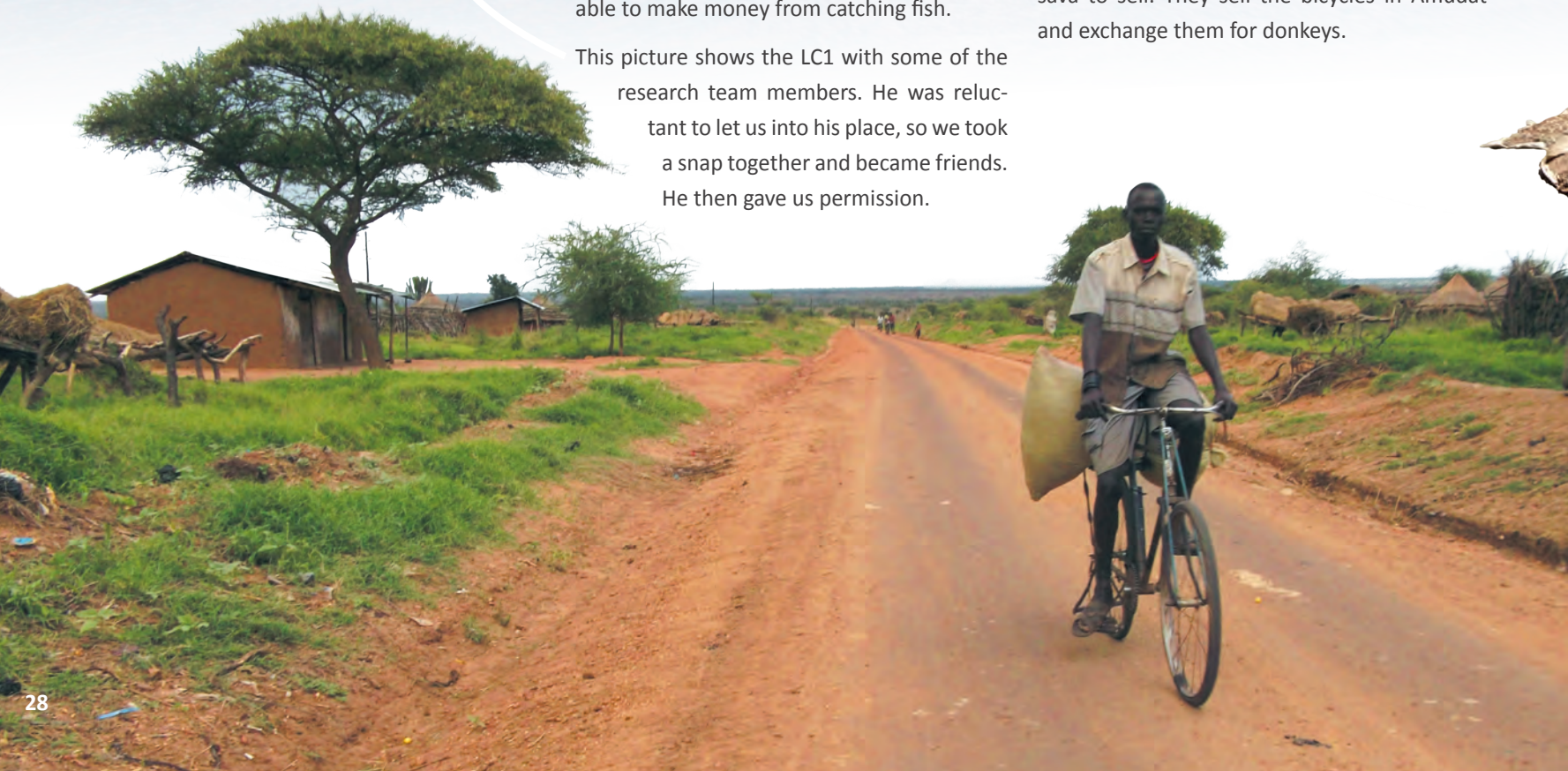
"And in this dam they planted fish"



The government built this dam in Nakichumet Parish, in Matany Sub-County. It was finished 6 months ago and this is the first time it has filled with water. The government built it to stop the road and gardens flooding and to provide water for animals. We hope that now the water will be closer in the dry season so we don't have to move so far. It has also been planted with fish, so some youth might be able to make money from catching fish.

This picture shows the LC1 with some of the research team members. He was reluctant to let us into his place, so we took a snap together and became friends. He then gave us permission.

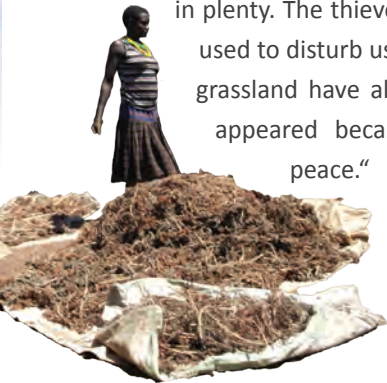
That youth on his bicycle goes to Iriiri and buys fresh cassava and then rides to Matany and sells it. He works as part of a group. He travels about 20km one way. Along that highway there are warriors from Nakapiripirit. They come and take bicycles and cassava and take the person and bicycle to the bush. They might kill the person and take the bike and cassava to sell. They sell the bicycles in Amudat and exchange them for donkeys.



Aleper Martha told us about how she is making a living in this place.

“My husband was killed in the bush by raiders. He had gone to collect firewood. That’s why I started a small business of selling beer and soda, but it failed. So I resorted to cutting grass for sale because I have strength to do it. I can afford to buy medicines to treat my children’s malaria using money I get from this grass. The place to cut grass is very near to my village. This place where I sell it is just on the roadside for customers to easily see. There are customers and the grass is

in plenty. The thieves who used to disturb us in the grassland have also disappeared because of peace.”



