



# Multisector Needs Assessment Karamoja Region - Uganda

May 2023

## CONTENTS

<b>Summary of Key Findings</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Household demographics</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Food security and nutrition</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Access to Food .....	5
Consumption Coping Strategies .....	5
Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women .....	7
<b>Livelihoods</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Source of Income.....	7
Livelihood Coping Strategies .....	8
Challenges to Pastoralism .....	9
<b>WASH</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Access to Water.....	10
Access to WASH Facilities .....	11
Access to Hygiene and Sanitation .....	12
<b>Protection and Humanitarian Assistance</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Protection .....	13
Humanitarian Assistance.....	13
<b>Social Cohesion</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Contacts .....	17

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

- **98% of respondents said they did not have enough food to eat in the past 7 days.** 41% of interviewees reported that the main constraint to accessing food was the unavailability of money. Similarly, 41% of respondents reported poor climatic conditions, resulting in poor crop yield.
- Almost all households (96%) were employing either a medium or high degree of coping strategies, highlighting that many people are needing to adopt more frequent and/or extreme coping mechanisms to meet their immediate food needs.
- Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) scores highlighted that **the number of women who achieved minimum dietary diversity was extremely low.** Only 8% of women reached this in Moroto, 6% in Nabilatuk, and none in Napak.

**98% of respondents did not have enough to eat in the past 7 days.**



### LIVELIHOODS

- In many households, the loss of livestock has disrupted the traditional roles of men. As a result, **households have diversified their economic activities**, such as engaging in casual labour outside of the livestock sector, selling firewood/charcoal, and local brewing. **Women have increasingly taken on a more prominent role in these economic activities**, leading to a significant shift in their contributions to the household income.
- **Women in 94% of surveyed households contribute to the family income**, compared to men who are only part of household income generation in 60% of households.
- The main sources of income are charcoal burning/sales (27%), casual labour related to agricultural activities (25%) and selling firewood (19%). Both men and women are engaged in casual agricultural labour and charcoal burning at similar levels, with the primary difference being that women were much more likely to engage in selling firewood (56%), and men more likely to provide casual labour for construction (40%).

### WASH

- Only 1 out of 10 households has access to the minimum humanitarian standard of 15 litres of water per person per day<sup>1</sup>.
- **89% of households do not have a toilet or latrine of their own.** 67% of households share their latrines with other households. Of those, the majority (68%) share it with between one to three families.
- 43% of households with children under the age of 5 reported they had diarrhea within the past two weeks. Additionally, 91% of households do not have a place to wash their hands.
- On average 30% of households stated there has been conflict or fight over water use in the community or with the neighbouring community.

**9 out of 10 people do not have enough water.**



### PROTECTION & HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The most cited major challenges in terms of protection in the community are the **insecurity of lives and animals, followed by the presence of armed groups and/or raiders, and domestic violence.** 89% of surveyed respondents stated they had not received any humanitarian assistance in the past 30 days. Of the 11% who said that they humanitarian assistance reached them, 59% received food aid and 28% agricultural inputs (such as tools and seeds).

**89% did not receive any humanitarian aid in the past month.**



99% of the respondents reported not being able to meet the basic needs of their households in the past 30 days.

<sup>1</sup> [Sphere Humanitarian Standards](#)

## BACKGROUND

**66%**

of people in Karamoja are living under the poverty line.

The Karamoja sub-region in North-East Uganda is one of the poorest areas of the country, with 66% of the population living below the poverty line, and food poverty levels at 75%.<sup>2</sup> Karamoja has been affected by decades of conflict in the recent past, and insecurity continues to impact on lives and livelihoods. The population predominantly relies on livestock and crop production as a source of livelihoods, in addition to mining, stone quarrying, and the sale of natural resources products.

In August 2022, 25% of the Karamoja population were reported to have been experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity. The latter is mainly driven by climatic shocks affecting the agricultural production with drought or floods, pests and diseases that have been affecting livestock. Furthermore, the low purchasing power of residents play a big role, coupled with the high market prices on essential food and non-food items, as well as the limited economic opportunities. The area has also been marked by localized conflict and insecurity, driven by raids on livestock.<sup>3</sup>

**1 in 4**

people in Karamoja are currently suffering from acute food insecurity.

This situation prompted Welthungerhilfe (WHH) to conduct a multi-sector needs assessment to provide an updated understanding of the humanitarian situation in Karamoja. The assessment provides information on emerging and increasing needs in the area, highlighting the dire conditions many people are facing and seeking to help response organisations better adapt their programming to meet these urgent needs.

This report details key assessment findings, highlighting a severe level of unmet needs. It draws a deeply concerning picture of widespread food shortages and insecurity, extensive use of negative coping mechanisms in response to this situation, and poor water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions. It also details protection risks and the impact of the early lean season and insecurity on community unity and divisions.

