

**ASSESSING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELFARE OF POKOT WOMEN  
IN AMUDAT DISTRICT: IMPACT OF PASTORALIST CONFLICTS  
AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

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## DECLARATION

I Rosemary Imagoro do hereby declare that this dissertation titled “Assessing the Socio-Economic Welfare of Pokot Women in Amudat District: Impact of Pastoralist Conflicts and Strategies for Improvement” is my original work and has not been presented in any other University or higher institutions of learning for any academic award.

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## APPROVAL

This is to confirm that this dissertation by Rosemary Imagoro titled “Assessing the Socio-Economic Welfare of Pokot Women in Amudat District: Impact of Pastoralist Conflicts and Strategies for Improvement” was done under our supervision and is now ready for submission for examination.

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Signature .....

Date .....

**Dr Judith Irene Nagasha**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely mother Ms Anna Margrate Amujal and my late father Mr Ludovic Odongo. Their encouragement, love, support and tolerance during my school endeavours have made me reach this far. I also dedicate it to all the women who live amidst violent ethnic conflicts.

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## ABSTRACT

This study assessed the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District, Uganda, focusing on the impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts and the contribution of strategies aimed at improving their welfare. The study pursued three objectives: (i) to explore the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District, (ii) to examine the perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on their socio-economic welfare, and (iii) to investigate the contribution of strategies implemented to enhance their welfare. Guided by a phenomenological research design, and qualitative approach data were collected from district and community leaders as well as local residents using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. The sample comprised 54 participants (36 females, 18 males), including 9 key informants and 5 focus groups of 8–12 members each. Findings revealed that Pokot women experienced multiple socio-economic challenges, including poverty, poor health, marginalization, harmful cultural norms, and unstable marriages. Pastoralist ethnic conflicts further exacerbated these challenges through physical and sexual abuse, displacement, and food and human insecurity. However, participants reported notable improvements in living conditions as a result of government and NGO interventions, including enhanced access to social services, community support, and increased participation in dialogue and decision-making forums. While interventions such as institutional support, disarmament, and livelihood programs had been implemented, their outcomes were mixed, highlighting gaps in coverage and effectiveness. Participants suggested strategies for further improvement, including sensitization on alternative economic activities, increased financial support, strengthened community participation, peacebuilding initiatives, and targeted women's empowerment programs. The study concludes that pastoralist ethnic conflicts continue to undermine the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women, and that existing interventions require strategic reassessment. It recommends that the government and other stakeholders adopt integrated, gender-responsive strategies that promote protection, recovery, empowerment, and sustainable livelihoods for women in conflict-affected communities.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Improved women's socio-economic welfare empowers women to support themselves, their families, while also contributing significantly to broader societal development (IMF, 2018). It fosters gender equality by enabling women to actively participate in decision-making and development process in their communities (Khalid et al., 2020). Given the critical role, this study assessed the socio-economic welfare of women in regions affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts, with a particular focus on the Pokot community in Amudat District, Uganda.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Advancing women's socio-economic welfare is fundamental to achieving sustainable development. It underpins progress in women's rights, poverty eradication, inclusive economic growth, gender equality, peace, and broader development goals (Ademiluka, 2018; IMF, 2018). Women's socio-economic status is not only a matter of equity but also a driver of inclusive growth. Globally, women play indispensable roles within families and communities, particularly in areas such as food security and healthcare (Muhia, 2020). Rather than viewing women solely as victims of conflict, it is essential to recognize their role and contributions as active agents of development.

However, in many developing countries, women's socio-economic welfare is severely impacted by the dynamics of violent conflicts. Ethnic conflicts, though not exclusive to pastoralist communities, are a global phenomenon that disproportionately affect women. These conflicts expose women to economic and social hardships, displacement, sexual violence, trafficking and heightened vulnerability. As their roles in sustaining family welfare

become increasingly precarious, women often lose their independent economic status and face significant disruptions to their livelihoods (Onyima, 2019).

The concept of socio-economic welfare extends beyond financial stability. It encompasses production, property ownership, personal security, education, quality of life, civic participation, autonomy, social capital, and the ability to influence decisions within their social environments. Historically, women have been subjected to systemic subjugation rooted in patriarchal norms. In ancient Israel, for example, women were regarded as property of their fathers or husbands (Chandi, 2019). Across cultures, women have been marginalized through power dynamics and cultural beliefs that restrict their roles and contributions. Despite their vital roles in development, women have often been excluded from meaningful participation in public life and confined to domestic responsibilities (Muhia, 2020; Kolleda, 2020).

Globally, women's socio-economic welfare has been undermined by patriarchal structures rooted in male supremacy. In the 1960s, women in the United States and Europe, faced workplace discrimination, earning less than men for the same work and being denied leadership positions or dismissed upon pregnancy (Htun et al., 2019). In traditional African societies, gender roles are shaped by cultural norms that prioritize male dominance and superiority (Ademiluka, 2018). Women's socio-economic status is frequently tied to their marital status and in pastoralist communities, women face compounded challenges. These include gender inequalities, low literacy rates, limited public engagement, and exclusion from decision-making and property ownership (Muhia & Mwenda, 2021).

The exclusion of women from decision-making processes, coupled with regressive practices such as polygamy and bride price further exacerbates women's vulnerability, reinforcing cycles of poverty, inequality, and systemic injustices. These customs contribute to the marginalization of women, limiting their access to opportunities and perpetuating their

disadvantaged status. In African pastoralist communities, women encounter severe economic, social, health, and cultural restraints that significantly hinder their ability to contribute to broader development outcomes and pursuit of leadership roles. This systemic exclusion restricts their access to resources and decision-making power, thereby curbing their socio-economic mobility (Onyima, 2017).

Despite these challenges, global efforts to improve women's status have gained momentum. In the 1970s, Europe and Latin America began to recognize women's contributions to development. The 1977 regional conference on integrating women into Latin America's economic and social growth marked a turning point, with governments endorsing a plan supported by the United Nations (Canton, 2021). This era saw the implementation of strategies aimed at enhancing women's access to and control over resources, reinforced by legal instruments such as the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Sharma & Tarp, 2018).

The African Union (AU) has made significant strides in advancing the gender agenda by formally recognizing the vital contributions of women to development across the continent (Ndiokubwayo, 2020). As a demonstration of its commitment to women's rights and gender equality, the AU's Assembly of Heads of State and Government declared 2016 as the African Year of Human Rights, with a particular emphasis on women's rights (Hendricks, 2017). This initiative marked a pivotal moment in the AU's efforts to mainstream gender considerations into its policy frameworks and development strategies.

One of the most transformative instruments in this regard is the Maputo Protocol, formally known as the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*. Adopted in 2003, the Protocol guarantees a wide range of rights for women, including political participation, reproductive autonomy, equality in marriage,

and protection from harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation. As of 2023, 44 out of 55 AU Member States have ratified the Protocol, signaling broad continental support for its progressive gender provisions (Makamase, 2023; Mutambasere et al. 2023).

Complementing the Maputo Protocol is the AU's long-term development blueprint, Agenda 2063, which envisions "an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of its women and youth." Within this framework, Aspiration 6 specifically calls for full gender equality in all spheres of life. The first ten-year implementation plan (2014–2023) set ambitious targets, including eliminating barriers to women's property ownership, increasing access to productive assets, and achieving gender parity in leadership across AU institutions. While progress has been uneven, the framework has provided a critical roadmap for integrating gender equality into national and regional development agendas (Kisira & Jack, 2024). Together, these instruments reflect the AU's evolving commitment to gender-responsive governance and inclusive development. They also serve as benchmarks for evaluating Member States' progress in promoting women's socio-economic welfare and protecting their rights in both peacetime and conflict settings.

Despite the above effort to the cause of women, for women in pastoral areas, their welfare remains poor because of pastoral conflicts. Pastoral conflicts in Africa are widespread and stem from a complex interplay of environmental, institutional, and socio-political factors. For instance, across West and North Africa, there has been an increase in pastoral conflicts especially in recent decades. In Nigeria's Middle Belt, there the resurgence of Fulani herder–farmer clashes such as in 2010 and 2015 (Chikwem & Osazuwa, 2021). In Nigeria, climatic stressors such as drought and desertification have forced herder's southward, exacerbating land-use disputes with sedentary farmers (Mezie-Okoye & Asike, 2020; Techagro, 2025). In Mali, the Ogossagou massacre on 23 March 2019, where around 160 Fulani villagers were

killed reflects the ethnicized dimensions of pastoral violence within governance vacuums (Ogossagou massacre, 2019–2025). Across Ghana and other parts of the Sahel, similar patterns of eco-violence are driven by competition over water, land scarcity, tenure insecurity, and sociocultural forces like identity-based prejudice and elite manipulation (Bukari et al., 2018; Olumba et al., 2022). These examples illustrate how pastoral conflicts while context-specific are consistently shaped by environmental stress, weak governance, resource competition, and socio-cultural friction.

In the Sudano-Sahel, pastoralist groups face increasing competition over grazing land and water resources due to climate variability, population growth, and agricultural expansion, often escalating into violent farmer-herder clashes (Brottem & McDonnell, 2020). Institutional weaknesses further exacerbate these conflicts, as inadequate governance structures and contested customary and formal arrangements hinder effective conflict resolution and resource management (Penu & Paalo, 2021). In Ethiopia's eastern Rift Valley, tensions are driven by contested boundaries, state-led land interventions, and the proliferation of small arms, which intensify cycles of violence and weaken community resilience (Burka et al., 2023). These patterns underscore that pastoral conflicts across Africa are not only resource-driven but also deeply embedded in structural and governance challenges that transcend national and regional boundaries.