The main activities youth are doing in this place are cutting and selling grass and making and selling charcoal.

Kobulin



We also visited Kobulin settlement camp in Lorengechorwa Sub-County and met a man living from his musical instrument.

“I started living in our home when we were still few in number. I joined school and completed my primary 7 in 1997. Sincerely, I faced a lot of problems which could not allow me to continue with my studies. Fortunately, a charitable organisation helped me and this lady was called Dr. Val. She supported me up to senior four. After my senior four, I went to Soroti Vision Bible College where I completed my

diploma, and now I am here. Right now I am here, but I have been in jail for ten years. While in prison, I learnt playing a musical instrument called *adungu*. When I was freed from prison, I started playing music and right now I have produced many songs. Some of you know some of those songs. My livelihood now depends on music as well as farming. I have produced one album, which I will perform soon.

I also earn my livelihood through part-timing in some schools as a music teacher. What I have realised with farming is that it can help in the fight against poverty, since you will never starve. I also go for casual labour, which we do as a group rotating our gardens.”



Narengemoru

Ngoleriet Sub-County

"At the moment the grass is good, the rivers are flowing. We don't need to go far. There is a lot of milk. We use it to make butter and sell it to feed our families."

Narengemoru is a common grazing ground. We arrived there early in the morning so we could talk to the herders before they took the cattle out grazing for the day. The cattle you see grazing in this picture are going far from the village. It's the job of the youth to take them long distances and look after them. At the moment though, because we have had so much rain, they don't need to go as far.



We then travelled to Lokopo - another kraal. Here we met Lokiru who was digging out bush rats from under a tree. Here's what he told us.

"I came here because my animals were raided since my gun was taken in the disarmament. What you see here is my life of hunting wild rats and trapping other big animals. In the process of digging rats I sometimes dig out a snake. You fight with that one until you kill it. I take the rats home and to the market for sale. If I get 1,000 shillings, I buy one can of sorghum for flour. With this work I get up very early in the morning. I dig with only the heart. It's up to me to save something for my stomach. Digging rats is better than sleeping or stealing."



Bush rats are nice. They are fatty. They are delicious. They are so appetising. When you eat it with local beer you just feel satisfied.

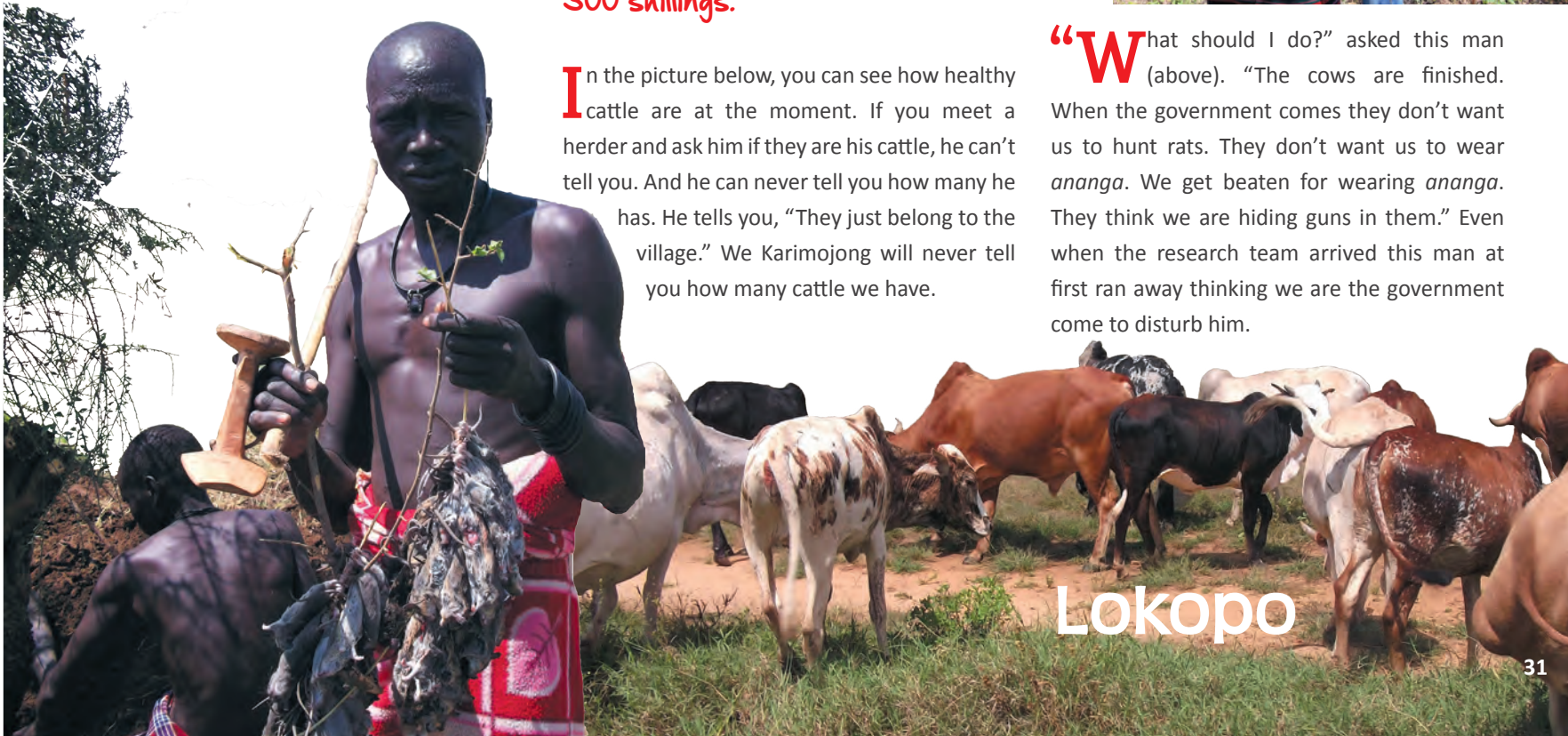


We used to keep cows, but we don't have them any more, so we hunt rats. A raw rat fetches 200 shillings while a roasted rat gets you 300 shillings.