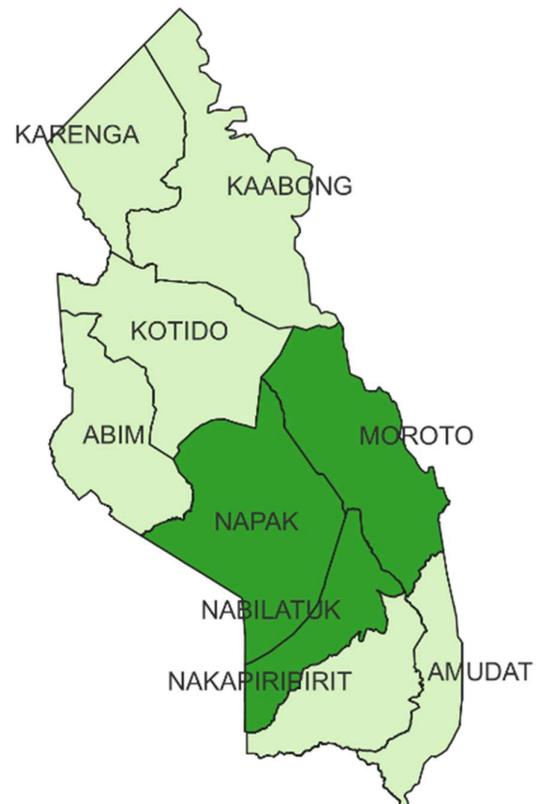
## METHODOLOGY

The needs assessment was conducted by Welthungerhilfe (WHH) over March and April 2023. The assessment combines survey data from 350 households (covering 2,118 people in total) across Moroto, Nabilatuk, and Napak districts within the Karamoja region, as well as the results of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) held during the same timeframe. The survey included a wide range of topics, with questions specifically focused on food security, nutrition, livelihoods, coping mechanisms, WASH, protection risks, and humanitarian assistance more broadly.



**350**  
households were surveyed for this assessment.

**Map: Karamoja districts included in needs assessment**



<sup>2</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics. Uganda National Survey Report 2019/2020

<sup>3</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). Uganda - IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis in Teso and Karamoja, June 2022 - January 2023

## HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

Over half of the households surveyed (55%) had between five and seven members, and 22% had eight or more, the remaining 22% had less than five members in their households. On average, **45% of households reported that they were female-headed**. 66% of households reported having one or two children below the age of five, and 32% reported having a person with physical or mental disabilities who cannot work. A full breakdown on such vulnerability criteria by district is provided below:

### Percentage of households surveyed who reported selected vulnerability criteria:

Status	District			Total
	Moroto	Nabilatuk	Napak	
Households with children under the age of 5	73%	83%	74%	76%
Households with pregnant or lactating women	53%	61%	56%	56%
Households with elderly members	31%	30%	42%	35%
Households with members with physical or mental disabilities	29%	40%	33%	35%
Households with members with chronic illness or serious medical conditions	35%	14%	14%	21%
Household with orphans under the age of 18	28%	25%	25%	26%

## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

### Access to Food

The findings from the assessment indicate severe constraints in accessing sufficient food, raising significant concerns about the food security and nutrition status of the population. An overwhelming 98% of participants reported not having enough food to eat during the past seven days.

**98%**

of respondents did not have enough food in the past seven days

Households reported a number of key constraints that contributed to this situation. 82% of respondents across all districts cited a combination of a lack of money to buy food, and poor climatic conditions resulting in poor crop yields. The latter constraint was particularly high in Napak, where over 55% of households cited this issue. Unfavourable weather patterns, such as drought or excessive rainfall, have led to reduced crop yields. Pests and diseases affecting animal and crop production was also mentioned by 12% of respondents in Nabilatuk.

Respondents in focus group discussions also highlighted that many households have experienced substantial losses of livestock due to increased cattle raids, leading to heightened food insecurity. The loss of livestock not only impacts the primary source of livelihood for many communities but also diminishes their ability to generate income and access food. The insecurities prevailing in the region, fuelled by these incidents, contribute to a pervasive sense of fear and anxiety among the population. This link between insecurity and food insecurity underscores the urgent need for comprehensive interventions that address the underlying causes of violence and instability.

“The increased theft and insecurity have contributed to anxiety and mental health issues. We are living in constant fear of bandits.”

*FGD respondent, Moroto.*

### Consumption Coping Strategies

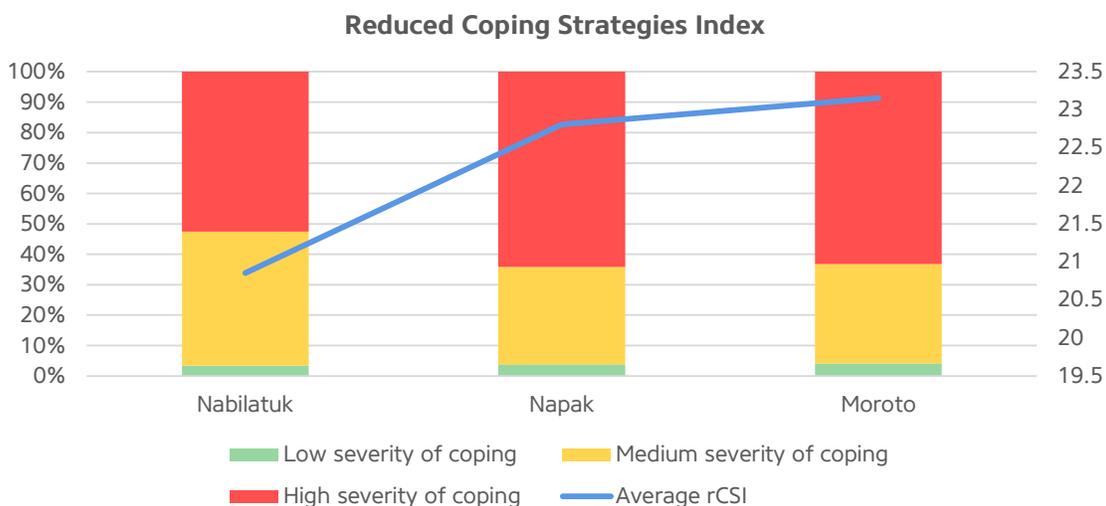
Consumption-based coping is when households respond to a lack of food or money to buy food by adopting negative coping strategies such as relying on less preferred and less expensive foods, borrowing food, or being supported by friends or relatives, reducing portion sizes, limiting the number of daily meals, or restricting adults' consumption to allow children to eat. The reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) measures the frequency and severity of these five food consumption strategies households engage in due to food shortage in the seven days prior to the survey and are

incorporated into a score from zero to 56: the higher the rCSI score, the more frequent and/or extreme coping mechanisms are adopted.