In East Africa, pastoralist ethnic conflicts have been a recurring feature in the Karamoja sub-region and northern Kenya, Maasai territories in northern Tanzania. These conflicts are driven by resource scarcity, climate variability, cattle raiding, contested land access, and fragile governance structures (Wennström, 2024). In northern Kenya, Turkana, Pokot, and Samburu communities experience recurrent violent clashes over livestock and water, exacerbated by the proliferation of small arms and transforming raiding practices from

traditional restocking to commercialized violence (Scheffran, 2012; Bostedt et al., 2023). Water scarcity in Baringo County, Kenya, strongly correlates with violent conflict intensity among pastoralists, underscoring environmental stress as a vital predictor of insecurity (Safari & Wambua, 2024). In Kenya's Laikipia region, land conflicts between pastoralists and conservation or agricultural stakeholders continue to escalate, with 'conservation diplomacy' suggested as a method for mitigating tensions (Munyalo & Munyao, 2025). Across these contexts, pastoralist women bear disproportionate burdens: displacement, loss of household heads, and entrenched poverty leave them economically vulnerable and dependent on male protection (Jua, 2018).

In Uganda, the government has enacted a range of legal frameworks aligned with international and regional commitments to enhance the socio-economic welfare of women. These instruments including constitutional provisions, gender equality policies, and Uganda's National Action Plans under the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda are designed to address the multifaceted challenges women face, particularly in conflict-affected regions (The Uganda National Gender Policy, 2007). Complementing this is the UNDP Uganda Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2025, which outlines strategic objectives for inclusive governance, sustainable growth, and institutional transformation, with a strong focus on women's empowerment and participation (UNDP, 2022).

Despite these robust and supportive frameworks, pastoralist ethnic conflicts continue to persist among the Pokot communities. Conflicts involving the Pokot in Uganda are deeply entrenched in the Karamoja culture to which the Pokot belong and are primarily fuelled by cattle raiding, resource scarcity, and the proliferation of small arms. In districts such as Amudat and Nakapiripirit, recurrent raids have destabilized communities, resulting in cycles of displacement, food insecurity, and weakened livelihoods (Ekiru & Ameripus, 2022). The

persistence of cattle rustling has shifted from a traditional cultural practice to a more commercialized activity, often involving organized groups with access to modern weaponry (Mkutu, 2008; Muricho et al., 2023). These violent episodes have particularly devastating impacts on women, who are left to provide for their households in the absence of husbands killed or displaced during raids, thereby deepening gendered vulnerabilities and poverty (Jua, 2018). These conflicts undermine the policies aimed at improving the social economic welfare of women and exacerbate women's vulnerabilities through violence, displacement and harmful practices such as early and forced marriages. These dynamics not only violate women's rights but also hinder their access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, thereby impeding broader development goals and gender equality initiatives (Saferworld, 2020).

This study draws on Human Security Theory and Empowerment Theory to examine the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District amid persistent pastoralist conflicts. Human Security Theory, articulated in the *UNDP Human Development Report* of 1994 and advanced by scholars such as Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq, shifts the focus of security from states to individuals by emphasizing “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want.” It identifies economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political dimensions of security that together illuminate how cattle raiding and ethnic clashes disrupt livelihoods, limit access to health and education services, and erode women's socio-economic welfare. This framework informs the analysis of both the welfare of Pokot women and the impact of pastoralist conflict on their everyday lives.

Complementing this structural perspective, Empowerment Theory focuses on the processes through which marginalized groups gain control over their circumstances. Developed within community psychology and participatory development by scholars such as

Julian Rappaport and Marc Zimmerman, the theory views empowerment as both a process and an outcome in which individuals enhance their agency, access resources, and influence decision-making. In the context of Amudat, empowerment is evident in women's engagement in peace committees, savings groups, and livelihood initiatives that foster economic independence and social voice. Integrating these theories provides a holistic framework for the study. Human Security Theory explains the vulnerabilities created by conflict, while Empowerment Theory highlights the agency and strategies through which Pokot women work to improve their welfare. Together, they guide the assessment of how insecurity and empowerment intersect to shape socio-economic outcomes and inform strategies for sustainable improvement.

Conceptually, ethnic conflict is defined as a disagreement based on ethnic grounds between individuals or groups over positions, power, or resources, with objectives to counteract, harm, or destroy each other (Jua, 2018). Pastoralist ethnic conflicts refer to disputes among ethnic communities dependent on livestock (Pflaum, 2021). Conflicts are not solely characterized by violence; they can involve co-existence or constructive outcomes if conflicting parties reach a common understanding. However, when conflicts manifest as violence, they become complex and undesirable, leading to loss of lives, property destruction, and economic loss. Conversely, resolving conflicts through mutual understanding can result in positive societal changes.

Social welfare involves providing communal, economic, and health assistance to those unable to obtain these aids independently, ensuring that basic needs are met and enhancing overall well-being (Chang, 2000). Socio-economic welfare is conceptualized as a means of promoting social inclusion and maximizing overall utility within society, ensuring that everyone's well-being is valued equally (Lupi & Marsiglio, 2021). This study assesses

the socio-economic welfare of women through various dimensions, including the capacity of women to meet their basic needs, social inclusion and protection from any form of violence, access to resources and services, decision-making capabilities, access to livelihood opportunities, and meaningful lives. By exploring these factors, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how socio-economic conditions impact women's' well-being and their ability to participate fully in society.

The study was conducted in Amudat District which is inhabited by the Pokot in the Karamoja sub region of Uganda. The Pokot are one of the two largest ethnic groups in the Karamoja region of Eastern Uganda, distinguished by their unique cultural beliefs, social norms, and a long-standing history of conflict (Muggaga et al., 2017). Historically, the Pokot have been involved in seasonal Pastoralist ethnic conflicts, which often escalate during droughts due to scarcity of grazing resources. These conflicts are primarily ecological in nature, driven by intense competition over essential natural resources such as water and pastureland, which are essential for their pastoralist livelihoods. The seasonal nature of these conflicts reflects the deep interconnection between environmental factors and socio-economic pressures within the region.

Livestock and pastoralism are central to the Pokot's identity, forming the foundation of their cultural and economic practices (Ogalo, 2017). Despite this central role, women's status within the community is often undermined, leading to diminished empowerment in both socio-economic and political spheres (Onyima, 2019). This study assessed the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District. By focusing on the interplay between traditional pastoralist practices and the challenges posed by these conflicts, the study aimed to shed light on how such dynamics impact women's economic opportunities, social roles, and

overall well-being and the various strategies for improvement of women's socio-economic welfare.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The socio-economic exclusion of women in conflict-affected pastoralist regions remains a pressing issue in Uganda. In Amudat District, Pokot women continue to face systemic barriers to economic, social, and political participation, despite playing vital roles in their communities (UN Women, 2018; UNICEF Uganda, 2020). These barriers include limited access to education, restricted ownership of productive resources, and exclusion from decision-making processes (Atim et al., 2022). Deep-rooted patriarchal norms and recurring pastoralist conflicts—often fueled by ethnic tensions and resource competition—intensify these challenges by disrupting livelihoods and increasing household vulnerabilities (Amone et al., 2023; Saferworld, 2020).

Although existing literature (Amone et al., 2023; Balogun & Dudu, 2024; Howe et al., 2015; Ilukol, 2022; Mukisa et al., 2023; Stites & Howe, 2019; Saferworld, 2020) highlights the broader impacts of conflict in pastoral regions, the specific ways in which such conflicts affect women's socio-economic welfare remain underexplored, particularly in the Karamoja cluster. Pokot women often suffer from displacement, food insecurity, loss of assets, and gender-based violence yet their lived experiences and coping mechanisms are rarely documented in policy or academic discourse. As noted by UNDP (2024), without targeted research and inclusive strategies, development efforts in fragile borderland areas risk overlooking those most affected. This study therefore seeks to assess the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat, examine the impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts, and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies designed to improve their conditions.

### **1.3 Purpose**

This study assessed the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District in Uganda

#### **1.3.1 Specific Objectives**

- i. To explore the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District.
- ii. To examine the perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women.
- iii. To explore the contribution of strategies implemented to enhance socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What are the lived experiences of the Pokot women in areas affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts?
- ii. How have the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women been affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts?
- iii. How do strategies implemented in Amudat District contribute to improving the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study was described under the following sub-headings: geographical scope, content scope and time scope as indicated below.

##### **1.5.1 Geographical scope.**

This study focused on the conflict affected areas and was conducted in Amudat District, located in the Karamoja region of northeastern Uganda. Amudat District is bordered by the Republic of Kenya to the east, Moroto District to the north, Nakapiripirit District to the west, and Bukwo and Kween Districts to the south. The region's high susceptibility to

pastoralist ethnic conflicts made it an appropriate choice for this research. Specifically, the study concentrated on the Pokot communities residing in Amudat.

### **1.5.2 Content scope.**

The study investigated the perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of women. Specifically, the study assessed socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women in pastoralist conflicts areas, how the Pokot women were affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts, and effectiveness of strategies implemented by the government and other stakeholders in improving the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women affected by the pastoralist ethnic conflicts.

### **1.5.3 Time scope.**

The study was conducted from June to August 2024. This three months' time frame was selected to ensure the study explores what was going on in the communities at the time. This helped to capture prevailing views of the study participants as they existed at the time and to reach data saturation. Methodological rigor, including triangulation, ensured that the data collected were rich, in-depth, and reliable for addressing the research questions.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study makes significant contributions at practical, theoretical, and scholarly levels. Practically, the recommendations provide policymakers and practitioners with insights into the factors influencing the socio-economic welfare of women in pastoralist communities, thereby guiding policy reforms and interventions to mitigate the complexities and effects of ethnic conflicts. Theoretically, the study advances understanding of the nexus between women's socio-economic welfare and pastoralist ethnic conflicts, offering a conceptual foundation for future research and enriching debates in development studies. Scholarly, the study adds to the limited body of literature on the impact of pastoralist conflicts on women in

the Pokot community of Eastern Uganda and evaluates the effectiveness of existing strategies, thereby expanding the empirical evidence base for academics and researchers.

### **1.7 Justification of the study**

The increase in ethnic conflicts among pastoralist communities in Uganda has become a critical regional security issue, significantly disrupting the socio-economic development of local populations, particularly affecting women (Ogalo, 2017). These conflicts, often marked by seasonal violence, have severe consequences for the socio-economic welfare of the affected communities. Despite growing academic interest in women's socio-economic welfare since the 1980s (Ashraf & Ali, 2018), there remains a notable lack of comprehensive studies exploring the relationship between pastoralist ethnic conflicts and women's socio-economic conditions. This study sought to address this research gap by examining how these conflicts impact the socio-economic welfare of women within the Pokot communities. Understanding the impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on women's socio-economic welfare is key for developing targeted interventions and policies. Women in these conflict-prone areas are often disproportionately affected, facing heightened levels of economic hardship, displacement, and social exclusion. This study's findings contribute to a deeper understanding of these issues and inform the design of more effective strategies to support women in conflict-affected regions.