"What should I do?" asked this man (above). "The cows are finished. When the government comes they don't want us to hunt rats. They don't want us to wear *ananga*. We get beaten for wearing *ananga*. They think we are hiding guns in them." Even when the research team arrived this man at first ran away thinking we are the government come to disturb him.

In the picture below, you can see how healthy cattle are at the moment. If you meet a herder and ask him if they are his cattle, he can't tell you. And he can never tell you how many he has. He tells you, "They just belong to the village." We Karimojong will never tell you how many cattle we have.



Lokopo



Atedeoi

Mooth Parish

This is tobacco growing in Atedeoi village in Rupa Sub-County.

Tobacco is very important. If someone tells you, 'I am hungry!' You should ask them which food they are hungry for. Then they will say, "Tobacco." Sharing tobacco is a sign of friendship. It is an important part of reconciliation after conflict. We use it for many different ceremonies, especially engagement between a boy and a girl. If a boy likes a girl, he will ask for tobacco and if she gives it to him, it means there is hope for him!

The LC1 of Atedeoi, Nangiro Longolei talked to us about youth and peace.

“Our youth survive through peace as a number one, anybody who goes to the bush to burn charcoal has no fear of any threats of enemies and even the one who hunts wild animals does it freely. Peace is very important. Even when rivers flood and block you from crossing to the other side, the peace means you can spend a night in the nearby village without any worries.

Peace has saved the life of the youth in this community. People burn charcoal and take it to the market for sale and the money they get is used for survival of the family and some is saved until it's enough to buy a cow or a goat. Like this, you keep on buying one by one until they reach a good number, then you are able to form your own kraal. What I tell youth is that herds of cattle are just like the hair on your head, whereby when it's shaved, it is able to grow again slowly by slowly.

Peace is the binding factor of everything in our life, in which people are united and they obey the rule of their leaders. If anyone makes a mistake, we can agree and punish the one involved in the offence. Our animals are able to multiply because of our free environment and people obey the rules of grazing in the village, where animals are first grazed in a particular area and when grass becomes limited in that area cows are shifted to another area agreed by the community.”

These calves remain at home grazing while the youth take their mothers far. The grazing areas close to home are reserved for the young animals. The very young shepherds look after these calves so they learn how to herd.





This man had these marks made on his face when he was younger. It shows he is courageous, since it is very painful to have it done. If a youth has killed someone, he will put marks like this onto his shoulder. These face marks show true beauty for the Karimojong.

However the government is concerned about people sharing blades and now discourages us from doing this.

The two youth carrying bows and arrows (above) said, “Now we have been disarmed, this is what we use to look after our



cattle and to try and defend ourselves.” These bows and arrows are also used for hunting.

Disarmament means it is more difficult for the youth to protect themselves and their cattle. Two thick fences surround the village. Youth cut the thorn bushes to make these fences. The outer fence is for protection. If an enemy comes it alerts people when they hear the fence being broken down and gives time to prepare for them coming.

Since we have been disarmed there is no good job the youth can do. Building very strong fences gives them a job and helps to protect ourselves and our animals.



The woman in the picture above goes for firewood and uses the money she gets from selling it to buy sorghum. She then uses the sorghum to make brew which she also sells. Others burn and sell charcoal and use the money from that for brewing.

Brewing makes money. It is also food. When you have it you forget what you have been thinking about and sleep. It's real food, you don't have to cook it. You don't need fire. When people work for you in your fields you must give them brew. They will not work otherwise. We use it when we are performing rituals, for example when a woman is pregnant with her first born, or the naming of a child. Even the residue is good for food. Brewing is very important for us.



Lokitelaakapeth

Lubuneit Parish

When you have more than five camels, it shows you are very rich and people respect you. When you have that you can put on a ring like this one.

These small boys are looking after the animals near the village while they wait for the big boys to get ready. These animals will then be taken far away for pasture.

We found most people in Lokitela Kapeth village in Rupa Sub-County keeping livestock and doing additional things to supplement that, such as burning charcoal, growing crops, collecting firewood etc. We met Longok who told us,



“My way of life and survival is through charcoal burning and keeping livestock. But the one I value most is my cows. I get food from them like milk and butter (*akimet*). When the children are tired of eating greens I can slaughter an animal to change their diet. I can sell an animal during times of sickness. I also value my animals because I want to use them for paying bride price for my wife.”

GLZ has shown people in Lokitela Kapeth how to make these charcoal saving stoves. They are very economical because once it gets hot, it stays hot without adding more firewood. Once the food is prepared, it can stay warm for a long time. This woman earns her living by making and selling them.



We also met Mariam Nakee. She told us,

“When I was growing up my mother fed me. She taught me household work like grinding, fetching firewood and preparing meals.