**96%**

of respondents are employing medium to high degree of coping strategies.

The results show that most households have engaged in such strategies to cope with the situation: almost all respondents (96%) of households surveyed were either employing a medium or high degree of coping strategies, highlighting that many households are needing to adopt more frequent and/or extreme coping mechanisms to meet their immediate food needs. Households with at least one or more members who are pregnant or lactating women, persons with disabilities, or persons with chronic illness had an average rCSI score of 2-3 points higher, and households with more than two children under five had scored on average over 4 points higher. This indicates such households are having to employ a higher severity of coping strategies.



Looking at each strategy, reducing the number of meals eaten in a day was most often used in Moroto (38%) and Napak (46%). In Nabilatuk, the strategy used most was relying on less preferred and less expensive foods (48%). Reducing the portion sizes at mealtimes was the second most used strategy in Moroto (33%), Nabilatuk (28%), and Napak (35%). This was then followed by relying on less preferred and less expensive foods as the third most used strategy Moroto (27%) and Napak (34%). In Nabilatuk, the third most employed strategy was reducing the number of meals eaten in a day (28%).

**Different Coping Mechanisms Used:**

	District			Total
	Moroto	Nabilatuk	Napak	
Rely on less preferred and less expensive foods.	95%	97%	93%	95%
Borrow food or rely on help from a friend or relative.	59%	50%	72%	60%
Reduce portion size at mealtimes.	84%	75%	78%	80%
Restrict consumption by adults for small children to eat.	87%	80%	81%	83%
Reduce number of meals eaten in a day.	65%	41%	68%	58%
Temporarily send children to relatives/neighbours. <sup>4</sup>	38%	34%	50%	40%

<sup>4</sup> The coping strategy of temporarily sending children to relatives or neighbors is not used as part of calculating rCSI but was collected to provide additional supplementary information.

Most households are forced to employ multiple coping strategies for their survival. Indeed, more than half of all households in Moroto (51%) and in Napak (55%) reported using five to six coping mechanisms. In Nabilatuk, 51% of respondents reported relying on three to four coping mechanisms. In addition, focus group participants reported picking wild fruits and vegetables to feed their families. In some cases, diarrhea and other diseases were mentioned because of this practice.

>80%

of mothers and fathers are not eating enough in order to ensure their children can eat

## Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women

The Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) is an indicator of nutrition diversity used for women aged between 15 to 49 years old<sup>5</sup>. The MDD-W is based on ten food groups<sup>6</sup> and is considered the standard for measuring population-level dietary diversity in women of reproductive age. According to the MDD-W, women who have consumed at least five of the ten possible food groups over a 24-hour recall period are classified as having minimally adequate diet diversity.

The percentage of women surveyed who achieved minimum dietary diversity was extremely low in all districts, raising further concerns about the food security and nutrition situation. Only 8% of women reached this in Moroto, 6% in Nabilatuk, and none in Napak.

## LIVELIHOODS

### Source of Income

Surveyed households predominantly reported their main source of income comes from charcoal burning and sales (27%), casual labour related to agricultural activities (25%), or firewood sales (19%). These income sources are often unreliable and result in low earnings.

Respondents relying on charcoal burning and sales to diversify their household income are particularly vulnerable due to their dependence on the availability of trees for charcoal production. Furthermore, these activities can have adverse environmental impacts, contributing to deforestation and soil degradation, and are often subject to restrictions on tree cutting. The market for charcoal is limited in local markets since the majority of households use firewood.

Similarly, casual labour related to agricultural activities, while a common source of income, is often characterized by low wages and seasonal variability. Agricultural labour is highly dependent on weather conditions and the agricultural cycle, leading to periods of low employment opportunities and income instability for households.



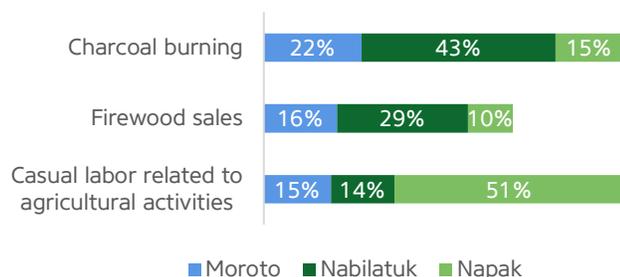
*Casual labour related to agricultural activities is often associated with low wages and seasonal variability.*

The demand for firewood remains high as a significant portion of the rural population in Karamoja relies on firewood for cooking purposes. This income source likewise faces significant challenges. While fuels like charcoal are primarily produced for sale, the market for firewood sales can be narrow because most households collect firewood themselves rather than purchasing it. The availability of firewood is also directly linked to deforestation, and the demand for firewood can vary depending on the availability of fuel alternatives and local customs.

<sup>5</sup> FAO and FHI 360. Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women: A Guide for Measurement.

<sup>6</sup> The 10 food groups are classified amongst (1) grains, roots, and tubers, (2) pulses, (3) nuts and seeds, (4) dairy products, (5) meat, poultry and fish, (6) eggs, (7) dark leafy greens and vegetables, (8) other vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables, (9) other vegetables, and (10) other fruits.