### **1.8 Operational definition of key terms and concepts**

**Conflict:** Refers to disputes, tensions, or competition over resources, social status or power that negatively interrupt the social and economic stability of an individual or communities, thereby undermining their socio-economic well-being.

**Ethnic conflict:** Refers to a conflict on ethnic grounds between individuals or parties over claims to position, power, and limited resources, when the rivals' objectives are to undermine, harm, or eliminate one another.

**Pastoralist conflicts:** Refers to disagreements across ethnic communities who depend on livestock.

**Socio-economic welfare:** Was viewed from the perspective of social inclusion, social protection and social status of women, health, access to resources, economic opportunities, participation in decision making and their psychological well-being.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter covers the theoretical review, and related literature on pastoralist ethnic conflicts, the socio-economic welfare of women in these conflict areas, and the strategies employed to enhance their socio-economic conditions.

#### **2.1 Theoretical review**

This study is grounded in Human Security Theory and Empowerment Theory, two complementary frameworks that provide a multidimensional understanding of the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District within the context of pastoralist conflicts. The integration of these theories offers an analytical lens that captures both the structural threats posed by insecurity and the agency of women in responding to those threats. Human Security Theory emerged in the early 1990s as a response to the limitations of traditional state-centric conceptions of security. Pioneered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its landmark Human Development Report of 1994, the theory shifts the focus from the protection of state borders to the protection of individuals and communities. Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq are among the key intellectual architects of this perspective, which emphasizes “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” as essential conditions for human well-being.

Human security is operationalized through seven interdependent dimensions economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security each of which speaks directly to the lived realities of pastoralist communities. In Amudat District, where cross-border cattle raids and ethnic clashes persist, this framework is critical for understanding how violent conflict disrupts women’s livelihoods, restricts access to

education and healthcare, threatens physical safety, and limits economic opportunities. By placing individuals at the center of analysis, Human Security Theory illuminates the ways in which pastoralist conflicts undermine the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women and provides a conceptual basis for exploring the first two objectives of this study: assessing their welfare and examining the perceived impact of ethnic conflict.

While Human Security Theory highlights the structural vulnerabilities created by conflict, Empowerment Theory addresses the processes through which marginalized groups mobilize to overcome these constraints. Originating in the fields of community psychology, feminist scholarship, and participatory development, Empowerment Theory was advanced by scholars such as Julian Rappaport (1987) and later refined by Marc Zimmerman (2000). The theory conceives empowerment as both a process and an outcome in which individuals and communities gain control over their lives, acquire critical awareness, and develop the ability to influence social and political structures.

Empowerment occurs at multiple levels psychological, organizational, and community enabling people not only to access resources but also to challenge the norms and power relations that perpetuate inequality. For Pokot women, empowerment is reflected in their participation in peace committees, women's savings groups, and livelihood diversification initiatives that enhance agency, build confidence, and create pathways to economic independence. This theoretical lens directly informs the third objective of the study, which seeks to explore the contribution of strategies designed to improve women's socio-economic welfare.

The integration of Human Security and Empowerment Theories creates a robust framework for analyzing the complex realities of Pokot women's lives in Amudat District. Human Security Theory provides the structural and contextual analysis necessary to understand how

conflict erodes welfare, while Empowerment Theory foregrounds the agency of women and the transformative potential of grassroots strategies. Together, these theories enable a nuanced exploration of both the risks and the responses revealing how the pursuit of security and the exercise of agency intersect to shape women's socio-economic well-being. By drawing on these complementary perspectives, the study moves beyond a narrow focus on either vulnerability or resilience and instead captures the dynamic interplay between external threats and internal capacities that define the everyday struggles and aspirations of Pokot women.

## **2.2 Women's socio-economic welfare in Pastoralist ethnic conflict areas**

The women's socio-economic welfare challenges among the pastoralist communities are particularly experienced in relation to their ability to participate in decision-making processes, social inclusion, social protection, access to resources and control of property, income levels and ability to meet their basic needs. Ayele (2019), using a convergent parallel design, examined pastoral women's access to and control over livelihood assets in the Fafan zone of Ethiopia's Somali region. The study highlighted that access and control over assets by pastoral women are severely limited, with community norms and values granting decision-making power primarily to men. In this study, it was found that resource control is predominantly held by men, with patriarchal traditions among the Pokot continuing to restrict women's access to and control over resources.

In their study, Khan and Digal (2023) assessed women's health issues in the border villages of Jammu and Kashmir in India. The study revealed that women endured hazardous living conditions with no proper health care facilities compounded by pervasive discrimination. They often experience severe limitations in social engagement and mobility, and their financial dependence on husbands, coupled with high rates of illiteracy and

unemployment, further entrenching their vulnerability. Similarly, Lenah (2016) observed that conflicts exacerbate the dire circumstances of already impoverished populations, with women bearing a disproportionate burden. The Pokot women in the current study face comparable challenges, including elevated levels of hunger and poor nutrition, reflecting a broader pattern of socio-economic disadvantages that intensifies with conflict. These shared experiences highlight the systemic nature of their struggles, where conflict not only heightens existing inequalities but also creates new barriers to accessing essential resources and opportunities.

Furthermore, Anbacha and Kjosavik (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study examining gender perspectives regarding climatic and non-climatic stressors in Borona, Southern Ethiopia. Their findings revealed that climatic changes have significantly altered traditional livelihood patterns, compelling many pastoralist women to assume additional responsibilities, within their households and communities. This shift has led to an increased workload for women, intensifying their socio-economic burdens and further exposing them to vulnerabilities associated with environmental and social change. Tenaws (2021) surveyed climate change impacts on pastoral livelihoods in Sitti zone, Somali regional state, finding that women are the most vulnerable group to climate change effects, with 85% of women significantly affected.

Galwab et al., (2024), also reported that climate variability directly impacts women and girls, who frequently bear the majority of unpaid household care duties. According to Hando (2023), conflicts and post-conflict situations further intensify women's work burdens as traditional male roles diminish, often leading women to become the primary breadwinners. The study underscores the need to consider gender-specific impacts when designing adaptive strategies for pastoralist communities facing complex stressors.

Additionally, Fernandez-Gimenez et al. (2021) explored the pathways of Spanish women pastoralists into livestock management, revealing that these women face social isolation and lack peer support, encountering scepticism about their abilities from the broader society. The study also noted varied degrees of marginalization based on age, marital, and socio-economic status. Banwell (2020), discussed how rape and sexual violence are particularly prevalent in conflict zones, emphasizing that women are disproportionately affected by these forms of violence. Similarly, the current study investigated the socio-economic welfare of women in Amudat. Among the Pokot, animal husbandry and pastoralism are not merely economic activities but are deeply embedded in their cultural and social fabric, symbolizing status, wealth, and community identity (Ogalo, 2017). This centrality of pastoralism deeply shapes the socio-economic landscape of the Pokot, influencing social norms, power structures, and resource distribution.

However, within this context, women's socio-economic and political empowerment remains significantly limited (Onyima, 2019). Despite the central role that women play in pastoral communities, often managing household responsibilities, contributing to livestock care, and participating in daily economic activities, Pokot women face entrenched systemic barriers. These include limited access to education, exclusion from decision-making processes, and cultural norms that prioritize male authority. Such constraints not only hinder women's advancement and decision-making power, but also restrict their ability to influence community development and secure equitable socio-economic outcomes.

The World Economic Forum (2020) underscores that a woman in pastoralist settings face heightened vulnerability due to significantly lower levels of education and systemic marginalization from both political and domestic decision-making processes. This marginalization manifests in restricted access to resources, limited participation in

community governance, and reduced economic opportunities, all of which perpetuate their socio-economic disadvantage. Consequently, while pastoralism remains a cornerstone of Pokot identity and livelihood, it simultaneously delineates the boundaries of women's empowerment. The structural limitations highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to address these disparities and promoting inclusive development within pastoralist communities.

Despite scholarly efforts to address the socio-economic welfare of women in the pastoralist areas, there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific conditions faced by Pokot women in Uganda. Existing analyses tend to be broader, often covering the entire Karamoja region and relying heavily on quantitative data. This may not fully capture the detailed experiences of individual communities. This study aimed to fill this gap, by providing a qualitative assessment of the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in the Pastoralist areas of Amudat District. In pastoralist societies, gender roles are deeply embedded in cultural norms and economic structures. Men typically dominate public decision-making, control livestock ownership, and manage external trade and mobility. Their roles are often associated with herding, security, and negotiating communal resources.

Women, on the other hand, play crucial, yet often undervalued roles in sustaining household economies. They are responsible for domestic labor, childcare, food preparation, and frequently contribute to livestock care, especially in managing small stock like goats and poultry. In many cases, women also engage in informal trade and resource gathering, such as collecting water and firewood. Despite their central contributions, women in pastoralist communities face systemic barriers to education, property ownership, and political participation. Cultural practices such as bride price, polygamy, and male-dominated inheritance systems further entrench gender inequality. Their exclusion from formal decision-

making processes limits their influence over community development and resource allocation.

However, shifts in climate, conflict, and economic pressures are gradually reshaping these roles. Women are increasingly taking on new responsibilities, sometimes becoming heads of households or primary income earners, especially in conflict-affected or drought-prone regions. These changes present both challenges and opportunities for advancing gender equity in pastoralist settings. This study offered a more comprehensive approach to understanding their socio-economic conditions and contributed to more targeted and effective policy interventions of individual communities.

### **2.3 Perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of women**

The perceived impact of Pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of women was substantial. Mutsotso et al. (2025) assessed women's participation in cattle rustling: A case study of Pokot women in North Western Kenya. The study found that women in the pastoral communities are great influencers of pastoralist ethnic conflicts. Women exert pressure, deploy several sanctions towards men and boys, cattle raiding in pastoralist communities do not occur without the concurrence of women. The study further revealed that, women carry the blame for any unsuccessful raid. These findings underscore the fact that women's role in motivating men in Pastoralist ethnic conflicts, this shows how deeply their socio-economic welfare is intertwined within the conflict system, shaped by and depend on conflicts. However, this dependence exacerbates cycles of poverty, insecurity, limited empowerment and levels of vulnerabilities.