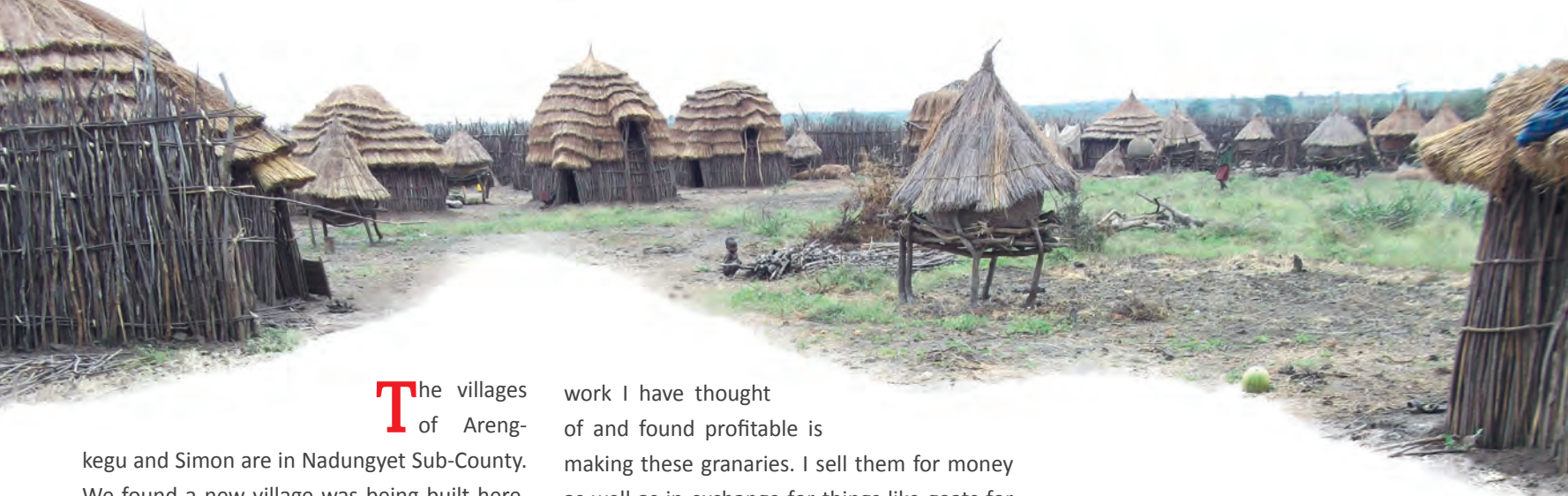
I did all that from then up to now. I followed what she told me, that when you are angry, go for firewood. If not, go for casual work. She has now died and I came to this place and I found that what people are doing here is no different to that place where I grew up with my mother.

During my stay in this community I got a piece of land and friends and even relatives. I followed the living habits of these people. They told me to go for charcoal burning, but I have a chest problem so that work is difficult for me.

Instead I began selling *waragi* and brewing. When the season became great and gave all the Matheniko community good harvest I began cultivating as well. The season favoured me with a good harvest amounting to two full granaries. This has not happened this year though, and I am currently depending on my *waragi* business, which gives me enough to buy food for myself and the family.

I also keep poultry. This helps me when I get a loss from the *waragi* business or when I need medical care or other extra things. I grow peas and greens in my garden, so I also have these when the harvest comes. During the cultivating period, I depend on the *waragi* business to live.”



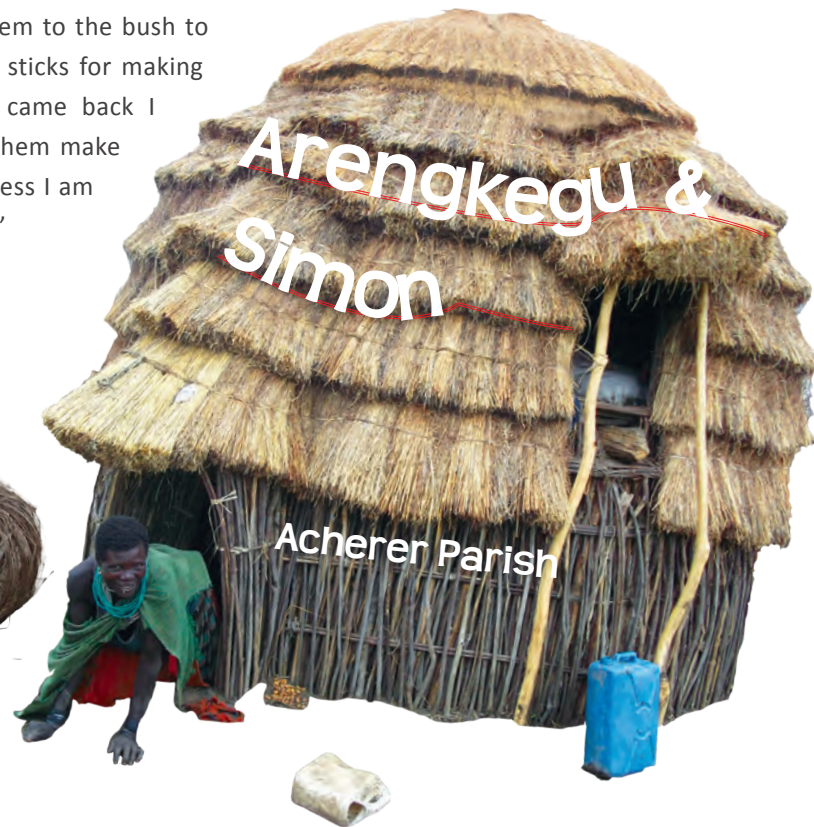


The villages of Arengkegu and Simon are in Nadungyet Sub-County. We found a new village was being built here. There were also several youth making granaries to earn a living. Akol was one of them.

“When I grew up, elders were the ones owning cattle. Cows were the way of life of the people in this area and another way of life was crop farming. There used to be good harvest, but these days the season has changed and there is a lot of hunger. I have tried crop farming over the past two years but all in vain. The only

work I have thought of and found profitable is making these granaries. I sell them for money as well as in exchange for things like goats for those who cannot offer cash. I also reserve some granaries for food storage at my home.