### Main Source of Income for Households



The findings highlight the importance of income diversification in Karamoja, with households engaging in multiple income-generating activities. However, it is crucial to ensure the sustainability of livelihoods, and limit the environmental impact of activities such as charcoal burning and firewood sales. Promoting alternative livelihood options, improving agricultural productivity, and supporting income-generating initiatives aligned with sustainable practices can enhance livelihood resilience and reduce dependency on less sustainable income sources.

The traditional roles of men have been disrupted due to the loss of livestock, pushing many households to seek alternative sources of income. As a result, households have diversified into non-livestock sectors, including engaging in casual labour outside of livestock-based agriculture, selling firewood/charcoal, and local brewing<sup>7</sup>. Women have increasingly taken on a more prominent role in these economic activities, leading to a significant shift in their contributions to the household income. Women in 94% of surveyed households contribute to the family income, compared to men who are only part of household income generation in 60% of households.

**>90%**

of women work more than three jobs. For men the number is lower (>50%)

“The youth are vulnerable to insecurity because they are the ones around the livestock which are the target of the raiders.”

*FGD respondent, Napak.*

Women predominantly work in the areas of casual labour related to agriculture (62%), firewood sales (56%), and charcoal burning (46%). Men who undertake paid work also predominantly work in the areas of casual labour related to agriculture (53%) and charcoal burning (38%), but in contrast are much more likely to provide casual labour for the construction sector (40%),

13% of households stated children are engaged in paid work. Those who work are most likely to be engaged in casual labour related to agriculture (75%), firewood sales (58%), and charcoal burning (35%).

### Livelihood Coping Strategies

The assessment sheds light on the various livelihood coping strategies adopted by households in different areas of Karamoja to meet their essential needs. Tracking these different strategies helps us to better understand how people are coping with shocks and how their needs are likely to change over time. Many of these strategies signal that household resources are diminishing, which may compromise their ability to meet food and other essential needs. These strategies are grouped into escalating severity categories of, “stress”, “crisis”, and “emergency”.

District	Not used	Stress	Crisis	Emergency
<b>Moroto</b>	13%	77%	53%	50%
<b>Nabilatuk</b>	13%	59%	45%	45%
<b>Napak</b>	7%	61%	40%	50%
<b>All households</b>	11%	78%	40%	42%

In all districts the percentage of households in stress, crisis, and emergency severity is extremely high. Many households are plainly operating with minimal resources.

<sup>7</sup> While a comparatively stable economic activity, especially for women, the expansion of alcohol production, sale, and consumption has been documented to have negative effects in areas within Karamoja. See Tufts and USAID. Alcohol Consumption, Production and Sale in Karamoja.

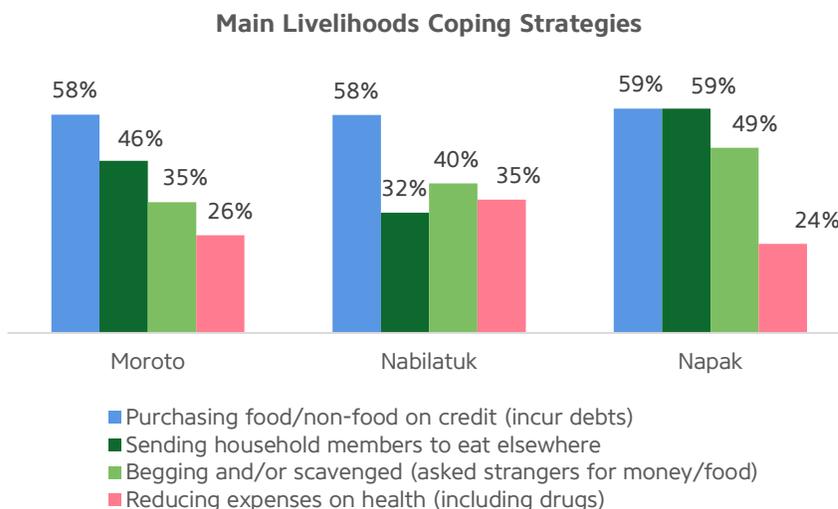
Looking at the individual coping strategies employed, the most used strategy reported was purchasing food or non-food items on credit, incurring debts as a means of survival (58%). This indicates the financial strain experienced by households and their critical measures to meet their basic needs.

Sending a household member to eat elsewhere emerged as a coping strategy for 45% of respondents on average and up to 59% of respondents in Napak. A significant proportion of households rely on external support or communal arrangements to ensure access to food.

This is further underlined by the fact that 40% of respondents reported engaging in begging and/or scavenging to meet essential needs and was again highest in Napak with 49% of respondents there. This highlights the extent to which households are pushed to seek alternative means of obtaining their basic needs.

Analysing the coping strategies specific to each area provides further insights into the localized dynamics at hand:

The findings highlight the dire circumstances faced by households in Karamoja and the urgency of targeted interventions to address food insecurity and the associated coping strategies.



## Challenges to Pastoralism

Livestock ownership among households varies across Moroto, Nabilatuk, and Napak. In Moroto, 48% of households possess livestock, 25% in Nabilatuk, and 40% in Napak. These figures reflect the significant role of livestock in the economy and livelihoods of the Karamoja region, which is predominantly pastoralist.

Understanding the primary challenges faced by these communities provides deeper insights into their unique circumstances. Insecurity and animal raids emerge as the most commonly reported concerns, affecting a vast majority of respondents in all three areas, with 93% in Moroto, 97% in Nabilatuk, and 95% in Napak. This reflects the historical context of the Karamoja region, which has experienced periods of conflict and inter-community tensions that contribute to livestock theft and insecurity.

