

# The Conflict Early Warning and Response mechanism (CEWARN)



*in the*

**Inter Governmental Authority On Development (IGAD)  
Region**

## **CEWARN Country Updates: January-April 2005**

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For the Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

**Report to Ethiopian CEWERU  
July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

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CEWARN, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia

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## CEWARN Country Update

### Update Period:

January through April 2005

### Area of Reporting:

Ethiopian Side of the Karamoja Cluster

### National Research Institute:

Inter Africa Group (IAG), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### Country Coordinator:

Coordinator: Girma Kebede

Assistant: Bizusew Mersha

Report to Ethiopian CEWERU  
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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this Country Update is to establish the incidence and outcomes of pastoral conflict on the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster from January 2005 through April 2005, set in the context of all reports submitted from January 2004 through April 2005. The reporting locations on the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster are 3 in number for the reporting period: Kibish, Nebremus and Bubua located in Kuraz Wereda, South Omo one, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. This Update presents both positive and negative precursors to the pastoral conflict situations as a means to illuminate trends that can help signal imminent outbreaks or escalations or mitigate ongoing conflicts in the Karamoja Cluster.

For the reporting period January 2005 through April 2005, 14 human deaths occurred and 43 livestock were raided. These raids were reported in a total of 8 incident reports, of which 3 involved parties from the neighboring countries of Kenya and Sudan. Violence was highest in February 2005. Peace indicators were fairly and consistently high from February to April.

Violent incidents declined during this reporting period compared to previous May-August and September – December 2004. The drop in violent incidents during the reporting period could be attributed to: the improved security in the area due to strong presence of government security forces and the peace activities conducted by civil society, NGOs and religious based organizations. The inaccessibility of dry season grazing areas to raiders has also contributed to a drop in the violence.

However, this does not mean there were no incidents in the area. In fact there were 8 incidents recorded during the period, of which assaults were the most common. The availability of small arms and bullets, and traditional forecasting of impending attacks were notable factors that exacerbated the tension between the communities and created the fertile ground for the incidents to erupt.

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*The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) of The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has coordinated the field reporting and editing of these reports. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have contributed funds towards this effort. CEWARN in collaboration with Virtual Research Associates (VRA) developed the early warning methodology and reporting tool. Suggestions and comments on this initial baseline are welcome. Please contact CEWARN Office at ([cewarn@ethionet.et](mailto:cewarn@ethionet.et)) in Addis Ababa with any questions, comments or suggestions. The next CEWARN Country Update May - August 2005 for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja cluster is scheduled for posting in September 2005. In the course of the year these Updates will be enhanced with specific response options identified and tied to their associated thresholds of indicator values that signal pastoral conflict escalation, destabilization or violence.*

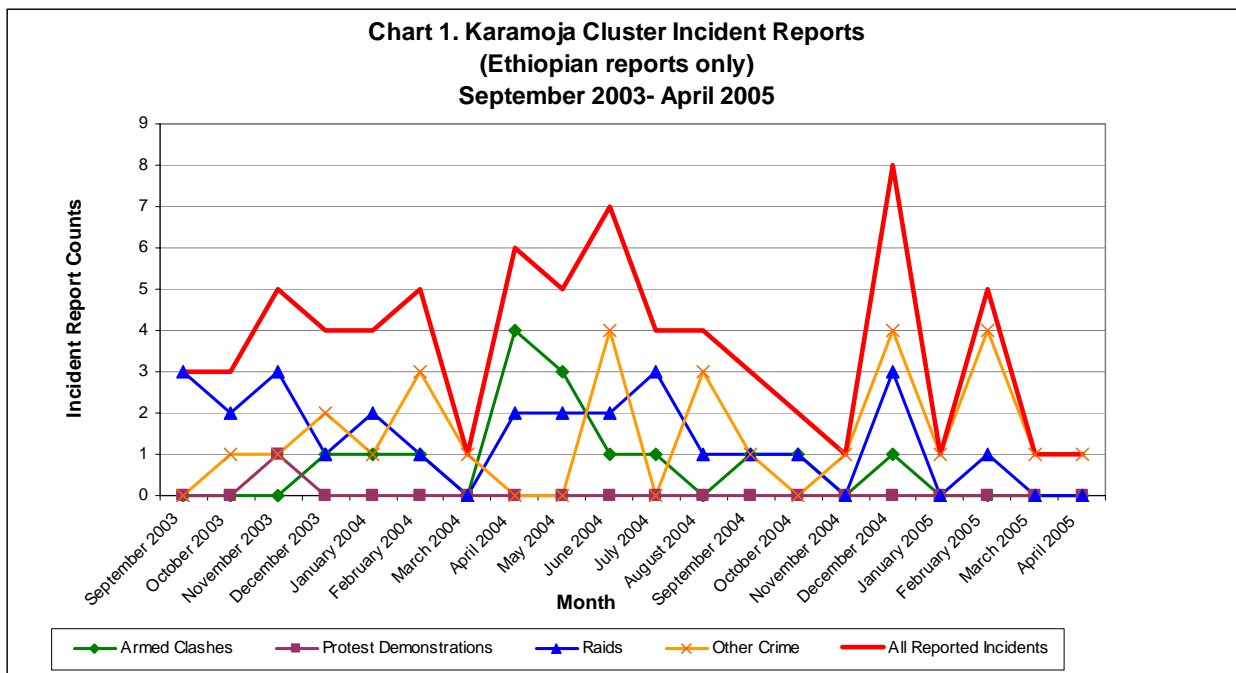
# IGAD-CEWARN Country Update – Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