I got the skills and knowledge of making granaries from elders because when I was young, I used to follow them to the bush to collect *ngatetelei* (flexible sticks for making granaries) and when we came back I could also sit and watch them make them. So this is the business I am doing currently to survive.”



Arengkegu & Simon

Acherer Parish

The women are building this village at the moment. It's a new village. The men fence the village and the women build the houses. We Karimojong move with our animals. Many things influence when we move. For example we move when there is

insecurity or when the grazing isn't good or if we need a new or better place for cultivation. We live in villages with our families and as the family grows we might need to move to ensure there are enough resources around to look after the family. If people die or our animals get sick, we move.

We say the soil has become hot.



From the village of Nawanatau you can see Mount Moroto. The mountain provides charcoal, firewood, grazing, stones and many other things that people earn a living from. The heavy rain we've had recently means that the grazing for livestock is very good at the moment. There used to be fighting between the Tepeth and the Matheniko on Moroto Mountain. At the moment there is peace.

When we arrived in Nawanatau it was early morning and a lot of the

youth were washing. Some of the team members joined them. They made friends while washing together and they were then willing to tell us all about their place.

The place they were washing in is meant for watering livestock, but it gives refreshment to the herders as well.

We met a strong energetic youth – he said he survived through laziness. We met a lame man, who made bows and arrows and got a wife.



Nawanatau

Lotirir Parish



"After our cows were stolen I started to sell waragi. Slowly that business is giving me enough profits so I can buy some goats. Slowly I am building back up."



The lame man was a challenge to the lazy man. The lame man is Akol Longorikwang. He told us,

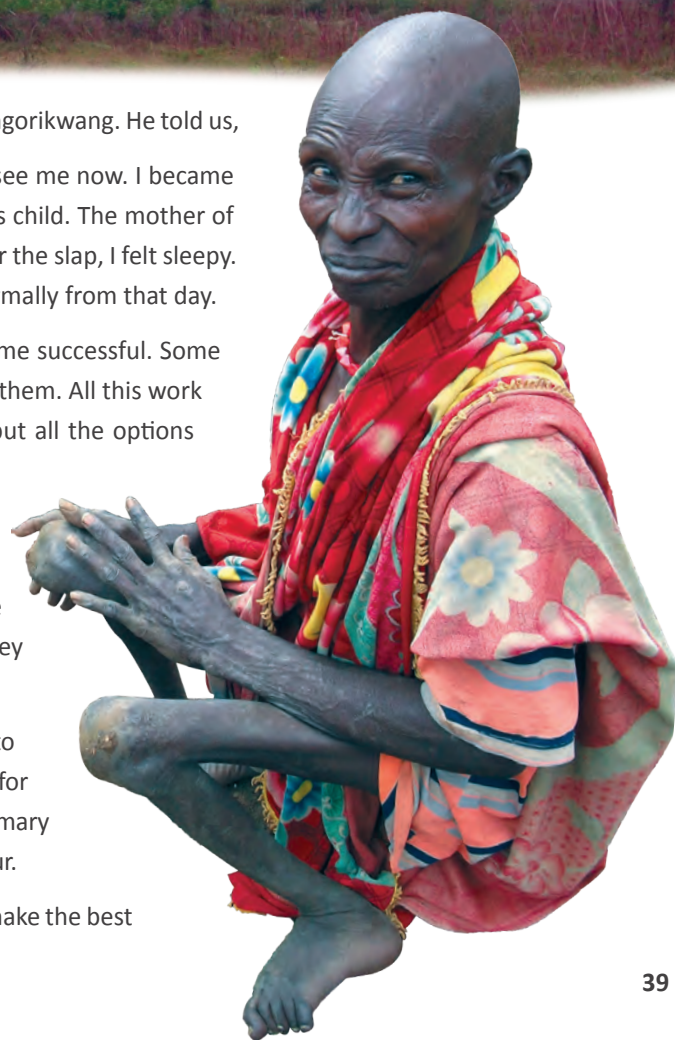
“When I was born I was walking properly, I was not lame like you see me now. I became disabled at the age of three when I fought with our neighbour’s child. The mother of the child I fought with became angry and she slapped me on the buttocks. Immediately after the slap, I felt sleepy. I went to sleep, but on waking up, I found my legs and waist paralysed. I could not walk normally from that day.

When I grew old enough, I could see my age mates going for cattle raiding and coming home successful. Some would go to town for casual labour and come home with money for their families. I envied them. All this work my friends were doing was not possible for me. I tried to think of how to earn money, but all the options seemed difficult to me.

As I sat alone under the tree, I saw some metal and a nail. I also saw a stone and got interested in it. I thought of a hammer for shaping this metal. It is through this stone and metal that I saw an opportunity. I decided to make knives and bow arrows to sell. My knives were bought mostly by women and my arrowheads by men. They became my way of survival. They made me able to marry my wife and they even took my children to school.

Time came when one of my sons finished Primary Seven, but I did not have enough money to taking him to secondary level. I took him to the District Education Officer, Abul Paul, to ask for support. He saw my situation and took my request positively. The rest of my children are in primary school. Some go with their mother for charcoal burning and some go to town for casual labour.

I do not buy these metals, I just collect the waste metals I find around the homesteads and make the best use of them. That is my way of living and survival.”





On our last day we visited Kamothing, a quarrying site, and Lotongir, a gold mining site, in Katikékile Parish. Heavy vehicles come from Jinja to Kamothing to pick up the marble stones. Lots of youth work here collecting stones and loading the trucks. The work here is so heavy. It is something people do when there is no other way to earn a living.