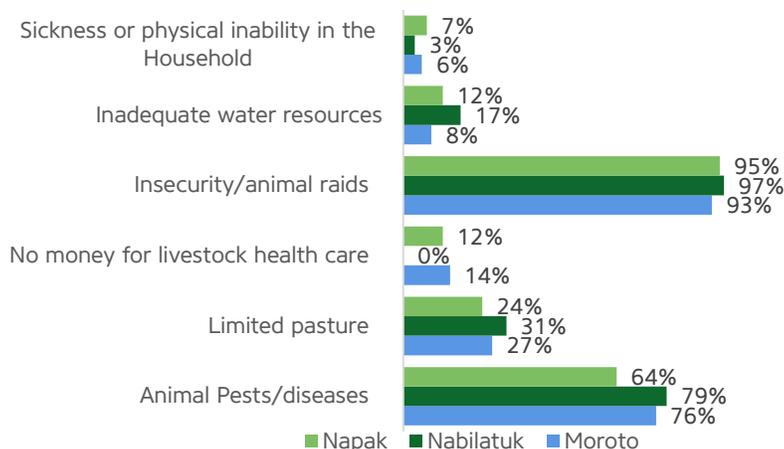
The second most prevalent challenge in livestock breeding across all three areas is animal pests and diseases, affecting 76% in Moroto, 79% in Nabilatuk, and 64% in Napak. This highlights the vulnerability of livestock

to various diseases and pests in the region, which can have detrimental impacts on their health and productivity.

The limited availability of pasture, cited by 27% in Moroto, 31% in Nabilatuk, and 24% in Napak, further underscores the ecological and environmental challenges faced by pastoralist communities in the Karamoja region. The arid and semi-arid nature of the landscape poses constraints on the availability of sufficient grazing land, affecting livestock nutrition and overall herd management.

Financial constraints for livestock health care, reported by 14% in Moroto and 12% in Napak, reflect the economic

### Challenges to pastoralism



realities of these communities. Limited financial resources and access to veterinary services can hinder effective livestock health management, potentially impacting the overall well-being and productivity of the herds.

Moreover, inadequate water resources emerged as a shared concern across all three areas, with 17% of respondents in Nabilatuk, 8% in Moroto, and 12% in Napak highlighting this issue. The semi-arid climate of the Karamoja region, characterized by erratic rainfall patterns and limited water sources, poses significant challenges in ensuring access to sufficient water for both humans and livestock.

These findings provide valuable insights into the livestock landscape and the complex challenges faced by communities in the Karamoja region. It underscores the need for holistic and context-specific interventions that address not only the immediate challenges but also the underlying socio-economic and environmental factors that impact livestock-based livelihoods.

## WASH

### Access to Water

98% of the water used for domestic purposes (e.g., cooking, washing, livestock) comes from the same source as water used for drinking. Focus group participants also highlighted cases where people and livestock shared the same source of drinking water.

**80% of the water source for drinking and domestic purposes come from deep boreholes**, with a small percentage of water coming from tap/piped water into dwelling (9%), and public tap or water fountain (5%).

“People and livestock share the same water sources which is not a good practice for good hygiene.”

*FGD respondent, Moroto.*

People consume around **8 litres of water per day on average (Sphere standard is 15 litres).**



A large majority (88%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with the water supplied from their main source, stating that it is generally acceptable and available in sufficient quantities throughout the year. However, despite this positive perception, when analysing the daily water usage, most households (over 90%) reported consuming less than the recommended Sphere standard

(over 90%) reported consuming less than the recommended Sphere standard of 15 litres per day per individual. The average water consumption per person per day in Moroto, Nabilatuk, and Napak was similar, with figures of 8.02 litres, 8.07 litres, and 8.55 litres, respectively.

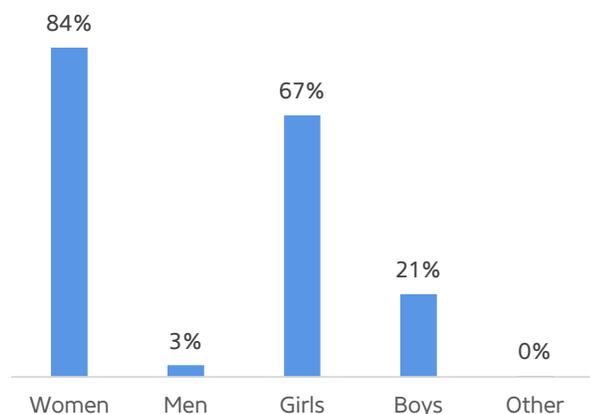
It is worth noting that water consumption tends to be lower in pastoralist communities compared to others, as supported by field observations. This can be attributed to certain factors such as the frequency of cooking, bathing, and handwashing not always being a regular routine. Additionally, in such communities, men and boys often rely on rivers and other natural water sources for bathing purposes.

- In Nabilatuk, 31% of respondents said that they normally pay for the water they use. When asked how much they paid for water per month, 94% said between 1000 and 2000 UGX.
- In Napak, 25% of respondents said that they normally pay for the water they use. Most respondents (78%) said they paid between 1000 and 2000 UGX per month.
- In Moroto, 20% of respondents said that they normally pay for the water they use. Most respondents (93%) said they paid between 1000 and 2000 UGX per month.



*Most people get their water from boreholes or wells. Only few people can consume the recommended Sphere standard of 15 litres per day.*

### Who is responsible for collecting water in your household?



Women are most likely to be responsible for collecting water in their households (84%), followed by girls at 67%<sup>8</sup>.