## Current Baseline Analysis

*NOTE: The y-axis are dynamically scaled on all of the charts presented below. Therefore, the reader should pay special attention to the upper and lower values presented for each chart. The range of values for all “scores” is from 0 to 100.*

**Chart 1 (below) presents the frequency of Violent Incident counts for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster for the reporting period<sup>1</sup>.**

In the reporting period 8 violent incidents were reported, of these 7 Other Crimes and 1 Raid. There were no Protest Administration and Armed Clashes. Among the 8 incidents reported 3 were cross-border involving communities from the neighboring countries of Kenya and Sudan. In February 2005 violent incident reports were at their highest levels. Violence was lowest during January 2005, March 2005 and April 2005.



The four Assaults and one Raid accounted for the high incident counts recorded in February. Of these four Assaults, two occurred between the Dassenech and Nyangatom of Ethiopia. The dispute that has erupted recently between Nyangatom and Dassenech is the cause for these two assaults.<sup>2</sup>

The other two Assaults were undertaken by Ethiopian security forces as a result of the incident that occurred near Turmi<sup>3</sup> on January 28, which prompted a strong presence of government security forces in the area. The Raid, which is also the only raid for the reporting period, was a cross border incident by the Turkana from the Kenyan side on the Nyangatom of Ethiopia.

<sup>1</sup> For full description of Violent Incidents see Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the Sep - Dec. 2004 Update

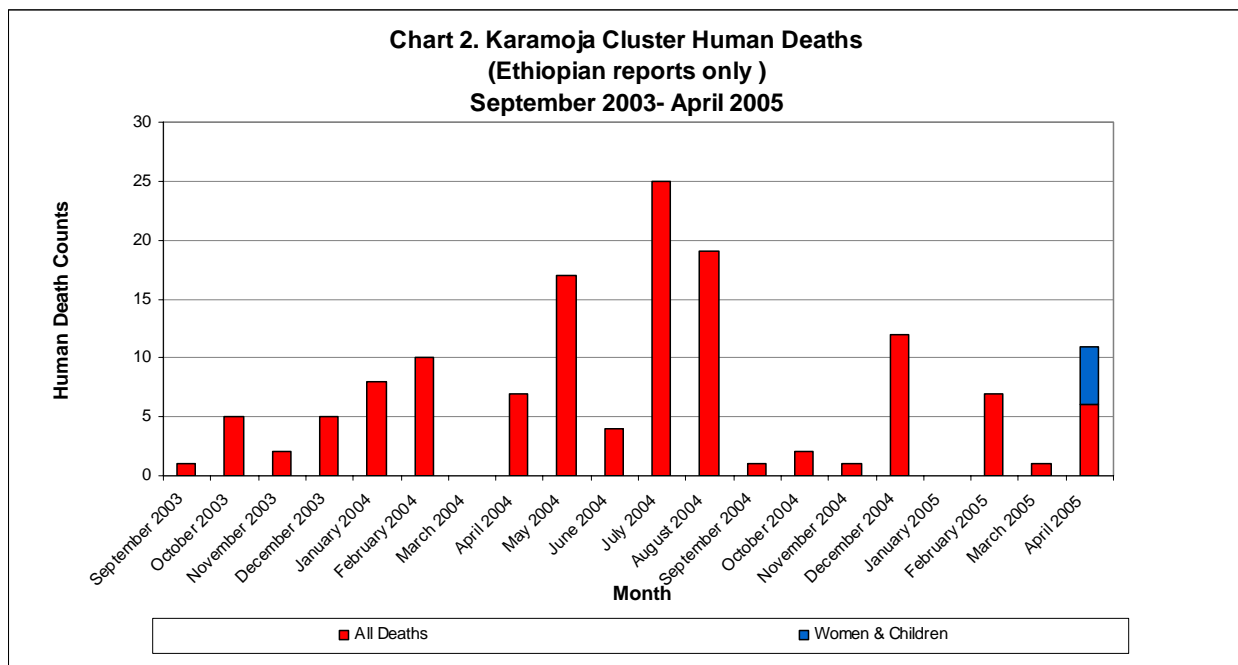
<sup>3</sup> On January 28, 2004 at a place called “Goremsa Terrara”, located half way between Turmi and Omurate, Dassenech bandits ambushed a government car that was on its way to Jinka from Omurate. They killed four of its passengers, including speaker of the south Omo zonal council. They took 3100 Birr from the victims and shattered the front window of the car. One lady, however, survived the assault without injury.