We were surprised how people working here and at Lotongir come from all over Karamoja. All different groups. They have united to do this work, whereas before they were fighting.

Lomer Mark told us his story.

“When I was growing up, I was a shepherd. I tried school up to some level, but money became a problem. I decided to join others in quarrying stones. When the lorries come to pick the stones, I get money. I divert the money I get into another business. The advantage of this quarrying work is that I get profits when my customer comes to buy.

We met a group of youth from behind the mountain. They push rocks down the mountain. Sometimes these rocks kill people. All the other places we went, people didn't die to make a living.

Peace allows me to run my business without disturbance. I have strength in the body, which is what you need to work well. There are stones available to quarry and roads for the vehicles to use. When my stones are not bought, if the market is down, I go for casual work in town to get money. All this needs flexibility and courage.”



Behind the mountain, different tribes, Jie, Mathaniko, are quarrying together, united. They have courage.



The people mining at Lotongir dig such deep mines and long tunnels so they can extract the gold. We thought how much strength and courage those people need for this work.

When we first approached the miners, they were wild. They didn't welcome us. They said, 'Go away! Our gold will disappear. We are tired of people coming near and giving us nothing!' Eventually though, they accepted to talk with us. There are around 200 people mining gold. They work in groups in different areas. One man starts by digging a hole. Then anyone

who uses that hole pays him a share. Miners told us that the mines sometimes kill people. Sometimes the tunnels collapse. Recently thirty people have been killed.

Others told us how they live from gold. "When I sell it, I can buy 20 litres of alcohol, take it to Turkana. Then I get two goats, Once I have 10 I'll make a kraal." Another says, "Mining is better than having a gun. A point is 40,000 shillings. If you get 4 points in one week, you can buy cows." Lokol Paul told us about his work in the mine.

"I grew up in the hands of my parents, where I had no any difficulty until I grew up. There was enough food and cattle those days, unlike these days when there is a lot of hunger. The few people who used to mine gold were looked down on by elders who owned big herds of cattle. The miners were not even allowed to fetch water from wells because the elders considered the wells a place where only their animals should drink. But as time went on, the life of the cow became rare and even those who used to have cattle resorted to gold mining.

It is because of hunger that people go to places like this. It is because of hunger that I am risking my life in this

work. Cattle raiders look for where the cow is. I am here because of gold. I look for gold to earn a living. It is better than earning a living through bad ways.

The day I am lucky, I get something for the family. But when there is no luck, I just have to stay with my hunger and wait for the following day, or else I borrow from a friend and pay back when my luck comes. Sometimes they offer you some money without expecting payment in return, just because of your good relationship.

I had no opportunity to go to school. If I had, perhaps I would be working in an office now. But I only see my life here in the gold mine."

"I'm busy! I used to be a killer. Now I've decided to earn my living by this. We need you people to help us."

Out of a big heap of soil, they found this little thing! You have to be determined!





ANALYSIS

When we returned to Moroto, we analysed the material from the 378 interviews and 16 communities. It shows how people's livelihoods are progressing. It helps us understand the opportunities that people value and those that are just things to do because of hunger. To us, a livelihood is for getting wealth, staying well, being able to eat, being able to build your family, your home and your culture.

Most people want a livelihood of livestock and crops together. In the wet season we take milk from animals while the crops grow and in the dry season milk stops and we eat our crops. Cattle and sorghum are a lifestyle and culture that our people value highly. They give food and money, and also good relations and pride. Only about half of the people have cows at present. Some people have kept some animals through the insecurity, and almost everyone else is using any extra money they earn to build a herd.

The most common livelihoods now are charcoal making and sorghum growing, followed by firewood, labouring, and then cattle. Women brew beer, cut grass and build houses and boys and men go hunting and cut fencing material. Young people use their strength to dig murram, break stones and mine gold. Specialists make grain stores and knives and arrowheads. A few warriors take part in income-generating peace processes, and educated people try to get jobs with NGOs. Most people do many things.

Heavy Work

We found that the dangerous work of mining, quarrying and going to places all over Uganda is all because of hunger. The worst is begging in Kampala. All the people who came back from the city say that they prefer to be at home, relying on their own hard work, even if some nights they go to bed hungry. Mining and quarrying are hard and people lose their lives doing such work, but they do it to regain cattle, not for its own sake.



Going down those deep holes is what you do when there is nothing else. When we saw young people struggling in those tunnels, we thought about their strength and courage and how they gain it from each other. It is common to see that a person from one district has befriended a person from another. At the mines and quarries people of every tribe work side by side and cooperate. The hardship has united them and they are willing to struggle together.

Can we talk about why people do these kinds of harsh work? Is it because it is the best way of life? We asked, why are you doing this? They said that when this peace came, all their animals were finished. They force themselves just to earn a living. They are not happy. Sometimes poverty can force you to do very heavy work to move on to other better things. If the cows increase again, people will not need to mine gold or quarry stones in dangerous ways any more. The work will remain to people who are desperate. They will always be there.

Cattle

Since we lost our cows, we are trying to catch up. Young people are struggling to achieve something to buy a cow. The youth who have cattle and those who have been given cattle by their parents are those who are able to live a good life. With cattle we can marry, plough the garden and do many different things. Cattle are a sign of pride. The Karimojong culture cannot be detached from us.



When a person only has a stick he cannot defend his animals, so now the cattle stay in kraals protected by the army. The animals have nothing to graze near to the kraal. When even the far grass is exhausted the kraal must move and army must come too. It takes negotiation because the army needs a borehole and a road for the troops. Disarmament targeted the youth and it was a very big issue for us.