Many respondents in Moroto (45%) and in Napak (47%) stated that the activity of fetching water and coming back took less than 15 minutes. In Nabilatuk, 50% of respondents said it took between 15 and 30 minutes.

A minority in each district stated that it took longer than 30 minutes: 18% in Moroto, 28% in Nabilatuk, and 29% in Napak. Notably, 11% and 13% of respondents in Moroto and Napak respectively said it took them between one to two hours to make the return journey.

Approximately 16% of households felt that collecting water had an adverse effect, mostly those from households who had longer journeys. Households in Moroto predominantly reported the highest levels of adverse effects and risks, including: 12%

reporting physical risks to those undertaking the journey (2% in Nabilatuk and no one in Napak), 12% stating there no time for other activities (4% in Nabilatuk and 8% in Napak), and 8% stating it disrupted children’s education (also 8% in Nabilatuk and 4% in Napak).

Many respondents reported conflict or fights over water use in the community or with the neighbouring community, a significant minority in all districts stated yes: 40% in Nabilatuk, 27% in Moroto and 25% in Napak.

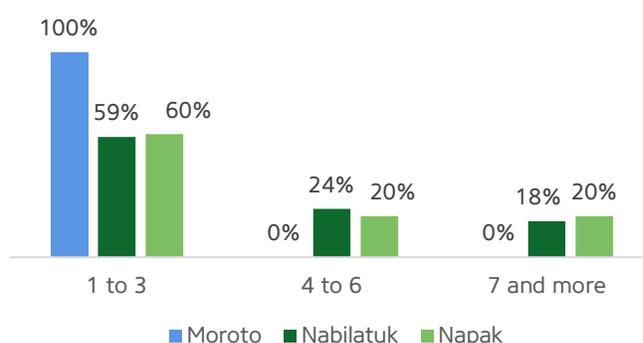
- In Nabilatuk and Napak nearly all respondents said that the disputes were predominantly between users for domestic purposes.
- In Moroto 68% of respondents also said that the disputes were predominantly between those using it for domestic purposes, however 15% mentioned disputes between herders and farmers, and 10% between those using it for domestic purposes and farmers.

### Access to WASH Facilities

89% of households do not have and use a toilet or latrine of their own. Only 20% of respondents in Nabilatuk, 10% in Napak and 5% in Moroto stated that they owned their own latrine or a toilet. Roughly 75% of households who own their own latrines or toilets in Moroto and Nabilatuk, and 45% of those in Napak, share them with other households.

The type of latrine used is predominantly the traditional pit latrine, except for 9% of residents in Nabilatuk and 18% in Napak who use improved pit latrines.

### Number of Households sharing the same latrine

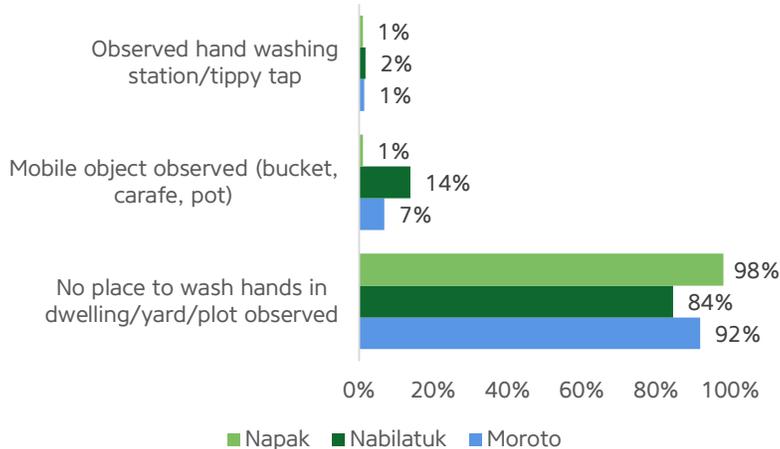


“Some latrines are incomplete because of our inability to get poles; insecurity has also deprived us from fetching wood or construction material in the forest because of raiders. As a result, households share the same latrines.”

*FGD respondent, Moroto*

<sup>8</sup> Multiple answers allowed for this question.

## Access to Washing Stations



When shared with other households, the latrines are predominantly used by 1-3 other families.

- In Moroto, all respondents stated that the latrines were situated less than five meters away from their houses.
- In Nabilatuk, 61% of the available latrines are about 50 meters away from the respondents' houses, 26% less than 5 meters away, and 13% more than 50 meters away.
- In Napak, 55% of the available latrines are about 50 meters away from the respondents' houses, and 45% less than 5 meters away.
- In all districts most households reported that the latrines they use are not designed to be drainable.

## Access to Hygiene and Sanitation

**43%**

of families have at least one child younger than 5 who had diarrhea in the previous two weeks.

Regarding hygiene and sanitation, 43% of households with children under the age of 5 reported that at least one child had diarrhea in the previous two weeks. Additionally, 91% of households stated they do not have a place to wash their hands, and most respondents do not have access to hand washing stations or facilities.

40% of women and young girls above 9 years do not have access to menstrual hygiene products, and 26% do not have enough products.

“Girls cannot afford appropriate menstrual hygiene materials which leaves them in a vulnerable position when those are needed.”

*FGD respondent, Moroto*

Most respondents in Moroto (61%) and Napak (71%) have been trained on hygiene and sanitation topics, compared to 49% in Nabilatuk.



Over 90% of all households surveyed report not having a place to wash their hands. As a consequence, children often fall sick.

## PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

### Protection

The most cited major challenges in terms of protection risks in the community are the general insecurity threatening lives and animals, followed by the presence of armed groups and/or raiders, and domestic violence.<sup>9</sup>



- General insecurity threatening lives and animals was the most cited challenge in all three districts almost equally at 89% in Napak, and 84% in both Moroto and Nabilatuk.
- The presence of armed groups/raiders was also cited by significant minorities in all three districts with 46% in Napak, 45% in Moroto, and 39% in Nabilatuk.
- Domestic violence was also cited prominently by respondents in Moroto (24%) and Nabilatuk (28%), with 10% of respondents citing in Napak. Gender based violence and abuse (11%), forced marriage (9%), and sexual harassment and abuse (9%) were also cited by some respondents. Notably, gender-based violence and abuse, and sexual harassment and abuse were three times more likely to be reported by female respondents.
- 28% of respondents in Napak stated “other”, with most of them citing hunger as a challenge in terms of protection, followed by fire outbreaks or wildfires. Hunger and fire outbreaks were also cited by respondents in Moroto and Nabilatuk.

- **General insecurity**
- **Armed groups**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Hunger**

	District			Total
	Moroto	Nabilatuk	Napak	
Domestic violence	24%	28%	10%	21%
General insecurity threatening lives and animals	84%	84%	89%	85%
Sexual harassment and abuse	13%	7%	7%	9%
Presence of armed groups/raiders	45%	39%	46%	43%
Female genital mutilation	0%	0%	0%	0%
Forced marriage	14%	9%	3%	9%
Gender-based violence and abuse	14%	10%	8%	11%
No problem	5%	10%	8%	7%
Other	5%	13%	28%	14%

96% of respondents stated that they thought some groups or individuals in the community were particularly vulnerable to such risks. Those groups most cited as being of particular risk include: the elderly (86%), followed by persons with physical and/or mental disabilities (62%), orphans (46%), pregnant and lactating women (28%), and children under 5 (26%).<sup>10</sup>

### Humanitarian Assistance

89% of surveyed respondents stated not having received any humanitarian assistance in the past 30 days. Of the 11% who said they had received some, 59% received food aid and 28% agricultural inputs (e.g., hoes, seeds, etc.).

99% of the respondents reported not being able to meet the basic needs of their households in the past 30 days.

Households cited a wide range of needs when asked to provide their top three priorities, but across all regions, **food was the most consistently mentioned need**. 99% of households stated food was one of their top three priority needs with the majority stating it was their highest priority. Health and medical expenses were overall the second most cited need (71%), notably highest in Nabilatuk with 82% of households citing it. This, combined with the need for clothing (30%), school fees or education expenses (28%), and water (22%) stated by a significant number of households indicates a substantial need for overall additional humanitarian assistance for increasingly vulnerable households in Karamoja.

**89%**

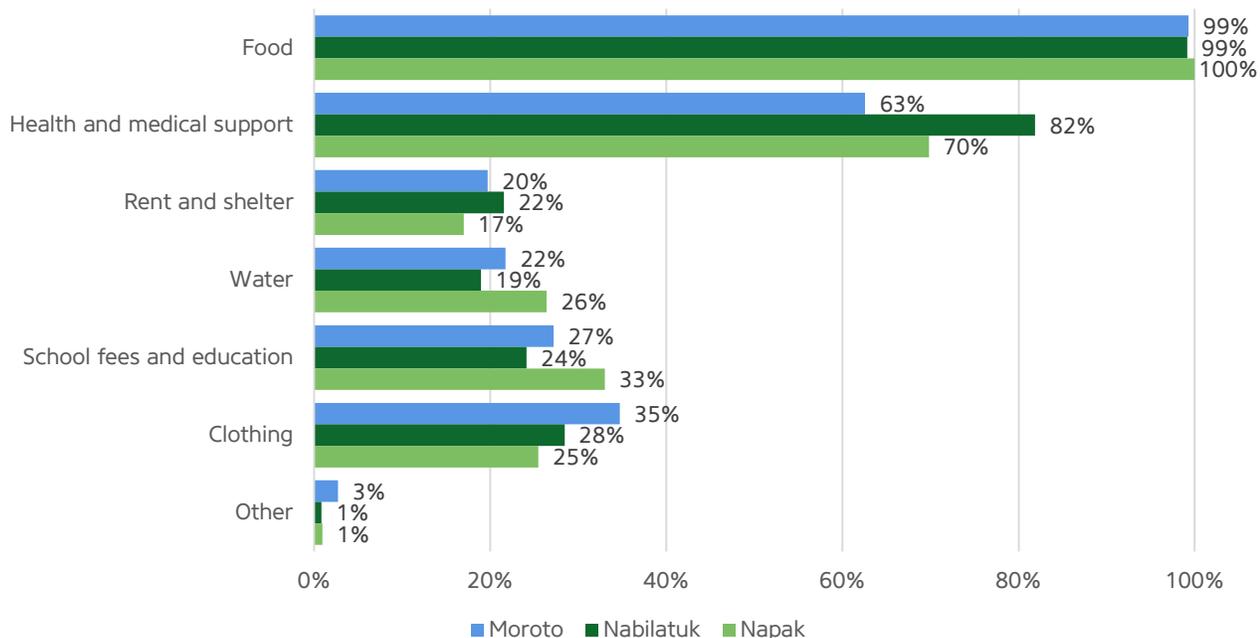
of families have not received any humanitarian assistance in the past month.

<sup>9</sup> Up to 3 answers allowed for this question.

<sup>10</sup> Multiple answers allowed for this question.

Finally, the preferred modality to deal with those needs is through in-kind distributions (46%), or through direct provision of services (41%).

### Top 3 Priority Needs of Households



Food was the most consistently mentioned need, highlighted by 99% of households.

