

AMPLIFYING WOMEN'S VOICES ON PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE IN KARAMOJA (FUNDED BY EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO UGANDA)



Figure 1 Pupils of Kalapata Primary School (project beneficiaries) pose for a picture with the Guests during 2019 International Women's day Celebration in Kaabong District

AMPLIFYING WOMEN'S VOICES ON PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE IN KARAMOJA

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Introduction and Situational Analysis

This action entitled: “Amplifying Women’s voices on peace, security and justice in Karamoja” is being implemented in three Districts of Kaabong (Kaabong Town Council and Kalapata Sub County), Amudat (Karita Sub County) and Moroto (Rupa Sub County) with financial support from the European Union Delegation to Uganda.

This write-up covers the period starting 15th May 2018 to 15th May 2019. The lead action implementer is Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE) and the Co-implementer is SAFERWORLD.

Overall, between May 15, 2018 to May 15, 2019, the project has so far reached 2,667 direct beneficiaries with 1,218 males, 1,162 females and 287 youth. The overall objective of the project is *to contribute to the promotion of the rights of marginalized women and children for the realization of inclusive peace, security and justice in conflict affected communities in Karamoja sub region.*

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED SO FAR

CONDUCTING PARTICIPATORY GENDER ANALYSIS OF CONFLICTS ON PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE IN KARAMOJA 2018

The overall **Objective** of the study was to understand the perspectives of communities on how women and children’s voices contribute to issues of peace, justice and security. Conflict analysis was conducted in Kaabong Town Council, Kalapata, Karita and Rupa sub counties. A total of 250 respondents were met during the activity and these included 120 women, 55 men and 75 children from all the 3 districts of Moroto, Kaabong and Amudat.

The findings of this activity helped the implementing team on contextualising the issues specific to each community. In seeking redress for conflicts and abuse, people in Karamoja generally prefer traditional and informal institutions over formal structures. Reasons for this include the police and courts having inadequate resources and capacity to effectively respond to conflict and insecurity in the region; corruption and perceptions of corruption; and limited coordination between these institutions to objectively deal with cases. For women, this means that even the most sensitive crimes affecting them like rape, defilement, and forced/early marriage are often handled by community leaders and mostly male elders. Women’s reluctance to report these crimes to formal institutions appears to be partly because referral pathways are not clearly understood and partly because there is a high level of community pressure to resolve these cases within the community. It is also because of stigma, shame/humiliation that come along the process of handling rape and defilement cases when carrying out medical check-ups which violates the women and girls’ privacy. Nevertheless, given the inability of the police and the courts system in Karamoja to effectively serve the region, there is widespread acceptance that the traditional mechanisms provide more accessible justice, even if this may be biased against women’s individual interests and rights.¹



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Youth and children Focused group discussion in Kalapata Sub County



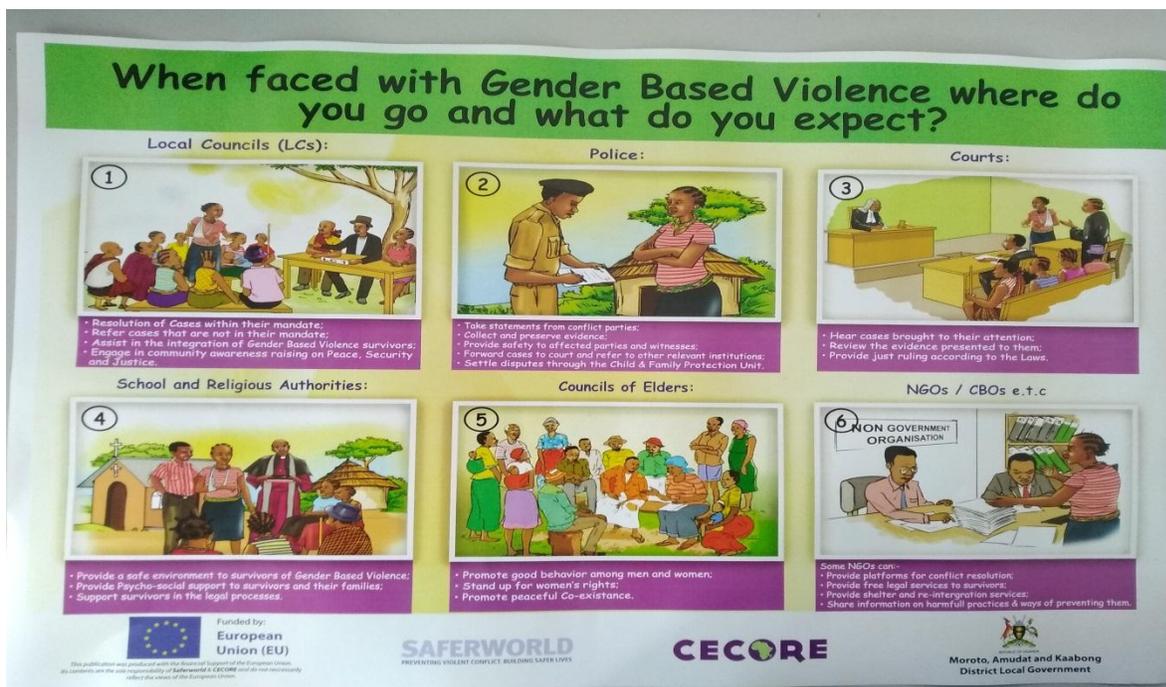
Adult focused Group Discussion in Kalapata Sub County