Relatedly, Abdulrashid et al. (2018) investigated the prevalence and impacts of livestock rustling in rural Katsina State, Nigeria. Their findings indicated that cattle rustling

exacerbates the cycle of poverty within communities, creating a significant income disparity between men and women, with women being disproportionately affected. This disparity is further compounded by the erosion of women's economic assets and opportunities, deepening their vulnerability. Complementarily, Odary et al. (2020) reviewed the role of women pastoralists in conflicts in the Horn of Africa, demonstrating that women are marginalized and disempowered, with restricted access to decision-making processes in post-conflict settings. This underscores the broader issue of women's limited participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, highlighting the need for more inclusive approaches to address their specific challenges and needs.

Ochieng (2017) investigated the participation of women in peacebuilding efforts between the Luo of Upper Nyakach and the Kipsigis of Sigowet sub-counties, revealing that during pastoralist conflicts, women and girls often become "soft targets" for revenge attacks. They suffer disproportionately from rape, sexual violence, displacement, and heightened social and economic vulnerability. These results point to the gendered nature of conflict, revealing the disproportionate vulnerabilities women face and the critical need to integrate their perspectives in peacebuilding initiatives.

Relatedly, Sani et al. (2021) explored rural migration and relative deprivation in agro-pastoral communities in Nigeria, noting that women and girls are particularly affected by cattle rustling. Their study revealed that women frequently faced rape, stigmatization, and loss of their means of survival. The violence associated with cattle rustling often disrupted women's ability to maintain their livelihoods and exacerbated their vulnerability. Additionally, the study highlighted how these experiences contributed to long-term psychological trauma and hindered women's access to essential resources and support networks.

Kimani et al. (2021) examined the changes in cattle rustling on gender relations among the Pokot in West Pokot, Kenya. The study indicated that, young girls and women are barred from attending school in order to help men transport guns during cattle rustling and conflicts. The study further revealed that women and children often fell victims of cattle rustling as many had to pay with their lives. This study affirms that women are exposed to physical and psychological harm during pastoralists ethnic conflicts, their human capital development is not only limited but their gendered economic and social marginalization is reinforced. In addition, Singh et al. (2022) investigated armed conflict and girl child marriages, the results indicated that conflicts deprive women of their right to education as they tend to tolerate and live on with the indirect consequences of conflicts.

Desmidt and Davis (2019) assessed the rhetoric versus actual advancements in the women, peace, and security agenda in Africa, concluding that women shouldered the majority of the day-to-day family burden during Pastoralist conflicts, while men engaged in raids. This dynamic led to economic dependency and increased susceptibility to manipulation without adequate protection. Saferworld (2020) also noted that insecurity from raiding disrupts markets, impedes investment, and leads to increased violence against women. Their findings also pointed to the broader implications of this dynamic, including the increased strain on women's mental health and overall well-being.

Kimani (2021) assessed gender transformation in cattle rustling and its implications on security management in west Pokot County, Kenya. His findings highlighted that, women suffered death in the hands of rustlers, their houses destroyed and burnt. These findings underscore the fact that women's contribution in pastoralist communities that is tied to domestic assets is lost. Women and children who often stay home while men went riding not only loose shelter but a sense of safety during raids and conflicts. The evidence underscored

the urgent need for targeted interventions to address both immediate and ongoing health challenges faced by women in conflict-affected regions.

Bendavid et al. (2021) investigated how armed conflicts impact women's and children's health, their finding indicated that such conflicts have detrimental effects on women's survival, including physical harm, infectious diseases, and poor mental, sexual, and reproductive health. Further, Sani et al. (2021) discussed the rural migration and relative deprivation in agro-pastoral communities under the threat of cattle rustling in Nigeria. Their study revealed that women and girls were most impacted by the raiders. In many cases, women were raped, stigmatized, and their means of survival was stolen. Zhang et al. (2021) further explored how conflicts and self-reported insecurity affect maternity healthcare and child health outcomes in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their study highlighted significant issues with maternal health and prenatal care in conflict-affected areas, underscoring the need for better protection for women and girls during conflicts.

In the same vein Ayele (2019) examined the status of pastoral women's access to and control over livelihood assets, the results revealed that men have extra access and control of land plus income household than women as determined by society norms and this situation is made worse during cross-border conflicts. Often times during conflicts, displacement occurs and women who have been displaced from their land by conflicts find it difficult to reclaim their property on return. Lastly, Aliru (2023) examined borderland conflicts and women's livelihoods in Madi Subcounty, Northern Uganda. The study revealed that women whose husbands died in conflicts faced significant difficulties accessing family land for farming due to entrenched cultural constraints, which severely impacts their ability to sustain their daily livelihoods. Additionally, the research highlighted that these widows often experienced compounded economic hardships, including limited access to financial resources

and social support, which further exacerbated their vulnerability. The study reinforces the urgent need for targeted interventions to support these women in reclaiming their economic and social stability.

Despite existing knowledge on the impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on socio-economic welfare, information remains fragmented, particularly concerning Pokot women in Uganda. Many studies have focused on broader impacts or other regions, leaving a gap in the specific understanding of how these conflicts uniquely affect Pokot women. This study, therefore, aimed to assess the perceived impact of such conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women, addressing gaps in the literature and providing a focused analysis on this marginalized group. Through this approach of examining the lived experiences of Pokot women, this research sought to contribute valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by Pokot women and inform targeted policy and support measures.

#### **2.4 Exploring the Contribution of Strategies Implemented to Enhance the Socio-Economic Welfare of Women**

Numerous strategies have been employed across African nations to address pastoralist ethnic conflicts and improve the socio-economic welfare of women and pastoralist communities. These strategies are often categorized as government-led, community-driven, or private sector initiatives (Sikuku & Bolatito, 2023). In Kenya, Kimokoti (2022) examined cattle rustling, identifying its root causes, emerging trends, and mitigation strategies. The study highlighted the Kenyan government's extensive disarmament campaigns in banditry-prone counties, which significantly reduced the prevalence of firearms among the populace, aiming to curb violence associated with cattle rustling and stabilize the region. Bethuel (2022) investigated joint disarmament programs between Kenya and Uganda, focusing on the security of nomadic pastoralist communities along the Turkwel River belt. The study

indicated that Uganda made substantial progress by providing alternative livelihoods for pastoralists, mitigating some adverse effects of conflict. Shethun (2023) explored cross-border conflict peacebuilding practices among the Dassanech, Nyangatom, and Hammer communities of Ethiopia and the Turkana of Kenya. The study emphasized the critical role of state-led diplomacy in resolving, preventing, and managing conflicts, noting the increasing involvement of women in peacebuilding efforts.

Alemneh and Alemu (2023) highlighted the necessity of understanding the structures, contexts, and actors involved in conflicts. Their findings underscored the importance of collaboration between state and non-state actors, along with community engagement, in promoting resource-sharing and interdependence among communities, thereby enhancing women's socio-economic welfare in conflict-affected regions. Rai (2017) examined established structures for enhancing women's welfare, mainstreaming gender, and democratizing the state. The study argued that institutionalizing women's welfare across all policy levels has been a global concern and a critical tool for improving women's welfare during cross-border conflicts.

Ashraf and Ali (2018) analyzed socio-economic welfare and the state of women in Pakistan, revealing that traditional limitations have hindered various initiatives targeting pastoralist women from being fully explored. However, more targeted initiatives focused on pastoralist women's economic empowerment have shown potential in supporting women's overall development and economic advancement. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2018) noted that institutions handling animal health, pasture, and rural water development are fragmented and inadequately facilitated. This fragmentation resulted in a lack of integrated policy and program approaches, leaving pastoral communities underserved and invisible in terms of project focus and delivery.

Nansereko (2017) investigated the impact of women's entrepreneurship programs on the welfare of beneficiaries in Nansana, Uganda. The findings showed that Uganda's women's entrepreneurship program interventions significantly improved the socio-economic welfare of women entrepreneurs by enhancing household incomes. Paul (2019) explored women's socio-economic growth in Matany sub-county, Uganda, and found that economic empowerment programs were effective in boosting women's economic growth and promoting gender integration at various levels.

Bargoria (2017) conducted a study in Tinderet sub-county of Nandi County, targeting 122 women in self-help groups, and showed that women who participated in these groups experienced increases in income, self-confidence, and decision-making capabilities regarding household needs. Ali et al. (2017) tested the theory of social networking on the empowerment of people, particularly women, in two villages in Bangladesh. Their findings suggested that social capital plays a crucial role in women's empowerment, enabling them to participate more effectively in household decision-making processes.

The study by Badejo et al. (2017) on the impact of self-help groups on pastoral women's empowerment and agency in Nigeria showed that women's attempts to engage in business activities faced numerous challenges. Many women lacked the necessary entrepreneurship skills and faced obstacles such as inadequate transportation, which limited their access to financial resources compared to men. Ashraf and Ali (2018) examined Pakistan's socio-economic position and treatment of women, identifying barriers related to the labor market and traditional and social institutions that prevented women from fully participating in development activities in cross-border communities. Their analysis highlights the need for reform in both economic and social institutions to facilitate women's active participation. The literature indicates that regional studies contend that pastoralist ethnic

conflicts among pastoral communities significantly affect livelihoods and regional peace. There is evidence that local governments and national stakeholders are willing to collaborate on developing initiatives to empower communities affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts. This willingness suggests potential progress if these initiatives are well-coordinated and inclusive.

However, there has been limited focus on gender-disaggregated research to understand how these conflicts specifically impact women and how women could be empowered to promote initiatives aimed at reducing pastoralist conflicts and enhancing their socio-economic welfare. This research, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by recommending strategies to improve the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women affected by cross-border pastoralist ethnic conflicts. Addressing this gap is essential to ensuring that women's specific needs are met and that they are effectively supported in their roles as both victims and active participants in conflict resolution.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology employed to assess the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women experiencing pastoralist ethnic conflicts in Amudat District, Uganda. The chapter details the research design, study area, study population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments/methods, data analysis procedures, quality assurance measures, ethical considerations, and potential limitations.

