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UGANDA: CONFLICT ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2018

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National Overview

January saw a deterioration of the security situation in different parts of the country particularly in the Karamoja sub region in North Eastern Uganda where cattle rustling is on the increase as reported by the SAFE's program Karamoja-based conflict monitors.¹ Incidents have been reported particularly from the districts of Kaabong, Kotido and Moroto. It is alleged that the Jie of Kotido, the Dodoth of Kaabong and the Turkana from North West Kenya are stealing livestock from each other. These incidents are threatening the hard earned peace in the region. A number of people have been killed during the raiding and counter raiding incidents. Since the drought situation deteriorated in North-West Kenya in the last couple of months, more than seventy thousand (70,000) Turkana pastoralists have entered Uganda with about one hundred thousand (100,000) livestock in search of pasture and water for their cattle. This has led to increased tension and frequent attacks with community members accusing the Turkana of encroaching on their grazing land and stealing their livestock.²

In another dimension, Karimojong pastoralists are moving away from Karamoja to some areas of Acholi, Lango and Teso looking for pasture and some of them are moving together with the Turkana and causing mayhem wherever they move to. This has led to an outcry from the farming communities in the Teso sub region.³ Because of this, a delegation of leaders from Karamoja and Teso sub regions have moved into the Bokora cattle corridor bordering Amuria district to quell disputes that are getting out of hand.⁴ The pastoralists are also accusing the farming community of occupying land traditionally meant for grazing and hunting during the dry season. In return, the farming community is accusing the pastoralists of letting their animals invade their gardens and destroying their crops hence leading to food shortage in the region. It is imperative that all the warring factions co-exist until the drought season is over.

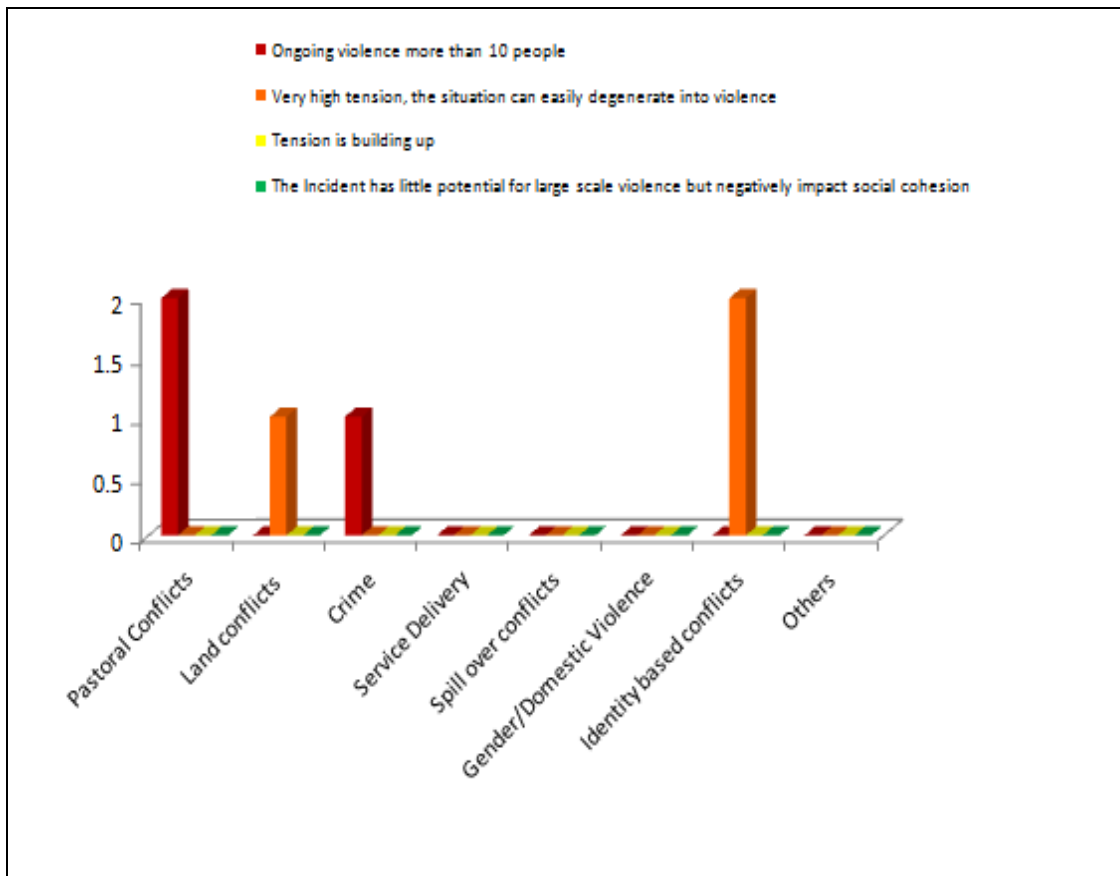
¹ USAID SAFE Conflict Monitors-Kaabong, Kotido & Moroto Districts

² USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment Report –November 2017

³ USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Soroti District

⁴ Ibid

Below: Number of Reported Conflict Incidents- January 2018



Source: SAFE Conflict Monitoring Database: January 2018

Regional Overview

Northern Region

The long standing conflict between nomadic pastoralists commonly known as “Balaalo” and residents of the West Nile region and other parts of the country continues to escalate. Residents accuse the pastoralists of destroying their gardens, grabbing land, and harassing indigenous communities on the land where they graze their animals. Following this outcry, the Uganda President Yoweri Museveni has directed that they all be evicted from the West Nile sub region and returned to their land of origin by mid March 2018.⁵

⁵ USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Arua District.