Key Informant Interview with LCIII Chairperson Kalapata Sub County

PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION (IEC) MATERIALS ON GENDER NORMS AND RIGHTS

Three key posters with varying messages were developed and produced in English and local languages (Ngakarimojong and Pokot). Community members including marginalised women acquired knowledge on their rights that they can use in conflict analysis and advocacy through the IEC materials. The materials are being used by the local government officials, our MDD groups and Girls-Child-led advocacy groups during their community sensitizations. The activity increased project buy-in by officials in all districts for better relations with the organisations and the project; Communities (women, girls, men and boys) are still receiving information on gender related conflict issues, property documentation which is enhancing their understanding of the link between gender norms and conflict. It is also increasing spaces for interaction between duty bearers on gender and rights with the community members.



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Women have the Right to:

Education:



Make decisions and Speak up:



Choose a partner:



Be free from Violence:



Participate and Stand for Elections:



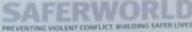
How can men support women to achieve the above rights?



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Moroto, Amudat and Kaabong
District Local Government

Property Rights and Documentation;

Property rights of both men & women includes;

- The right to use land and other property like livestock;
- The right to protect the property;
- The right to get income from the land and other property;
- The right to pass over the property to one's successors and
- The Right to make a will.

Property documentation;

- This is the process of recording / writing property rights on paper;
- When can you document property?
 - > During sharecropping;
 - > When renting mining pits and gardens;
 - > Handing over responsibility to a care taker;
 - > During Family meetings on property related issues;
 - > When making a will.

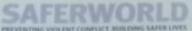
Who carries out documentation?

- Both women and men have the right to participate in documentation of property;
- The right to documentation of property is in the national laws;
- People can visit the office of community services, LCs, elders, councilors for assistance and witnessing some of the documentation of their property.

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ORGANISING MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA AWARENESS RAISING ON GENDER NORMS AND RIGHTS



MDD practicing



MDD performing in the community outreach



Field project officer CECORE MC during International Women's Day



Lady Comfort sings as some guests dance – On Women Rights

The aim of formation of MDD groups was to sensitize the community and the other duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of women and children for transformation in social and gender norms that cause violent conflict and frustrate the ability of women and youth to participate in leadership and decision making. It is important to note that songs, dance and drama are often used by communities in Karamoja to convey information, stories and lessons.

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Therefore, the performances have allowed for the issues to be contextualized for the community members and provided them with an interactive and alternative approach to internalize community issues related to women marginalization. The activity involved the formation of 1 group of local Karimojong artists of 3 members (2 males and 1 female) and 4 MDD groups composed of 128 members (81 females and 47 males) and 3 local music artists. **Songs to be uploaded on the website soon**



MDD members performing



MDD members performing



Impoverished households due to lack of education (Drama)



Witchcraft as one of the cause of gender discrimination(Drama)

GIRL-CHILD-LED ADVOCACY GROUPS:

During the interface of the project implementing partners and the communities it became urgent to address the needs of the girl-child since she seemed to have been on flight, this was because many girl-children were suffering a lot of human rights-implied violations such as child labour, denial of education, forced and early marriages, rape, defilement, child trafficking, child neglect and exposure to high crime exploitation among others. As a result 4 Girl-Child-led advocacy groups were formed by CECORE in Kaabong District composed of 60 members; 2 groups out of school called youth mothers and 2 in - school pupils. These groups were trained in conflict analysis, gender analysis and advocacy skills.