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The other three Assaults were reported in January, March and April - one for each month; all took place in the Kibish area of reporting. In January, a group of Nyangatom cultivators assaulted and wounded a Dassenech woman after they were provoked by a group of Dassenech who destroyed their crops. In March a group of Turkana ambushed Nyangatom mobile traders, and in April a group of Nyangatom in alliance with a group of Toposa from South Sudan attacked a Mursi kebele after Mursi traders stole an estimated 500 bullets from the Nyangatom. There were no Raids reported in these three months – an unusual scenario for the area. The decrease in violent incidents during these three months can be attributed to the operation that has been going on in the areas of reporting, particularly in Nebremus and Bubua, by government security forces to apprehend the Dassenech criminals that killed the speaker of the zonal council and two of his colleagues on January 28 near Turmi. The strong presence of the security forces could have restrained the communities from engaging in violent incidents.

It appears that there is no direct relationship between the Raid and Other Crime as indicated in **Chart 1**. However, there seems to be a connection between the Assault in January and the two Assaults in February which occurred between the Dassenech and Nyangatom. The Assaults are a manifestation of the recent animosity between the two communities which have taken the form of reprisal and counter-reprisal attacks.

Human deaths for the reporting period are presented in **Chart 2 (below)**



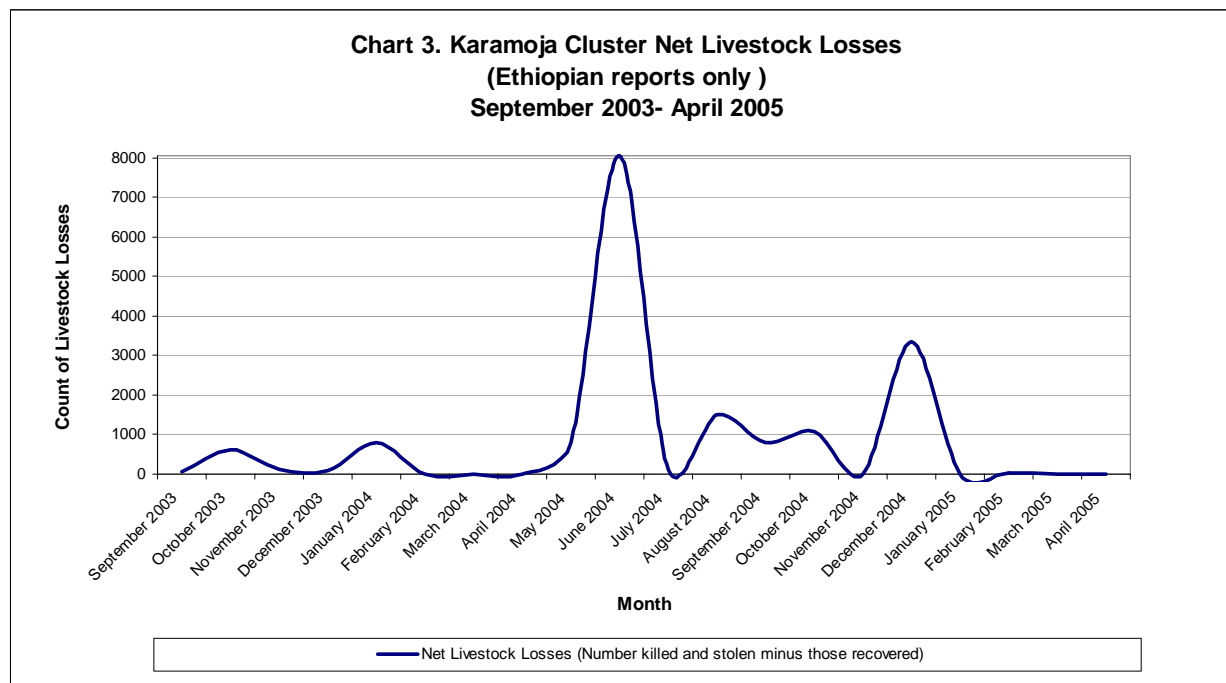
A total number of 14 human deaths were reported from the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster in the reporting period. Of these 14 deaths 5 were women and children, killed in an Assault in April by Nyangatom (in alliance with Toposa) on the Mursi claiming the lives of 6 family members. The four Assaults and one Raid in February led to the death of 7 people. The other Assault in March by Turkana on Nyangatom mobile traders claimed one life.