## SOCIAL COHESION

The impact of the early lean season and insecurity on community unity and divisions between households in Karamoja is complex and varied. The responses from different individuals in the focus group discussions reflect contrasting experiences and perceptions.

- In Moroto, some female respondents mentioned the shared fear of insecurity has led people to go to gardens in groups, fostering a sense of unity and togetherness. The prevailing hunger has also prompted some individuals to share food with their neighbours, creating a sense of solidarity. However, another female respondent expressed concerns about the lack of unity and trust within the community, highlighting incidents of theft and suspicion among community members.
- In Napak, the effects of insecurity seem to have caused both unity and division. Some female respondents noted the insecurity has led people who had previously scattered to different places for survival to come back together, indicating a reunification of the community. However, others highlighted the disunity and lack of trust that have emerged because of the insecurity, with people living in suspicion of one another.
- In Nabilatuk, farming has been mentioned as a unifying factor, as people work together in each other's gardens, promoting cooperation and togetherness. However, the impact of insecurity has resulted in scattered communities.

*"Because of fear of being ambushed while in the garden since this insecurity begun, people now go to the gardens as groups and even come back together, meaning it has brought unity among people."*

FGD respondent, Moroto

*"Insecurity has brought more disunity in the community since many people are now living in suspicion of one another so there is no trust amongst people anymore."*

FGD respondent, Napak

*"Insecurity has scattered people to different places and community requests support in-kind."*

FGD respondent, Nabilatuk



*Conflict sensitive programming that fosters social cohesion and addresses dynamics of exclusion is especially critical in the current context.*

Overall, it is evident that the early lean season and insecurity have had both positive and negative effects on community unity and divisions.

While some communities have found ways to come together and support each other, such as working together on farms, sharing food, and facing common challenges, there are also instances where insecurity has led to divisions, suspicion, and displacement.

These dynamics highlight the need for targeted interventions that address the underlying causes of insecurity, promote trust-building initiatives, and foster community resilience in Karamoja.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Food Security & Nutrition:

- Urgently provide targeted food assistance to households, ensuring inclusion of vulnerable groups. Access to food is severely limited, with widespread reports of insufficient food intake.
- Support the development and strengthening of local food systems, including value chains and market linkages, to enhance food availability, access, and affordability, especially for more vulnerable groups.
- Encourage local food production through initiatives that promote sustainable farming practices, local seed banks, and community-based food storage facilities.
- Facilitate community-led disaster risk reduction initiatives, including early warning systems, preparedness training, and the establishment of community-based resilience committees.



### Livelihoods

- Urgent livelihoods support is needed, with the vast majority of households are having to use multiple coping strategies in the current situation (nearly half using at least one emergency level strategy).
- Enhance collaboration between local authorities and community leaders to improve livestock security and prevent animal raids.
- Conduct training and awareness campaigns on animal disease prevention and management practices among livestock owners, including proper hygiene, quarantine measures, and prevention methods including tick and worm control. Promote community-based animal health workers to provide basic animal healthcare services, raise awareness, and support preventive measures within local communities.
- Provide training and resources on livestock feeding practices, including alternative feeding strategies during dry seasons, to ensure adequate nutrition for livestock even in resource-constrained environments. Access to resources, exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, need to be addressed as a driver of insecurity.
- Continue supporting communities to strengthen their livelihoods through income generating activities in agriculture, land restoration, and other cash-for-work activities, to reduce the reliance on crisis and emergency survival strategies. Promote social cohesion through economic development programs to ensure the continuity of livelihoods activities, and access to fields and markets.
- Facilitate training and capacity-building programs on entrepreneurship, value chain development, and market linkages to enhance income generation and create sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- Support livelihood diversification initiatives, such as promoting income-generating activities beyond livestock farming, including small-scale agriculture, agro-processing, and micro-enterprises.



### Water, Hygiene and Sanitation:

- Scale up WASH programs to ensure a wider coverage of beneficiaries to access sanitation facilities.
- Improve access to reliable water sources through the construction and rehabilitation of water infrastructure.



### Humanitarian Assistance:

- Conduct regular context and conflict analysis and ensure programmatic interventions are conflict sensitive and integrate the Do No Harm approach.
- Invest in building the capacity of local organizations and community-based groups to effectively respond to humanitarian needs. Support training programs and resource mobilization efforts to empower local actors in delivering timely and culturally appropriate assistance.
- Prioritize assistance to vulnerable groups, including women, children, elderly individuals, and persons with disabilities, ensuring their specific needs are addressed. Market access is limited in many locations requiring that humanitarian assistance to be distributed either in-kind or through direct provision of services.
- Implement gender-sensitive approaches that promote equal access to humanitarian assistance and protection services.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to all the people involved in this assessment. In particular, the communities of each district who readily engaged with the assessment, our enumerators who collected the data, and the survey and focus group participants for sharing their experiences.

**Authors and Technical Support:** Joelle Assaf, Christopher Wynn Mitscherlich, Kevine Ayero, Julius Lwegaba, Gudrun Stallkamp, Grace Liakori, Lukoo Mbambu, Irene Nasasira, Paul Mungai, Samuel Korobe, and Christian Schniepper.

**Review and Editing:** Melina Eberwein and Sarah Jakobi.

## Contacts

Christian Schniepper [christian.schniepper@whh.de](mailto:christian.schniepper@whh.de)

Julius Lwegaba [julius.lwegaba@whh.de](mailto:julius.lwegaba@whh.de)

Christopher Wynn Mitscherlich [christopher.wynn@whh.de](mailto:christopher.wynn@whh.de)