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It is significant to note that all these groups were very active during the commemoration of the International Women's Day and have continued to reach out to fellow children, parents and to rest of the community members. This mode of community awareness is becoming popular and is identified with the project progress, and thus CECORE and partners will continue supporting more of such Girl-Child-led advocacy activities and help local artists produce more awareness songs. **Poem to be uploaded on the website (in recorded voice or video clip)**



Girl-Child pupils of Kalapata Primary School perform a moving poem about a woman during International Women's Day celebration in Lotim Sub County, Kaabong District.



The pupils sang a song that moved the guests to tears during the International Women's Day celebration in Kaabong District.



RADIO TALK SHOWS ON GENDER NORMS, RIGHTS AND CONFLICTS

Radio talk shows is one of the ways of creating project awareness and advocacy on the key issues faced by women in relations to peace, security and justice in Karamoja. Two out of nine radio talk shows have so far been



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conducted at Akica FM (Moroto) and Radio Voice of Karamoja 92.7 FM (Kotido)

The involvement of female led panelists to campaign on women issues was a success factor to the radio talk shows as was the mix of panelists-Political, Technical and the Community that clearly articulated their voices in a balanced manner.

TRAINING TO CONFLICT AFFECTED COMMUNITIES, CSOS, CBOS AND COMMUNITY DRIVEN ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

A total of 124 project beneficiaries (54 women, 40 men and 20 youth) were trained.

The Training Covered: Conflict Transformation, resolution and analysis; Human Rights, Women Rights, Children Rights, advocacy and networking skills; land rights and documentantion; Understanding of key concepts and strategies on peace, human rights and justice and applying them in the Karamoja context, Collaboration and encouraging the transfer of unified campaign messages for greater impact for instance the question of land rights, amplifying women voices, justice and Increasing the capacity of communities, especially women and their leaders, to analyze and advocate for improved their human rights situations, including those who are marginalized in their communities.

The key community conflicts highly ranked are; wife beating, child neglect, denial of property for women, conjugal rights denial and denial of education to children especially the girl-child.

Action plans came out of the training and most items have been executed by most trained beneficiaries, as 8 out of 10 trained people say that they were changed and transformed due to the trainings. During the joint monitoring visit most individuals confirmed to have been transformed following the trainings



Figure 2 Community Representatives from Rupa Sub County trained in Moroto

Some Testimonies from the Trained Project Beneficiaries

NADUK BETTY (the LC1 Chairperson – (called the Woman Chairman) was very grateful to have attended CECORE's trainings on conflict transformation, analysis and resolution and gender issues. She stated that she is now confident in handling village conflict issues. She said that, many families prefer to come to her before taking the cases to courts. When asked how she does this, Betty stated that she acts like a mediator and her strength is being a good listener and then allowing the conflicting parties to opt for reconciliation. Betty also appreciates and appeals that the MDD groups be supported with income generation activities to keep them together

ENGOR GODWILL: one of the beneficiaries of the trainings and MDD activities is very glad that the project came and says it was timely. She says she used to be quarrelsome, chaotic, fighter for which she nearly killed her husband due to rumours and she was then regarded as a community misfit. But now she is becoming respected due to the CECORE's EU supported programme. She further says she does not get involved in quarrels, fights and rumours anymore. She is happy to have been identified as the mentor for the young mothers. She states that this is helping her to remain disciplined.

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CHRISTINE CHEPUKAT now has 50 goats as her own property. She is waiting for them to fatten then she sells them so she can buy 5 cows. Christine made a personal commitment and resolution after the training that she wanted, as a woman, to buy her own livestock. An elder TALAKAPEL KORUWA said that he is now able to freely share issues and property with his wife. He stated that he changed since the training. This elder made a personal commitment to share property with his wife immediately after the training in Amudat District held on the 14th September 2018. This is contrary to the Pokot culture i.e. women owning livestock but our work with them as made some see the light. PAUL LORENG LOTNGORIA took all his 8 children to school immediately after the training. He made a personal commitment to take his children to school after noticing that he has been denying them a right to education and upon realising that education would turn life positively due to the current trends and he now does not want his children to suffer in future.