#### **3.1 Study Design**

The study adopted a phenomenological research design to explore lived experiences of Pokot women in the context of pastoralist ethnic conflicts in Amudat District, Uganda. Phenomenology was chosen for its qualitative nature, allowing for an in-depth exploration of subjective experiences and the meanings attributed to these conflicts (Neubauer et al., 2019; Creswell, 2018). It focused on understanding the lived experiences as perceived and interpreted by individuals (Qutoshi, 2018). Research by Neubauer et al. (2019) underscored the effectiveness of phenomenology in amplifying marginalized voices and informing context-specific interventions among conflict-affected populations. Similarly, Creswell (2018) affirmed the methodological accuracy of phenomenological inquiry in qualitative research, particularly in capturing the complexities of human experiences in diverse cultural and social settings.

In qualitative research, phenomenology enables researchers to uncover the lived realities of participants, capturing their perspectives, emotions, and interpretations of events within their socio-cultural contexts (Ellis, 2019). This design prioritized qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather rich and descriptive data. These methods facilitated a deep exploration of participants' inner

experiences, critical for understanding how Pokot women navigate challenges and construct meaning amidst conflicts.

### **3.2 Study Area**

The research was conducted in Amudat District, Northeastern Uganda, situated in Karamoja Sub-region. Specifically, the study focused on Amudat Sub-County, largely impacted by Pastoralist conflicts involving the Pokot of Uganda, Pokot of Kenya, and Turkana communities of Kenya. This area was selected due to its significant socio-economic challenges exacerbated by these conflicts, making it critical for examining their impacts on local communities (Amudat District Local Government, 2018).

Amudat District features an arid and semi-arid environment central for pastoralist livelihoods, with a predominantly rural population engaged in livestock farming. The Pokot community constituted one of the main ethnic groups in the area. Proximity to Kenya and historical tensions between the Pokot of Uganda and Kenya, as well as the Turkana communities of Kenya, had contributed to recurrent conflicts over resources such as water and pasture.

The selection of Amudat Sub-County for this study was informed by documented socio-economic challenges exacerbated by conflicts (Amudat District Local Government, 2018). Persistent poverty, limited access to basic services, and high levels of food insecurity were identified as key issues facing the local population. These challenges are further compounded by livelihood disruptions and displacement caused by conflicts, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as women, children, and the elderly. Research by humanitarian organizations and academic institutions highlights the socio-economic and humanitarian consequences of Pastoralist conflicts on local communities, necessitating context-specific research and targeted interventions (UNDP Uganda, 2018).

### **3.3 Study Population**

The study targeted Pokot women residing in conflict-affected areas of Amudat District, Uganda, encompassing married women, widows, the elderly women, single mothers and men representatives. Previous studies (Bartels et al., 2020; Campbell et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2018) highlight the unique vulnerabilities and challenges faced by women in conflict zones, emphasizing the need for focused research efforts to address their specific socio-economic needs. The selection of Pokot women in Amudat District was motivated by their vulnerability to the impacts of pastoralist ethnic conflicts, given their roles in household management, economic activities, and community resilience. As stressed by Kumar et al. (2018), women often bear the brunt of conflict-related disruptions, loss of livelihoods, and exposure to gender-based violence. Understanding these dynamics is critical for developing targeted interventions that promote women's empowerment and resilience in conflict-affected settings.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

The research design incorporated 09 key informant interviews and 5 focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore the socio-economic impacts of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on Pokot women in Amudat District, Uganda. Each FGD comprised an average of 8-12 respondents, from diverse age groups and socio-economic backgrounds, totalling approximately to 45 participants across all groups. One FGD was mixed to facilitate the capture of the perspectives of men while the remaining four FGD were conducted exclusively with women. This overall sample size was selected based on recommendations from previous qualitative studies emphasizing data saturation and comprehensive coverage of study objectives (Creswell, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017; Guest et al., 2006). According to Creswell (2018), data saturation occurs when no new information or themes emerge from additional data collection effort. In total, 9 key informant interviews and 5 FGDs were conducted until data saturation was achieved, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of participant perspectives.

Participants were purposively sampled based on their knowledge, experiences, and roles relevant to Pastoralist ethnic conflicts, women's socio-economic welfare and representation of different community perspectives in Amudat District. This targeted approach ensured the sample represented a diverse range of perspectives and expertise pertinent to the study objectives. Throughout data collection, rigorous methods were employed to uphold the quality and trustworthiness of the findings, including detailed notetaking, audio recording of interviews and FGDs with participant consent, and ongoing reflexivity among the research team to mitigate biases and maintain methodological thoroughness.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques**

Purposive sampling was utilized to select participants for focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews, aligning with the qualitative nature of this study. Purposive sampling enabled the deliberate inclusion of individuals with direct knowledge and experience related to Pastoralist ethnic conflicts and their impact on women's socio-economic welfare. This choice of the methodology facilitated the capture of a variety of perspectives and insights essential for understanding the complexities of socio-economic dynamics in conflict-affected settings (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

The rationale for purposive sampling included the selection of participants based on their expertise, roles, and experiences related to the study topic, ensuring the sample included individuals capable of providing rich insights into the impacts of conflicts on women's socio-economic welfare. By purposefully selecting key informants from diverse backgrounds (e.g., community leaders, government officials, NGO representatives), the study captured a wide range of viewpoints and experiences, enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of qualitative data collection.

### **3.6 Data Instruments**

The study employed multiple data collection instruments and methods to gather comprehensive qualitative data on the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women experiencing pastoralist ethnic conflicts.

#### **3.6.1 Interview Guide.**

A semi-structured interview guide was employed to conduct interviews with key informants, including community leaders, local government officials, and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This approach ensured flexibility in questioning while maintaining consistency in exploring key themes, issues and procedures that answered the research questions (Levitt et al., 2018). Interviews were conducted in a conversational style, allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives regarding the socio-economic perceived impacts of conflicts on Pokot women. Each interview session was audio-recorded with participants' consent to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

#### **3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide.**

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were facilitated using a structured guide to engage women and mixed groups in discussions on the socio-economic perceived impacts of conflicts. Conducted in community settings, FGDs promoted open dialogue and collective sharing of experiences (Van Eeuwijk & Angehrn, 2017). The structured guide facilitated exploration of diverse viewpoints and captured consensus among participants on challenges and opportunities amidst ethnic conflicts. Detailed notes supplemented audio recordings, ensuring comprehensive data collection.

#### **3.6.3 Observation Checklist.**

An observation checklist complemented interviews and FGDs by systematically documenting direct observations of community dynamics and daily challenges faced by Pokot women in

conflict-affected areas. Observations were conducted across various settings within Amudat District to capture contextual factors influencing socio-economic conditions. The checklist included items such as daily routines, community interactions, and visible impacts of conflicts on infrastructure and livelihoods. Observational data provided valuable context and complemented insights gathered through interviews and discussions.

### **3.7 Data Quality Control**

The study adopted phenomenology as its design, ensuring quality control measures grounded in established research methodologies. Dependability, referring to the consistency and stability of findings over time and across researchers (Kyngäs et al., 2020; Patton, 2015) was rigorously maintained through detailed documentation. For example, detailed protocols for data collection, coding procedures, and analytical techniques were carried out and followed to ensure traceability and replicability (Mora-Cantalops et al., 2021). This approach aligned with Patton's (2015) assertion that dependability enhances the trustworthiness of qualitative research by demonstrating consistency in methods and findings.

Credibility which is crucial for establishing the believability and accuracy of research findings (Nosek et al., 2018) was strengthened through triangulation of data sources. The study combined semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and observations to validate findings across multiple perspectives (Smit & Onwuegbuzie, 2018). This triangulation not only corroborated the accuracy of interpretations but also enriched the depth of understanding of socio-economic impacts in conflict-affected areas.

Confirmability, ensuring that findings are grounded in collected data rather than researchers' biases (Haven & Van, 2019; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was supported by maintaining detailed audit trails. These trails documented decisions made during data collection, coding, and analysis, including rationales behind methodological choices (Roger,

2018). Additionally, peer review processes involving research assistants and colleagues provided critical scrutiny and validation of interpretations, enhancing the objectivity and neutrality of the study's outcomes (Yin, 2018). Transferability, that is the extent to which findings can be applied to other contexts (Nowell et al., 2017) was ensured through detailed description of study participants, settings, and contexts. By providing rich, contextual descriptions, the study aimed to facilitate readers' assessment of the applicability of findings in similar settings (Weise et al., 2020). The current study provided comprehensive explanations for a clear representation of the findings and to facilitate the applicability of the findings in the context of the Pokot women.

### **3.8 Study Procedures.**

Following approval from the Department of Development Studies, Faculty of social science, and directorate of graduate training and research, I commenced data collection in a phased approach with the help of trained research assistants using focused group discussions, key informant interviews and observations. To ensure accuracy during data analysis, interviews and FGDs were audio-recorded with participants' consent (Silverman & Patterson 2021; Xu et al., 2020). Research assistants handled recordings confidentially, ensuring secure storage and restricted access to authorized team members only. Transcripts were anonymized to protect participants' identities, maintaining confidentiality throughout the research process (Miles et al., 2014).

### **3.9 Data Processing and Analysis**

Qualitative data collected from interviews, FGDs, and observations underwent rigorous processing and analysis using thematic content analysis. This methodological approach facilitated a systematic exploration of emerging themes and patterns aligned with study objectives (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Data transcripts from participants during the study was used to draw meaningful conclusions.

### **3.9.1 Data Organization.**

Recorded interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness (Saldana, 2016). Transcripts were organized into manageable units of analysis, such as paragraphs or meaningful segments, to facilitate systematic coding and thematic identification (Guest et al., 2020). The study identified meaningful phenomena and experiences both positive and negative that offered insights into the socio-economic perception of the Pokot women.