It is believed that there are more than 25.000 herds of cattle belonging to the pastoralists in the West Nile sub region.⁶ The SAFE Program has repeatedly reported about this conflict in various conflicts assessment reports. In the January 2017 conflict assessment report, the SAFE program reported how residents of Moyo and Yumbe districts carrying spears, pangas, sticks, bows and arrows evicted the pastoralists in the area amidst violent scenes. The pastoralists had been accused of grazing their livestock in the area, destroying crops and preventing residents from accessing water sources. The pastoralists were also accused of trying to process land titles for the areas they are grazing in without authorisation. In the November 2016 conflict assessment report, the SAFE program reported on skirmishes between residents and pastoralists in Palaro sub county in Gulu district which led to the District Local council (LC5) chairman Martin Ojara Mapenduzi issuing a two day ultimatum to the herdsmen to vacate the area or risk having their livestock confiscated. Conflicts between cultivators and pastoralists in different parts of Uganda have been recurring for a long time, claiming lives of many innocent people from the two communities and creating major economic impacts to the nation. There is urgent need to mitigate this conflict. Local communities should work together to demarcate grazing areas and water sources for livestock in areas occupied by both cultivators and pastoralists.

Eastern Region

Tension is very high in the Bukedi sub region following clashes between the Bagwere of Budaka district and the Banyole of Butaleja district over the boundary separating the two districts.⁷ This month, residents of Budaka district destroyed food crops belonging to residents of Butaleja district at Limoto swamp. Following this incident, the residents of Butaleja district retaliated by destroying the food crops of the Budaka residents. Police had to be called in to calm the situation. Three police detachments have been reinforced at the boundary to prevent further clashes although tension remains very high. This is one of the many border conflicts in the country that have increased due to the creation of new districts.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Budaka District

The two districts have had a history of boundary conflicts and the SAFE program has repeatedly reported on this conflict in various conflict assessment reports.⁸ Residents of the two districts have been clashing over ownership of the River Namataala and River Manafwa and nearby wetlands used by both groups for cultivating food crops. The clashes have left dozens of people with multiple injuries and also sparked fresh insecurity fears.

In March 2017, the Government of Uganda (GOU) officially demarcated the border in order to solve the conflict but attacks and counter attacks continue.⁹ SAFE's Bukedi-based conflict monitors will continue to monitor the situation on the ground and report any tension and conflict incidents to SAFE's conflict monitoring database.

Western Region

Tension is very high in Bushenyi district following a fight between two muslim factions that resulted into the destruction of Basajjabala Mosque in Ishaka Municipality.¹⁰ During the clash, more than thirty (30) people were injured and doors and windows damaged. Police had to be deployed to contain the situation. Seven people have so far been arrested as having been the masterminds to the incident. The leaders managing the mosque have been accused of mismanaging property belonging to the mosque. Conflicts involving management of mosques have been rampant countrywide in the last couple of years. In the October 2017 conflict assessment report, the SAFE program reported on a clash in Kamuli district in eastern Uganda where one person was killed after being hit with a piece of wood and several others were injured following a dispute over ownership of a mosque. Other incidents which have resulted into violent incidents have included Nakasero Mosque,¹¹ Masaka Mosque,¹² and Nateete Mosque among others.¹³ The two warring groups in Bushenyi District should be encouraged to dialogue in order to avoid the conflict from escalating. The Bushenyi-based USAID SAFE conflict monitors will continue to monitor the situation in the district and report any incidents to SAFE's conflict monitoring database.

⁸ March, September, October, December 2015, April, May, August, September, November, December 2016, March, April, August 2017

⁹ USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment-March 2017

¹⁰ USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Bushenyi District

¹¹ https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1135658/muslims-fight-mosque

¹² <https://ugandaradionetwork.com/story/muslim-factions-fight-to-control-masaka-central-mosque>

¹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TEwVXXOyB0>

Central Region

The security situation in the central part of Uganda especially in the greater Masaka region continues to deteriorate. In the November 2017 conflict assessment, the SAFE program reported how anonymous letters and leaflets were being disseminated around the region, threatening residents who were living in fear. Many residents had been robbed, beaten and others stabbed to death shortly after receiving the anonymous leaflets.

There had also been reported incidents of rape and arson. These endless attacks left many unanswered questions among the community and tension was very high. This month, five people including a retired senior police officer and his granddaughter were killed and there were attempts to behead a baby.¹⁴ Because of this insecurity, the President of Uganda – Yoweri Museveni visited the area to reassure the community.¹⁵ The Inspector General of Police Kale Kayihura has also pitched camp in the area and police has arrested a number prime suspects behind the attacks.¹⁶ To further mitigate the attacks, police has set up toll free lines at sub county level and intensified community policing in the region. The police have also encouraged neighborhood watch vigilance, registration of residents and patrolling of the areas. This insecurity in the greater Masaka region was also reported in SAFE's April 2017 Conflict assessment when Members of Parliament (MPs) led by the Leader of Opposition Hon Winnie Kiiza tasked GOU to explain the high level of insecurity in the area.¹⁷ The SAFE program will continue monitoring the situation on the ground and also hopes that the new government initiatives will bring security to the area.

¹⁴ <http://www.thegrapevine.co.ug/2018/01/01/its-bloody-thugs-kill-police-officer-plus-4-others-and-injure-7-in-new-year-raid-on-3-villages/>

¹⁵ <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Masaka-murders-Museveni-Masaka-Kale-Kayihura-police-688334-4249638-ttlfk/index.html>

¹⁶ ibid

¹⁷ <http://www.theugandatoday.com/news/2017/04/kayihura-rushes-to-masaka-over-insecurity/>

Map of Uganda Showing The Conflict Hotspots As Highlighted
In This Report



Source: <https://conflictmappinguganda.crowdmap.com/>

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