It is clear from the above that most of the incidents that led to human deaths during this reporting period were Assaults. In fact, of the total 8 incidents reported during this period, 7 of them were Assaults and accounted for 13 of the 14 deaths.

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The Assaults that occurred involving Nyangatom, Dassenech and Mursi show that the victims were innocent people caught in the pattern of retribution and counter-retribution which has become the trend in the long standing conflict among the communities living in the Areas of Reporting. Furthermore, lack of response from local officials or traditional elders to these violent incidents implies a culture of impunity (absence of rule of law) in the area whereby the perpetrators unleash attacks without being apprehended.

Livestock losses are presented in Chart 3 (below).

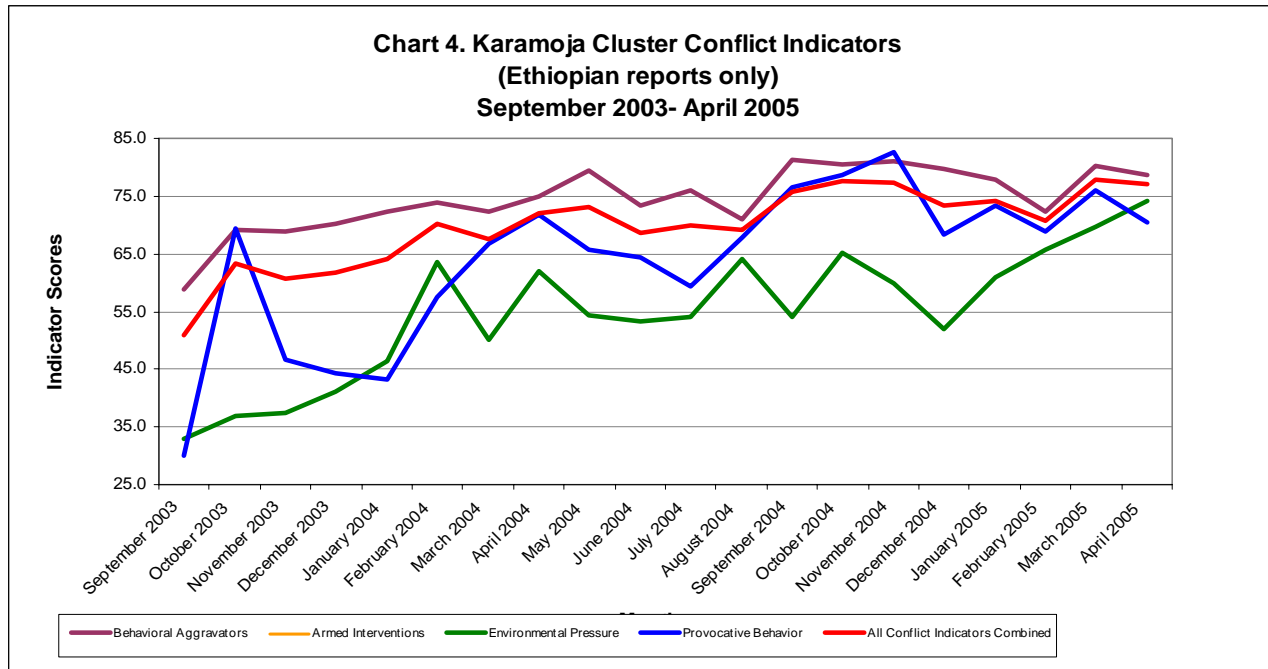


A total number of 43 livestock were reported raided for the reporting period which occurred only in February. The Raid occurred in February when Turkana raiders crossed into Kibish in Ethiopia and raided 13 donkeys and 30 cattle. The unusual low number of raids in the reporting period could be attributed to: (a) the strong presence of government security forces that has restrained the communities from engaging in violent incidents including raids; (b) the peace efforts by various actors reported during the period (please see explanation for **Chart 5**); and, (c) the concentration of livestock in a restricted dry season grazing area, known as “Desset”, which made raiding difficult as it is a secluded island surrounded by Omo river (please see explanation for **Chart 4**).

It can be argued that since the type of incidents prevalent during the reporting period were Assaults, the number of livestock losses reported were relatively very low.

## IGAD-CEWARN Country Update – Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

Chart 4 (below) presents Conflict Indicators for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster.



Conflict Indicators in Chart 4 (above) describe Aggravating Behavior, Provocative Behavior, Armed Interventions, Environmental Pressure, and the Combined Conflict Indicators<sup>4</sup>. Provocative Behavior was high in January and March and low in February and April. Aggravating Behavior was low in February and high in March. Environmental Pressure increased steadily throughout the reporting period. The Combined Conflict Indicators were low in February but high in March and April.