### **3.9.2 Data Coding.**

During the initial coding phase, data segments were systematically labeled based on recurring themes and patterns identified in the transcripts (Roger, 2018). This process involved both descriptive coding to categorize data and interpretive coding to uncover underlying meanings and implications (Charmaz, 2017). Pseudo names were used for key informants' participants and focused group discussions (Flick, 2018). This supported the researcher in ensuring consistency and rigor in the analysis process.

### **3.9.3 Theme Development.**

Themes were developed by grouping related codes into broader categories that reflected key aspects of the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This iterative process of theme development allowed for exploration of socio-economic impacts and conflict experiences among Pokot women (Terry et al., 2017). Each theme captured a coherent pattern of meaning derived from the dataset, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the study phenomena.

### **3.9.4 Data Interpretation.**

Data interpretation involved deriving meaningful insights and explanations from the coded data to address the study objectives (Creswell, 2013). Researchers analysed relationships

between themes and explored their implications within broader socio-economic contexts and conflict dynamics (Mezmir, 2020; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process of interpretation aimed to uncover deeper insights that could inform policies, interventions, and further research efforts (Patton, 2015). The study summarized data collected for the relevancy and insights the data held, while discarding all the irrelevant data.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical principles guided all aspects of the research to ensure the protection, rights, and well-being of participants, particularly in conflict-affected areas. The study adhered to established guidelines and frameworks to maintain ethical integrity throughout the research process.

#### **3.10.1 Voluntary Participation.**

Voluntary participation was paramount to respect participants' autonomy and minimize coercion or undue influence. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. This approach was aligned with ethical guidelines that emphasize voluntary and informed consent as fundamental principles in ethical research (World Medical Association, 2013). For example, in studies involving vulnerable populations such as conflict-affected communities, ensuring voluntary participation is crucial to safeguarding participants' rights (United Nations, 2006). By clearly explaining the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks, researchers empowered participants to make informed decisions about their involvement.

#### **3.10.2 Informed Consent**

Informed consent procedures were rigorously implemented to ensure participants fully understood the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits before agreeing to participate (National Institutes of Health, 2018). Participants were provided with detailed information in a language and format accessible to them, fostering transparency and trust.

Literature suggests that obtaining informed consent is not just a procedural step but an ethical obligation to respect participants' autonomy and rights (Hennink, et al., (2020). By using clear and comprehensible consent forms and allowing ample time for participants to ask questions and seek clarification, researchers upheld ethical standards and promoted ethical conduct in research (Bryman, 2016).

### **3.10.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality measures were rigorously maintained throughout the research process to protect participants' privacy and sensitive information (Miles et al., 2014). All data collected, including audio recordings, transcripts, and field notes, were anonymized and stored securely. Access to identifiable information was restricted to authorized research team members only, ensuring confidentiality and minimizing the risk of inadvertent disclosure. Research literature underscores the importance of confidentiality in fostering trust between researchers and participants, particularly in studies involving sensitive topics or vulnerable populations (Silverman, 2016). By adhering to strict confidentiality protocols and anonymizing data, researchers ensured that participants' identities and personal information remained protected throughout the study (Hennink, et al., 2020). Participants were given pseudo names.

### **3.10.4 Anonymity**

Participants' anonymity was safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms or codes during data analysis and dissemination of findings (Saldana, 2016). Personal details that could potentially identify participants were omitted or altered to ensure confidentiality in all research outputs. Anonymity is essential in qualitative research to protect participants from potential harm or repercussions associated with their participation (Krueger & Casey, 2015). By using anonymization techniques and avoiding the use of identifying information in research outputs, researchers respected participants' confidentiality and minimized risks to their privacy.

### **3.10.5 Safeguarding Privacy**

Privacy considerations were prioritized throughout the study to create a safe and respectful environment for participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Data collection took place in settings that ensured confidentiality and minimized the risk of inadvertent disclosure. Secure data management protocols were implemented to protect participants' privacy and maintain trustworthiness in the research process. Ensuring privacy is crucial in maintaining the integrity of research outcomes and upholding ethical standards (Creswell, 2018). By establishing clear protocols for data handling and storage, researchers minimized risks associated with breaches of confidentiality and demonstrated their commitment to protecting participants' privacy rights.

### **3.10.6 Risk Assessment and Mitigation**

The study conducted a comprehensive risk assessment to identify potential risks associated with discussing sensitive topics, such as conflict and socio-economic vulnerabilities (Robinson, 2020). Measures were implemented to minimize emotional distress or harm to participants, including researcher training on recognizing and responding to signs of distress.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, analysis, and interpretation of data concerning the socio-economic welfare of women in areas affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts. The study specifically focused on the Pokot women in Amudat District in Karamoja subregion to understand their socio-economic conditions amidst these conflicts. Data was collected from a sample of 54 (36 female, 18 male) participants through Key Informant Interviews (KI), Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Observation. The predominance of female participants in focus group discussions was intentional, aligning with the study's primary focus on the socio-economic welfare of women.

The findings were presented so as to address the following research Objectives.

- i. To explore the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District.
- ii. To examine the perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women in Amudat District.
- iii. To explore the contribution of strategies implemented to enhance socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat.

To analyse the data collected in order to address the study objectives and answer the research questions, the researcher used NVIVO-10 to code the qualitative data and thereafter used the concept maps so as to generate responses for the coded data which was also presented using the interview excerpts.

**Profile of respondents:** This section presents respondents' profile as shown in the table below, it displays that the majority of the respondents in the focus group discussions were female, a factor that is considered relevant to the purpose of the study. The dominance of

male participants in the key informants' interviews was majorly because most of the positions interviewed were occupied by male, reflecting the male-dominated nature of decision-making positions in Karamojong society.

This gender disparity is largely due to the fact that most of the positions interviewed were held by men. Further, the participation of men and other local area leaders was also to offer insights into the roles played by the local leadership and men in their community in relation to the study. To ensure confidentiality, each respondent was assigned a pseudonym (alias) to protect their identity.

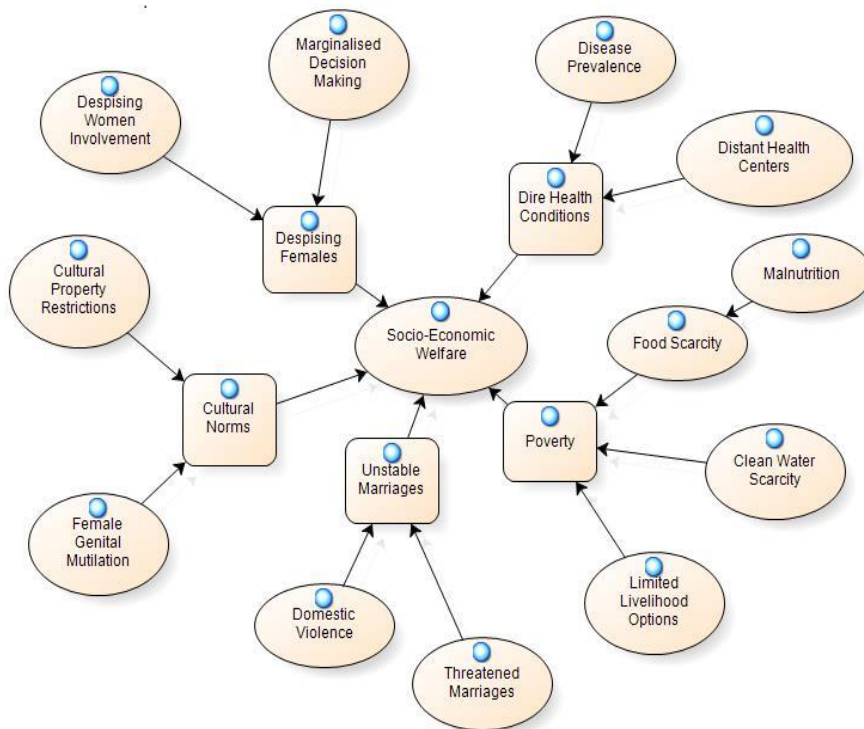
**Table 4.1: Respondents Profile**

	<i>No</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Alias</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>
<i>KI- Interviews</i>	1	Karamoja	Gombolola Internal Security Officer ( <b>GISO</b> )	<i>Stephen</i>	30	Male
	2		Amudat	Area District Councillor	<i>John</i>	43
	3	Amudat	Community Development Officer	<i>Mark</i>	35	Male
	4	Amudat	Parish Councillor	<i>James</i>	50	Male
	5	Amudat	LC-III, Amudat TC	<i>Jude</i>	48	Male
	6	Amudat	Mayor, Amudat TC	<i>Musa</i>	39	Male
	7	Amudat	Women Representative	<i>Mukiise</i>	26	Female
	8	Amudat	Senior Assistant Secretary,	<i>Samalie</i>	37	Female
	9	Amudat	Men Representative	<i>Simbwa</i>	26	Male
<i>FGDs</i>	<b>No</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Focus Group Discussion</b>		<b>Participants</b>	
	1	Ngongosowon	Males and Females		21 (M:5, F: 16)	
	2	Kosike	Women and Male		24 (M:6, F:18)	

## 4.1 The socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District

The socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat was presented using the concept map indicated in the section below with *figure 4-1*.

The analysis is structured around five themes: health-related experiences, female marginalization, cultural norms, unstable marriages, and poverty.



**Figure 4. 1: Concept map for the Socio-Economic Welfare of women**

### 4.1.1 Dire Health Conditions

The socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District were found to be seriously affected by dire health conditions in their areas of stay. Pastoralist ethnic conflicts among the Pokot have resulted in dire health conditions particularly among women and children. Seasonal cattle raids, displacement, and destruction of livelihoods disrupt access to healthcare services and expose populations to untreated injuries, malnutrition, and other communicable diseases.

#### ***4.1.1.1 Distant health centers***

The women in the Focus group discussion at Kosike Village revealed that the health centers are distant from their homesteads and getting to the health facilities in case of emergency was very difficult and could ultimately result to loss of lives. Lalemong noted, “The fear for our lives has made majority of us to give birth at home using traditional means.” While Nalengot added “I know one of my friends who lost a child while giving birth at home, her delivery became complicated, a situation that needed her to visit a health center.” This was supported by the findings during an interview with John, 43, who has experienced some of the harsh conditions of a dire health system.