People say that a cow is more important than money. They say this because with the cow you will get everything. You will get milk, butter and meat. You get dung for building and cooking fuel. You get dowry, friendships and celebrations. There is nothing you need to go and buy in the market. Even when you just look at the cow, it is like looking at everything – life.

Sorghum and other crops

Sorghum is the staple food of our people. It is something common to everyone. We eat it daily, share it, make beer and use it for cultural ceremonies. It brings unity. Even when the kraals have gone far from home they take sorghum from home as food. During harvest and cultivation there are opportunities for labour. A husband loves his wife so much when she makes beer, because she welcomes friends to come and visit and the household commands respect. It is also important when the family is performing rituals, for example when a woman is pregnant with her first born, or at the naming of a child.



The residue of malted grain is food for young children. Women can make a lot of money selling brew to people from their villages.

The nature of the soil makes a difference. For example in Iriiri the soil is fertile, so it works well for gardens. In Moroto the soil is not suitable for farming and gardens do not come out so well.

Charcoal and firewood

Most people took up charcoal burning when they lost their cows. It is a new occupation. Charcoal and firewood are ways to make money to invest in other businesses to feed the family. Everyone hunts after the harvest. Young men make granaries and cut building poles and young women cut firewood.

People said they now walk for one day to get charcoal. Trees are getting scarce. In Nadungyet, people are going to the boundaries, and people on the other side are doing the same and the two sides are meeting. There used to be trees between the two places. Even the government is fighting against charcoal. Those trees once cut will not come again. It may continue because there is need for it. If only a few people make it then there will be a demand, and people will do it. Other people will stop making charcoal if they can return to a life of cattle and sorghum.



NGO Work

Some young people are employed by NGOs for peace. They go to visit schools to show them that they have peace among them and they sing peace songs. Some make an income attending NGO meetings. Many NGOs come with their own people who take the salary they get to develop their own homes in other parts of Uganda. There is nothing left in Karimoja. If they employed Karimojong, then we would put the money into our area. When they leave they leave with everything. It is as if they were never here.



Strength and Progress

When we look at all the ways people are making a living we see their strength, courage and determination. This year the rains have been good and people have made progress. Although many are without cows, each one is working towards buying animals and paying for education. People have not left the culture of livestock keeping. They still follow their elders.

Even when you just look at a cow. You see everything in it – meat, butter, milk. It is like looking at everything – life.

Flexibility : Awowouk

Hard work : Initiative : Courage :
Determination : Physical Strength

Open mindedness : Angara Ngatameta

Thinking ahead : Strategy : Knowledge & Skill :
Wisdom : Creativity : Inspiration

Care & Knowledge : Akiithitiya Loothe*

Knowledge & Skill : Looking after things

Respect : Akereru

Making good arguments : Cooperation :
Friendship : Unity : Good counsel : Family

Law : Ngikithila

Tradition : Leadership

*Akiithitiya Loothe literally means using something with care and knowledge.



ANALYSIS

When we analysed all the stories and interviews we found a common pattern of strengths in almost all of them. We identified five main strengths; flexibility, open-mindedness, respect, care and knowledge, and law. People are using them towards building the life they want. These strengths have been mostly ignored by those who come here from outside.

Flexibility

The miners take risks to go down deep holes and work hard between life and death. Those people need strength and courage. The people quarrying stone take risks on the mountainside. A young woman who goes out for firewood is also courageous. Even when she goes out she is not scared. She doesn't look around. She goes a very far distance to get her firewood. If the young women leave in the early morning, midday they get home. Next morning at dawn they leave for the market. It shows the physical strength of the youth.

If you are creative and hardworking you can make money and buy what you need. You do not rely on only one thing to make a living, you are ready to do many things. You adjust from one activity to another. Even when you fail you persevere.

Open mindedness

Being open minded is having broad thinking and using your mind to achieve something. If you are mining gold, you should not consume the whole of what you get. You should reserve a part for the future. It means learning skills from

others, like the women who learned to use the basin and water in gold mining. Wisdom, a natural understanding of what to do, is when warriors mark the direction to walk without a compass, or when people can find water in a dry riverbed. If women make charcoal, sell it, buy grain, make beer, sell it, and buy food for their family, they are being strategic to increase the little that they have.

Our team member Naputaria has initiative. He goes hunting and uses the money from it to pay friends to help him dig murram. He saves the money from that to buy goats, then he cultivates and now he has cows. You have to have thinking and strategy for getting beyond hard work to a simpler life.

Respect between people

Even the research has brought unity among us. We have learned from each other. Since we visited those places we have made friends with the people we met, and we can build on that. When one of us is breaking stones, all his or her friends will do it for him. Old enemies support each other in the gold mines and quarries.

We go for firewood and herd together in groups for safety and company. While young men and women are doing the harvest, young girls can take charcoal to market and buy food for us. It reinforces the work. When a woman has made beer she shares it with friends.

We make peace through networks of age-mates and use our experience of war to make

arguments for peace. The fighters must agree that it is enough. If an age-set leader goes to the other side he will not be hurt because he is known. From Matheniko when he goes to meet the age-set leader of Bokora, he will be the one to be listened to. It comes automatically. Our networks go across Karamoja.

Care and Knowledge

This is about using something with care, knowledge and wisdom. Elders make sure that the grass is not finished before the animals move on to another area. They give their knowledge to younger people. When the young people went for peace they were showing wisdom. The peace has influenced everything, because it allows people to use all their strengths.

When a young man is managing his cows, and when the grass is near and the water is near, he has strength. He is rich. He is thinking about how to look after them and about getting married. He commands respect. The products of the cow can care for whatever size of family he has.