The increase in Provocative Behavior in January and March could be attributed to the frequent traditional forecasts of possible attacks, unusual movements of all male groups and pre-raid blessings. For instance, forecasts of possible attacks from Nyangatom and Turkana were reported in Nebremus and from Dassenech in Kibish. Unusual movements of all male groups were recorded in all the areas of reporting in the same month. Pre-raid blessing was also witnessed in March. However, it is hard to establish a link between the forecasting, the pre-raid blessing and the unusual movement of all male groups as the information is not enough to suggest that. Plus, it is hard to say that the pre-raid blessings that took place in March were related to incidents initiated by communities from within the Ethiopian side.

Aggravating Behavior increased in all Areas of Reporting throughout March and April due to availability of small arms and ammunition, lack of access to new market outlets, interruption of joint or self-help communal activities, declining livestock prices, and harmful government livestock and pastoral movement policy. For example, small arms and ammunitions were provided by Toposa mobile traders from south Sudan who are traditional close ally of Nyangatoms. Because of denial of access, enough markets were not available for the pastoralists to exchange goods. The existing ones were accessible intermittently. As a result, with little market outlet, there was a drop in livestock prices.

The strong presence of government security forces in the area of reporting (to apprehend the criminals of the January 28 incident) as well as the tension between Nyangatom and Dassenech, Nyangatom and Mursi, and Turkana and the others above, hampered pastoral movements and joint and self – help activities such as digging of wells.

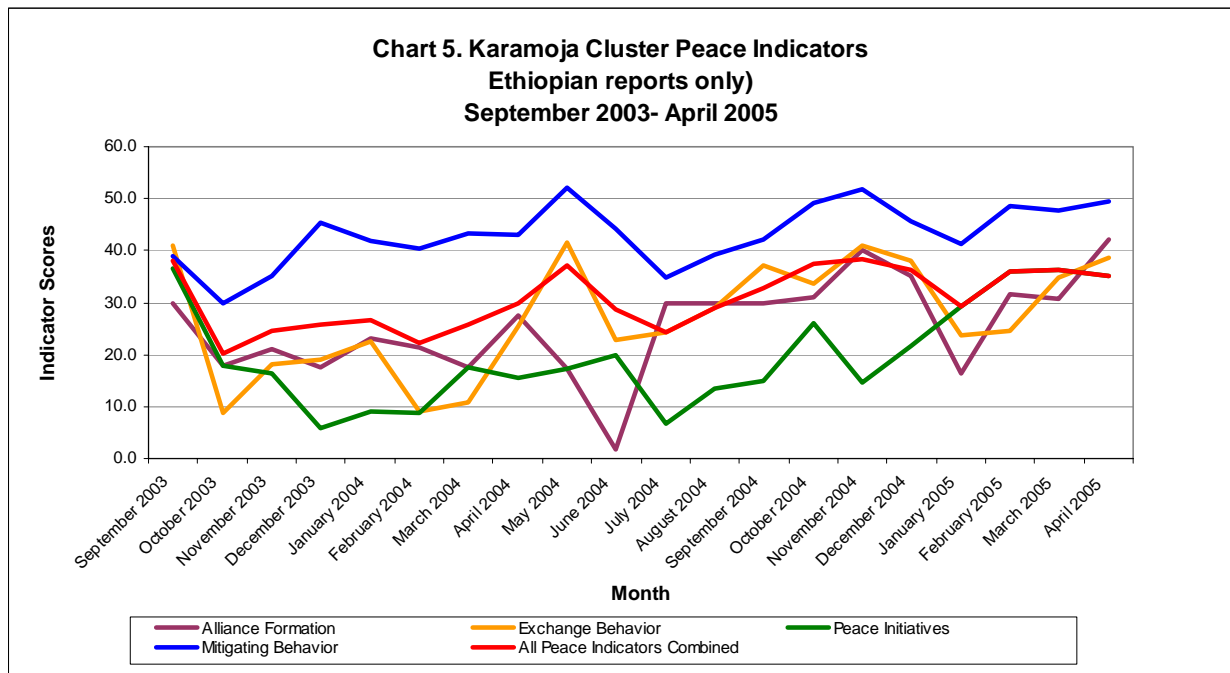
<sup>4</sup> For full list of Conflict Indicators please refer to Appendix 2

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The new government directive around the end of February to expand the Omo National Park (located in Kibish Area of Reporting), whereby large rangeland resources of the Nyangatom were reserved only for the park purposes, depriving the communities of their vital grazing areas and threatening the survival of their livestock and seasonal movements.