When it comes to health conditions in this area, the plight of the women is quite tough. Many communities seem to shift from time to time, making it hard for women to access health services because they fear walking long distances alone to the health units (Key informant interview in Amudat town council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

The distant health facilities coupled with the nomadic nature of the Pokot communities and Pastoralist ethnic conflict challenges, discourages health seeking behaviors of the Pokot and prevents timely access to medical care for injuries sustained from conflict-related violence and illnesses leading to severe health complications especially by women. This underscores the need for investment in pastoralist health initiatives to promote free movement for healthcare and need for targeted government strategies to strengthen health service delivery in remote pastoralist regions.

#### ***4.1.1.2 Disease Prevalence***

The appalling situation of the health facilities and the health services that the Pokot women face has resulted to the increased disease burden in their families. Nakiru confirmed by saying; “Our children suffer from a lot of diseases, we treat them using local herbs because

the health centers are far from where we stay.” This was also reiterated during key informant interview by Stephen, 30, a community leader in Amudat district who reported:

The area has been plagued by a number of diseases such as polio which have affected the women and the children especially, simply because taking the children to the health facilities is hard since the health facilities are very few in the area (Key informant interview in Amudat subcounty on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024).

These findings aligned with field observation, it was observed that children exhibited signs of malnutrition, visible thinness and stunted growth. Others exhibited skin infection, cough, running nose and teary eyes highlighting underlying health and nutritional challenges. From the above findings, it is evident that the few and scarce health facilities are affecting not only the women but also the children and men who live in the conflict affected areas.

In addition, facing the brunt of the scarce health facilities, are the expectant women who cannot access the health facilities, leading to maternal health complications. The scarcity, inaccessibility and geographical isolations of healthcare facilities and medical services reflect systemic issues and creates a critical barrier to healthcare access. Responding to these challenges requires urgent restoration and strengthening of the healthcare infrastructure and improving access to essential medical services in pastoralist ethnic conflict areas.

#### **4.1.2 Despising female**

Mirroring on the various decisions that have to be taken from time to time at home and community level, it was evident from the women focus group discussions that the Pokot women are despised and that is characterised by the marginalised decision making and non-involvement of women in various important activities.

#### ***4.1.2.1 Marginalised decision making***

The findings revealed that the marginalised decision making of women was shown by the fact that the decisions were made majorly by men without the consideration of the constructive contributions from women, Nakiru had this say:

Most of us here in Pokot are not part of decision making because of the societal dictations. Whenever meeting, dialogues are called, we are never invited to be part of such meetings and in most cases these meetings are done away from home. Any major decisions like selling of the land are made by the customary community in which we live but we are completely ignored (FGD from Ngongosowom Village on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

The Pokot women are strongly discouraged from taking part in the community and family decision making processes. Traditionally, the roles of women and men are clearly defined among the Pokot. Women are responsible for household chores, garden work and taking care of the children. These findings were collaborated with the insight of the district leader, John, 43 noted that:

The patriarchal traditions and culture of both Pokot of Kenya and Uganda still manifest that the women are not very free in decision making and talking in public. In fact, during meetings, women sit a distance away from the meeting. It is until when they are called to come and join the discussion that they did so (Key Informant Interview in Amudat town council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

Men among the Pokot dominate the decision-making processes and are presented as head, while women dominate the household roles and responsibilities. The dynamics in the traditional beliefs among the Pokot, make women to be considered inferior and not allowed to take key decisions and leadership positions. Mark, 35, a district official added:

Women have a lot of responsibilities at household level and yet in most cases they are not taken as part of decision making. Sometimes men make mistakes which could have been avoided by simply involving the women in the decision making (Key Informant Interview in Amudat District on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

Excluding women from decision making among pastoralist communities reflects deep-rooted patriarchal norms that promote gender inequality and put away the important contribution that women make in supporting effective resource management. This not only undermines governance but impedes community resilience and perpetuates cycles of poverty including conflict. This calls for targeted community driven interventions involving both men and women.

#### ***4.1.2.2 Despising women involvement***

The Pokot women are considered to be weak and emotional, and they are considered as property to men. They are not considered to be strong to take tough decisions. During focus group discussion, Kori from Kosike village noted that “ Even when we suggest some ideas, our views are not considered because we are seen as being weak and not capable of being strong” .These findings agreed with the views put across by Cherop, a focus group discussion male participant from Ngogosowom who had this say “ In our culture, women are not expected to take part in important activities, if they do, they are expected to remain, silent.

The FGD findings agreed with John, who reported that:

During *Ameto* (punishing violators of customary laws) for example, the members of the community involved in wrongdoing and cleansing those who commit adultery by beating, women are excluded from such assemblies. Women would weep on seeing their sons being punished. So, locking women out of such assembly was designed to

ensure that the offender receives just punishment without sympathy (Key Informant interview in Amudat town council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

The above findings were confirmed through observation during mixed focus group discussion, women were timid and hesitant to share their views, while male participants dominated the discussion. While the challenges faced by women in conflict zones are daunting, proactive and inclusive interventions can serve as catalysts for positive change, promoting resilience and empowerment amidst adversity.

#### **4.1.3 Cultural Norms**

The Pokot women indicated that cultural norms among pastoralists communities are profoundly in-existence in form of cultural property restrictions, widow inheritance and the Female Genital Mutilations which create further vulnerability leaving women exposed to socio-economic instability.

##### ***4.1.3.1 Cultural Property Restrictions.***

Cultural property restrictions limit women's access to and control over resources, reinforcing gender inequalities. Women revealed that they are facing tough cultural restrictions, and these are hindering their capacity to own and even develop financially. Loperu noted:

As women in the Pokot community, we are not allowed to own any property. Whereas we can access land for cultivation, all land is considered to be a family property, and the women cannot therefore develop much on the land especially when the ownership of the land can change easily with or without the removal of the projects that the women have placed on this land (FGD in Kosike on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024).

In agreement with the focus group discussion, Mukiise, 26, a community leader in Pokot community, Amudat emphasised that cattle, a main resource among the Pokot community is not owned by women despite the big role they play in taking care of them. She stated:

Ownership of any reasonable assets is something that is not for women in this community. Cattles are the only resources owned by pastoralist communities including the Pokot, yet in this Pokot community, as women, we are not supposed to own these resources, and this affects our decision-making and control over resources (Key Informant interview in Amudat on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

Restrictions on economic activities, along with reduced control over resources, highlight the compounded challenges faced by women in conflict settings. This coupled with the increased responsibilities and social isolation of women because of cultural norms reflect broader patterns of gender inequality among the Pokot.

#### ***4.1.3.2 Female Genital Mutilation***

The findings also revealed Female Genital Mutilations (FGM) as a silently on-going cultural norm among the Pokot community. During focus group discussion with women, Nanyang from Ngongosowono village reported that “Circumcision of girls is still practiced in secret as part of our tradition. However, we do not talk about it openly.” These findings agreed with

the interview excerpt presented by Mukiise, 26, who reported:

There are some rooted cultural practices like Female Genital Mutilation in this community which are cherished by parents as it fetches more bride prices. This has encouraged cattle rustling and make women suffer in the long run since there seems to be no solution in sight to stop the Female Genital Mutilation (key informant interview in Amudat on 24 July 2024).

The above findings reveal that the women's social roles and economic activities work against their overall socio-economic welfare. Addressing these issues requires strategies that enhance women's autonomy and support their economic and social integration, particularly during and after conflicts.

#### **4.1.4 Unstable Marriages**

Conflicts and heightened insecurity among the Pokot undermine men's ability to provide, shifting increased responsibility, burdens of survival and vulnerability to women. These pressures lead to domestic violence and threatened marriages especially when women fail to provide for their families.

##### ***4.1.4.1 Domestic Violence***

The Pokot women in FGD further revealed that they are facing domestic violence in their marriages as a result of restricted movement during conflict. Loro had this to say “

Among Pokot women, it is culturally expected to collect food from the bush. However, when we fail to do so, our husbands beat us. We also fear going to the bush because of the risk of being raped by cattle riders....” (FGD in Ngongosowom on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

These findings concurred with views of a male participants, Morulinga, who noted:

At the family level, absence of food and water, makes women inferior before their children and it also attracts serious sanctions inform of beating, rejection and divorce from their husbands (FGD in Kosike on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

While women described their responsibility of being breadwinners as a routine household duty, field observations highlighted the heavy burden involved, as women were seen traveling long distances to collect food, sometimes from the trees.

#### ***4.1.4.2 Threatened Marriages***

The marriages of the Pokot women are constantly on the verge of collapsing owing to the Pastoralist ethnic conflicts conditions which they have to endure. This not only jeopardizes their physical safety but also deeply affects their mental well-being, sometimes leading to enduring trauma. The interview excerpts below from Samalie, 37, confirms it.

In this community, men still do not respect the concern of equality and women are taken more as personal belongings subjected to any treatment by the owner. There is a continual fear among women of men withdrawing from them over any flimsy reasons (Key informant interview in Amudat subcounty on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024).

Relatedly, Mark, also revealed that there are several cases of domestic violence and threatened marriages which happen within the homes of the Pokot women as a result of lack of food or water at household level, a responsibility considered for women. Pokot women are expected to provide food for their families, failure to do calls for sanctions, he stated that:

Some women suffer much violence in their homes while some are mostly beaten seriously at night when their husbands return home drunk and pick up fights over trivial issues. For instance, if he finds no food prepared for him or no water in the house (Key informant Interview in Amudat District on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

This responsibility of women being bread winners among the Pokot communities, reflects the structural poverty and resource scarcity compounded by gender inequality. This requires interventions to integrate food security and gender prevention and response.

#### **4.1.5. Poverty**

Women endure silently amidst poverty and frequent droughts reflecting the economic fragility faced by women in conflict zones. These intersecting challenges not only undermine their resilience but also perpetuate cycles of disadvantage and further marginalization.

#### ***4.1.5.1. Limited livelihood options.***

The women revealed that they have limited livelihood options which are characterised by meagre earnings as a result of high poverty levels characterised by food and clean water scarcity. The ability of women to cultivate or look for food is limited, leading to increased vulnerability. Cheloreng from Ngongosowom stated, “we can not go to the far gardens because warriors will kill us, we have resorted to cultivate where people are many and the challenge is that we shall not get enough food.” The inadequacy of food during drought, has resulted to negative coping strategies, such as charcoal burning.