Law

In Karamoja we have laws that show the correct way of behaving. Even in the goldmines there are rules for how each person should behave next to the others. With murram it is agreed without saying that no one should take from someone else's pile, even if he leaves it for a long time. The traditional law and the system of age sets is our culture. The leaders guide the age mates in what to do. All of these rules and laws are strength, because they guide and protect our people.





conclusion

The disarmament brought us peace, but it has also brought us poverty.

The youth accepted the disarmament and people said it was good to be able to go safely in their work. But because we have not been disarmed equally, we lost our cows and we resorted to hard and risky work in mines, quarries and murram pits. And even though the raids are much less now, thieves still threaten people. Now the majority of people are getting what they can from charcoal and firewood. Mining and charcoal are not sustainable ways of making a living, and we see them only as a way back

to our proper life. We have not left the culture of livestock keeping behind; we are buying animals when we can, we are farming sorghum as we have always done, and we are still following the ways of our elders.

In our journey around the different settlements & kraals of Moroto and Napak we found our people working hard and being courageous and creative. There has been so much rain this year, and the strength of soil and rain has combined with our own strength to give us hope for the future.

We realised that most NGOs who come to develop Karamoja do not reach to the village to find out exactly what people want. We suggest that those agencies should carry out research with the people before implementing programmes.

Our team has got this knowledge in doing this research. We know what we want to do now. If we go back to the places where we visited, we can identify those ones who have the greatest strengths. We can ask them to call their brothers and sisters to ask them to join in doing what the strong ones are already doing. We can strengthen our friendship with those people and encourage them that there is something to be done. We Karimojong have our culture. It cannot be detached from us.



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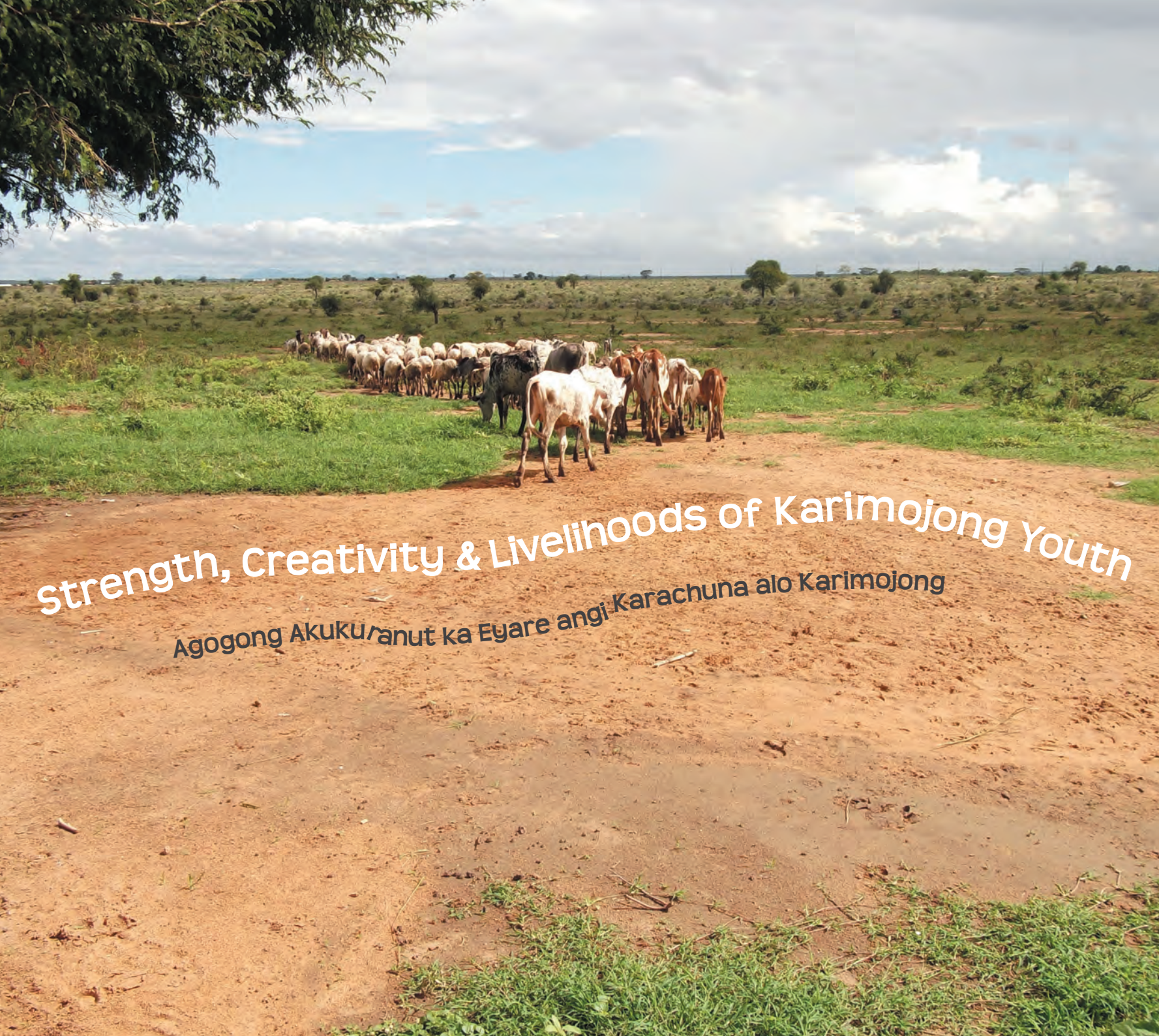


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Strength, Creativity & Livelihoods of Karimojong Youth

Agogong Akukuranut ka Eyare angi Karachuna alo Karimojong