Environmental Pressure increased steadily since January 2005. Traditional grazing areas were abandoned due to (a) shortage of rainfall which in turn led to scarcity of pasture and water, and (b) insecurity in the area (particularly the tension of with Hamer, Turkana and Mursi<sup>5</sup>). In Kibish the abandonment of traditional grazing areas led to competition over resources as it increased concentration of livestock in secure grazing areas. However, in Nebremus and Bubua the abandoning of traditional grazing areas did not lead to competition since the secure area is a vast expanse grazing land (known as “Dasset”) that is surrounded by the Omo River. It has to be noted here, however, Environmental Pressure emanating from shortage of rainfall has declined beginning the second half of April due to improved rainfall. And the Dassenech and Nyangatom were seen taking out their cattle from secure dry season grazing areas such as Dasset to traditional grazing areas scattered around in various Kebeles and deep into Kenya.

Chart 5 (below) presents Peace Indicators for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster.



Peace Indicators (below) present Alliance Formation, Exchange Behavior, Mitigating Behavior, Peace Initiatives, and All Peace Indicators Combined<sup>6</sup>. Alliance Formation was low in January and high in April. Exchange Behavior was low in January and February and high in March and April. Peace initiatives were steadily high during the reporting period. Mitigating behavior was low in January but increased from February to April. Combined indicators were low in January but were consistently high from February on wards.

<sup>5</sup> The inclusion of a new Area of Reporting, Bubua, the Hamer and Mursi

<sup>6</sup> For list of Peace Indicators refer to Appendix 2

## IGAD-CEWARN Country Update – Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

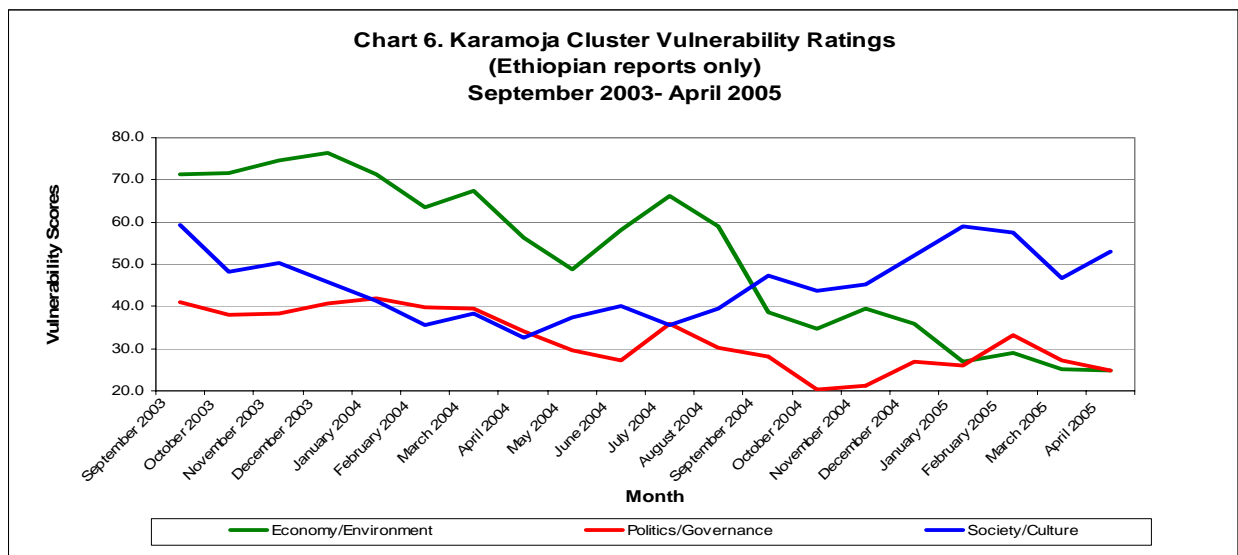
Alliance Formation was high in April due to the collaboration reported in Kibish. The alliance had one feature: an inter-ethnic alliance forged between Nyangatom and Toposa. These two groups are traditionally close allies and lot of exchanges take place between these two groups. The Nyangatom even live in the Toposa area of south Sudan. Their joint assault on Mursi in April expresses this strong bond.

During March and April, Exchange Behavior increased. Non-raid celebration, labor & commodity exchange and inter-group sharing contributed to this rise. The non-raid celebration indicated that increased presence of security forces has created a space (a peaceful one) for traditional ceremonies to take place. Labor and commodity exchange and inter-group sharing particularly were noticeable in Kibish and were conducted between Toposa and Nyangatom and Turkana and Nyangatom. The exchange and sharing between the latter two communities is some how a new phenomenon and it indicated how much the relationship between the two groups improved during this reporting period.