DELIVERING TRAININGS ON GENDER CONFLICT SENSITIVITY AND RESOLUTION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS

Three trainings were conducted in Kaabong, Amudat and Moroto Districts, A total of 96 beneficiaries were trained (38 females and 58 males). The following categories were present in the training: District Councilors, District Executive Committee, DCDOs, and the army, Prisons, Police, Deputy RDC, CDOs, LCIII Chairperson, SAS and LCV among others. These are the core decision makers and duty bearers in the target area. **The following topics were covered;** Stages of conflict, Conflict analysis, resolution, transformation and Responses to conflicts;; Human Rights, Women Rights, Children Rights; roles of bearer and right holder's rights among others.

The training has increased the capacity of local government actors to understand their responsibilities as duty bearers, as well as to comprehensively analyze conflict and the rights of women in post-conflict settings. They are now equipped with the skills to fulfill their roles as duty bearers, promote the rights of women, and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner and apply conflict sensitive approaches in their work. The training for local government authorities emphasized the application of conflict and gender sensitivity in development processes to ensure that causes of conflicts, injustices and insecurity that are linked to gender are adequately understood and prioritized by government. Participant in all the 3 districts came up with action plans to be mainstreamed in their office schedules to enhance women's voices on peace, security and justice.

PROVIDING ACCOMPANIMENT SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES AND CSOS ON RESULTING ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

The field project officers continued to follow up the action beneficiaries to ascertain the level of progress of community based action plans and give support where needed. Most project beneficiaries who were trained (90%) became members of the Music Dance and Drama groups in order to continue sensitizing the communities together. During the follow up the field project officers were able to guide in shaping the messages passed by the MDD and other advocates like the local artists to the community having the following in mind: conflict sensitivity, gender sensitivity, cultural sensitivity and only using proactive approaches in the process. During the process of follow up, there were many testimonies on how reporting cases had increased



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compared to before, and that there was evidence that women voiced out their issues in a more meaningful way in public meetings than before, the fact that most community members had embraced the project and were willing to become change agents.

FACILITATING COMMUNITY LEVEL TALKING CIRCLES TO DISCUSS LOCAL CONFLICTS, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, FACTORS LIMITING WOMEN FROM THE FULL ENJOYMENT OF THEIR RIGHTS

The talking circles were organized as a form of community dialogue between the rights holders (community members) and the duty bearers (Lower level local government staff). The objectives of the talking circles were: To find key challenges women face in Karamoja Districts and to learn together better ways on conflict resolution mechanism

The issue covered: During the talking circles the participants were given chance to list all the challenges they had in the community in relation to peace, justice and security. The ranking was done and the following topics were discussed: Forced and early girl-child marriage, forced elopement/courtship rape, girl child education, women property rights, relations between the Dodoth and the Turkana, re-armament of the Karachuna, street children in Kaabong Town Council, alcoholism and FGM.

SOME PICTURES DURING THE TALKING CIRCLES



The members of St. Monica Women's group attentive as members deliberate.



Talking circles being used by St. Monica women's group during their annual meeting



APALONGOR delivers during a talking circle



LODUKAE giving his opinions during a talking

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circle

JOINT PROJECT MONITORING AND EXPENDITURE VERIFICATION EXERCISE

Besides the routine project monitoring the team had a joint monitoring and evaluation exercise. A tour of all the project location was done to get the feel of the project progress. It was very interesting to note the testimonies from most project beneficiaries on how the project had impacted on their behaviour, beliefs and actions. Interesting to note was the fact that most traditional and structural practices that undermined women were being challenged at community level.



Monitoring team interacting with Project beneficiaries in Karita Sub-county, Amudat District

At the end of the first year project implementation, Expenditure verification was conducted by TAM Associates. The objective of the expenditure verification exercise was to match the field based information, records of purchases/procurement and the documentation of accountabilities. The exercise was two-phased, record verification in the office and the field verification at the community and field office levels, took place between July 14 and 28, 2019.



TAM Associate staff interacts with project beneficiaries in Kalapata Sub County –Kaabong District

3.0 ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE PROJECT (JULY 2019 TO MAY 2020)

The following activities will be implemented in the second year of the project.

Continued dissemination of IEC materials

Continued Music Dance and Drama activities and continue with Girl-Child-led Advocacy in the target communities.

Radio Talk Shows

Continue with Talking Circles at community and district level

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Facilitate Community parliaments to discuss issues of Rights, Peace, Security and Justice

National level Advocacy for women's voices on Peace, Security and Justice in Karamoja.

Other projects support activities to be done will be: Routine project monitoring and evaluation, Project Final Evaluation.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The project is creating impact in the target location and there is constant need to have the project scaled up to other areas as well. The approaches used are good for future intervention for CECORE and partners.