Peace Initiatives showed a significant rise starting from January. The active involvement of civil society groups, NGOs, religious based organizations in peace activities was the reason for the rise. Civil society groups - particularly community elders - were witnessed during this period giving advice to young members of the communities not to involve in violent acts. The elders were also seen in initiating dialogue to resolve conflict that erupted between communities, particularly between Nyangatom and Dassenech. In Kibish, there were cases where the Nyangatom and Turkana elders held a session to discuss common security problems and common use of grazing areas. There was also an active involvement of a religious based organization – Mekanen Yesus- in peace activity by giving Bible teaching on the virtues of peace in Nebremus. An active participation of NGOs, both from Kenya (in Kibish) and Ethiopia (EPARDA, in Nebremus) in either conducting research on how to resolve the conflict in the area or providing good office for negotiation and mediation was reported on various occasions.

The cumulative effect of uninterrupted access to health and education services, better functioning of local governance (including law enforcement), provision of negotiation/mediation service and stable bride price led to the steady rise of mitigating behavior after January. The reason for this positive environment largely lies in the enhanced presence of security forces and the various peace activities indicated above.

**Chart 6 (below) presents Vulnerability Ratings for the reporting period.**



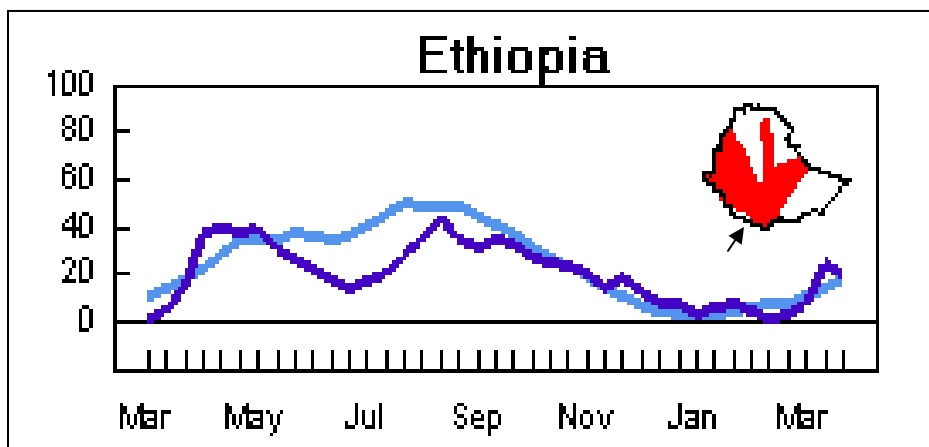
Politics and Governance Vulnerability Ratings were declining as the Area of Reporting witnessed improved local governance including maintenance of law and order following the strong presence of government security forces. Society and Culture Vulnerability Ratings were declining in February and March as peace activities and presence of security forces paved the way for exchange, trade and traditional celebrations to take place.



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Economy/Environment Vulnerability Ratings began to decline after February with the easing up of the tension in the area as a result of the presence of security forces and various peace initiatives. Moreover, with onset of rainfall in April helped in the decline of environmental pressure.

The rainfall baseline in **Chart 7** (below) presents the amount of rainfall that was recorded in the Areas of Reporting for the Ethiopian side of the Karamoja Cluster for the reporting period.



*Credit: vf-tropi.com*

 This season

 Normal

 Area included

Until mid-April, there was absence of rainfall in the Area of Reporting. This brought Environmental Pressure on the pastoral communities whereby they were forced to abandon their traditional grazing areas and move to dry season grazing areas. In Nebremus and Bubua the dry season grazing area is a secluded vast island in the middle of Omo River known as “Desset”. It seems the dry spell has contributed to the decline in conflict incidents and livestock losses as this dry season grazing area (Desset) is not vulnerable to attacks. After mid-April the dry spell was reversed and the area got adequate rainfall to ease the Environmental Pressure.

### Comparative Analysis

In comparison to the previous reporting period (September – December 2004), violent incidents were highest in February 2005 for the reporting period. Of these, Assaults were high in number while Raids were relatively low. There were no Armed Clashes or livestock raids/losses. Human death counts were highest in April 2005. Reports from the reporting areas indicate 3 out of the 8 incidents were cross-border – involving communities from neighbouring countries of Kenya and Sudan.

### Analysis of Proximate Conflict Aggravating Factors

According to information from the field, the proximate conflict aggravating factors were: disruption of pastoral movements, livestock diseases, and availability of small arms and ammunitions. In addition intermittent access to markets interfered with demand and supply and resulted in the fall of livestock prices. Moreover, it was reported that interruption of Joint self-help activities and traditional forecasting of impending attacks also exacerbated communal tensions.

### Analysis of Structural Conflict Aggravating Factors

Field reports indicated that there were less number of raids and human deaths as compared to the previous reporting period. However, there was heightened tension between antagonistic communities because of environmental pressure in the form of extended dry spells.

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In Kibish the intense environmental pressure resulted in competition over pasture and water while in Bubua and Nebremus its effect was less pronounced because livestock were taken to the island on the estuary of the River Omo. In addition, the recent government directive to expand the Omo National Park resulted in the eviction of the Nyangatom from their traditional grazing areas.

### Analysis of Proximate Conflict Mitigating Factors

The proximate conflict mitigating factors, according to field reports, were inter-ethnic alliance formation (between Nyangatom and Toposa and Nyangatom and Turkana), labor and commodity exchanges, non-raid celebrations, provision of social services, and maintenance of law and order. These factors were made possible by increased peace initiatives by civil society and strong presence of government security forces in the areas of reporting.

### Analysis of Structural Conflict Mitigating Factors

The reporting period included the month of April in which the Environmental Pressure began to decrease because the amount and distribution of the rainfall was considered adequate in the areas of reporting. The reports were also supported by data from FEWS-net and the National Meteorological Agency. The periods following the commencement of the rainy season are times of ample grazing and watering. During such period there is a tacit and mutual understanding between the antagonistic pastoralist groups that the livestock must feed on “new grass, herbs and plants” which are considered to be medicinal. The fresh water in the springs and the ponds is also considered as a form of laxative for cleaning the intestines of the animals. Times of abundance are thus periods of relative peace to provide the livestock with pasture and water. This analysis is supported by the field reports that the communities took their livestock from dry season grazing areas to traditional grazing areas beginning mid-April.

## RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>ACTORS</b>	<b>SHORT TERM</b>	<b>MEDIUM TERM</b>
<b>CEWERU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speed up the organization and operationalization of the CEWERU unit</li> <li>Provide a means of quick response to mitigate on-going conflicts such as engagement with the people and strengthening civil society peace efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform stakeholders through regular country reports on the situation in the Areas of Reporting</li> <li>Promote and be involved in local communities and civil society initiatives in peace building in the Area of Reporting</li> </ul>
<b>LOCAL COMMUNITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application of traditional conflict mitigation mechanisms to address conflicts before they escalate and in resolving existing ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote engagement between customary institutions and local government to incorporate pastoralists voice in local development and peace efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>CIVIL SOCIETY/ NGOs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote on going peace and conflict resolution efforts to continue in a sustainable manner</li> </ul>	

## IGAD-CEWARN Country Update – Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

### Appendix 1: Description of Indicators (from the Situation Reports)

<u>Alliance Formation</u>		
Inter-ethnic group alliance	Ethnic group – government alliance	
<u>Armed Intervention</u>		
Internal armed support	External armed support	
<u>Aggravating Behavior</u>		
Interrupt other activities Development aid problems Media controls Migrant laborers New Markets Negative media coverage	Pastoral migration Harmful migration policy Harmful livestock policy Influx of IDPs Security escorts Small arms availability	Bullets as commodities Protest Student attendance interrupted Separation of groups Livestock prices dropped Post-raid blessing Livestock sales increase
<u>Environmental Pressure</u>		
Natural disaster areas abandoned	Land competition Livestock disease	More livestock in secure areas grazing
<u>Exchange Behavior</u>		
Celebration Inter-group sharing	Inter-group marriage Cross-border trade	Gift offering
<u>Mitigating Behavior</u>		
Access to health care Small arms disclosure Access to education	Relief distributions Markets remain open Positive media coverage	Law enforcement Bride price stable Negotiations taking place
<u>Peace Initiatives</u>		
Women peace messengers Religious peace building	Weapons reduction program NGO peace initiatives	Local peace initiatives
<u>Provocative Behavior</u>		
All-male migration	Pre-raid blessing	Traditional forecasting

# IGAD-CEWARN Country Update – Ethiopia Side of the Karamoja Cluster

## Appendix 2: Definitions of the Incident Categories

- Armed Clashes
  - Military Battle (Armed hostilities or engagements between an official military unit of a government and an armed party. Includes both civil war and inter-state war battles.
  - Other Armed Clashes (All other armed hostilities or engagements. Includes all communal and inter-communal battles.
  
- Raids
  - Raids with Abductions (Raids focused around abductions of people or the taking of hostages. May include injuries or death to humans, and/or damage, destruction or theft of other property).
  - Organized Raids (Other organized raids. May include injuries or deaths to humans, and/or damage, destruction or theft of other property).
  - Livestock Theft (Raids focused around the theft of livestock. May include injuries or death to humans, and/or damage, destruction or theft of other property).
  
- Protest Demonstrations
  - Peaceful Protests (peaceful protest demonstrations or assemblies. May include isolated or low-level violence).
  - Violent Turmoil or Riots (Assemblies or crowds that get out of control. Marked by violence, disorder, damage and/or destruction).
  
- Other Crime
  - Assaults (Physical attacks and abuse involving the actual use of physical force against individuals, and/or groups. Does not include abductions.
  - Banditry (Commandeering of vehicles, highway robbery, and other similar criminal activities).