These findings collaborated with the views of Jude a community leader who indicated that the scarcity of food is severe, and this has been very much influential in promoting its negative consequences of malnutrition. He reported “Women in this area are very desperate, and this is arising from lack of basic commodities such as food and shelter and food scarcity promotes malnutrition especially among the children”. Further, the study findings highlighted that limited market access and resource scarcity undermine economic stability, highlighting the broader economic challenges faced by women in pastoralist ethnic conflict areas. In agreement, Musa, 39, a district leader and a key informant interview noted:

Pokot women due to limited livelihoods options move together with the animals when the animals go for greener pastures. They earn so little from this trade, yet this exposes them to mosquitoes and attack by wild animals. The limited earnings that they get from the various jobs which are very limited in the area, leaves them poorer (Key informant Interview in Amudat District on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

Traditional livelihoods of the Pokot communities have been affected, leaving women with very limited options that are not sufficient for their survival. In agreement, John, 43, a leader

in the area revealed that indeed the women have very little to look forward to in terms of earning, he noted:

Violent cattle-raiding has escalated to such a level that the ability of the women to practice in traditional livelihoods has been badly affected. The women are living with few options for survival and those few options generate very little in terms of earnings (Key informant interview in Amudat on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

These findings were collaborated through observation, the livelihoods of Pokot women are centred around collecting food, small income generating activities and engagement in the heavy burden of domestic chores and caring for children. Their economic roles are constrained by cultural norms, lack of access to land ownership including minimal participation in decision-making processes regarding their household.

#### ***4.1.5.2 Food and water scarcity***

The data also revealed clean water and food scarcity which has brought malnutrition and lack of proper healthy diet especially for the young children is faced by the Pokot women. In an interview with Samalie, 37, a key informant, she stated that, “There is great scarcity of clean water in the area and many women have been killed as they travel long distances in search of water, firewood and charcoal yet nothing seems to be done.”

The scarcity of food, water resources and the challenges in managing them reflect the broader challenges faced by the Pokot women on resource access. Increased competition and altered distribution patterns exacerbate the existing vulnerabilities and create additional hurdles for women to support their families. These findings reinforce the severe challenge of resource scarcity on women’s socio-economic welfare that requires effective resource management, equitable distribution and targeted interventions to ensure access to essential resources and support for sustainable management practices.

## 4.2 The perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women

This objective sought to examine the perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women. This section presents the findings from key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observation. The effect of the conflicts on the welfare of the Pokot women was presented using the mind map which shows that the main aspects that relate to the effects of the conflict on the welfare of the women are expressed by miserable conditions, physical and sexual abuse, insecurity threats and broader impact of pastoralist ethnic conflict which they have to bear continually with very little of things getting better.

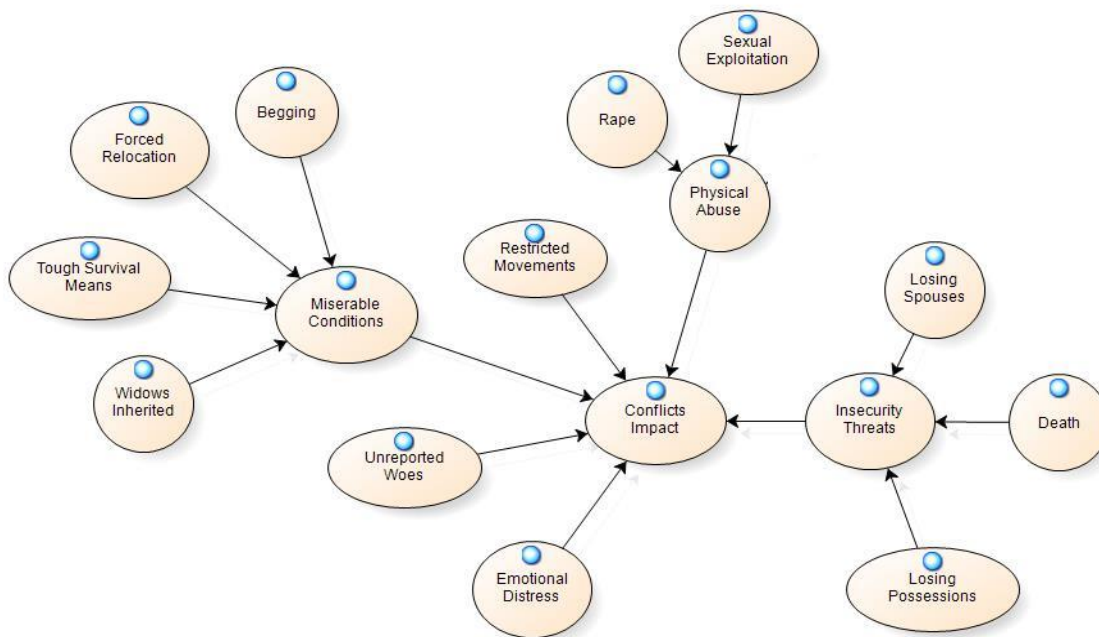


Figure 4.2: Concept Map for the Conflict Impact

### 4.2.1 Insecurity threats

The pastoralist ethnic conflicts have resulted to the death of some raiders, leaving women as widows and at a risk of being inherited. This highlights the miserable conditions, and the health risks associated with it that women have to leave with.

#### ***4.2.1.1 Loss of spouses***

Nangolet, one of the women testified to having lost her husband during raids and she was inherited by her brother in-law. She narrated:

My husband died when the Karamojong raided in Moruita, leaving me with three children. I discovered his death weeks later, alongside the loss of most of our livestock. Upon returning home, my brother-in-law inherited me according to our customs. I had nothing to do but accept. Since then, he controls all my animals which were left by my husband, he does want to educate my children, and he does not take care of us at all, yet he uses my animals to cater for his problems. Also, my cowives hate me because I took their man, yet I do not get anything ....” (FGD in Kosike, on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

These findings were in agreement with the views of John, who reported:

Widow inheritance in the Pokot and Karamoja community is practiced though it's silent despite the current HIV/AIDS scourge. This practice has created a double jeopardy for widows. First, they never fit in the new marriage relationships because they are perceived as grabbing the husband belonging to another wife. Second, their lives get subjected to the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections but also increase the risk of transmitting the epidemic (Key Informant interview in Amudat on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

#### ***4.2.1.2 Death of women***

Pastoralist ethnic conflicts have not only altered the daily activities of women but also caused death and injuries. Due to conflicts, women and girls are charged with the

responsibility of providing food for their families as men go raiding. In the process of looking for food, they pay dearly with their lives. Cheptegei reported that:

My friend was caught up in the raid when she had gone to look for food in the bush, the raiders did not only rape her but also killed her along with her baby, we learnt of her death after three days (FGD in Ngongosowon on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

These findings agreed with the viewpoints of Lochorobo, a male participant, who reported:

Cattle raiding can take place anytime without warning, for example, a few years back, raiders came to our village abruptly and during that time, two women killed in the bush were they had gone to collect food and firewood (FGD in Ngongosowon on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

These findings were further strengthened by Stephen, a leader, who reported that:

Among the reports that I receive in my office on the raids that take place, includes death of not only raiders but also some members of the local population who include sometimes women and children. This happens when women have gone to isolated places such as bush to look for food, firewood of even water (Key Informant interview in Amudat on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024).

The death of women as a result of pastoralist ethnic conflicts is not just a loss of life but a disruption of household stability, economic productivity, and social cohesion. It significantly undermines the socio-economic welfare of women and their dependents, creating both immediate and long-term vulnerabilities. Interventions to include

psychosocial support and community-based support networks are key in supporting to address this issue.

#### **4.2.2. Miserable Conditions**

The pastoralist conflicts have led to significant alterations in the daily lives of Pokot women. Women reported that they find it difficult to find basic necessities such as food, water and shelter and they have had to adjust their routines to avoid conflict zones, impacting activities such as food collection and social interactions. This was particularly observed to be profound during the FGD with women in the area as indicated in the excerpt below by Chepkoech:

During conflicts, we have to migrate to other places in search of food and water. In the process, we get exposed to staying in harsh conditions- no homes, starving and sleeping outside in the cold with no clean water. We are sometimes exposed to enemies, wild animals hence some of us contract diseases, such as pneumonia, diarrhea and infections (FGD in Kosike on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024).

##### **4.2.2.1 Forced Relocation**

The necessity to avoid conflict areas has disrupted fundamental daily activities and social interactions, leading to significant lifestyle changes. Forced relocation to less secure areas not only affect living conditions but also adds to the overall insecurity and instability faced by women. This was Consistent with Samalie, 37, a female community leader, she stated:

The conflicts are associated with migration of women from their homes in the course of fleeing the danger posed by the conflicts. However, there are dangers associated with the forced migration, including the vulnerability of female-headed households

coping without the labour and security (Key Informant Interview in Amudat Subcounty on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024)

#### ***4.2.2.2: Begging on the streets***

Migration due to conflict often deprives women and children of essential and decent food including health supplies, leading to reliance on begging and other unhygienic survival strategies as stated by John 43.

As a result of the conflict, young mothers are often forced to relocate with their children to urban areas to beg on streets to earn a living. This makes them lose their self-esteem and lead unhealthy life (Key Informant Interview in Amudat Town council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

The above responses highlight the health risks associated with displacement and forced migration. The deprivation of essential supplies and reliance on survival strategies during migration underscore the severe health impacts of displacement. The lack of access to basic needs exacerbates vulnerabilities and creates additional health risks for women and children.

#### ***4.2.2.3 Tough survival means***

The study revealed that conflict has resulted in widespread livelihood losses, leaving many women without a stable income. Economic instability has also led to decreased income levels; the loss of stable means of livelihood and decreased income reflect the severe economic impacts of conflict. Livelihood losses and economic instability undermine women's ability to maintain financial security and support their families, exacerbating socio-economic vulnerabilities. Nalengo reported that:

Survival has become difficult due to conflicts, we cannot easily collect food, and we cannot carry out trade because we fear to risk our lives. Our other colleagues who

engage in trade have returned to doing small business which most of the time do not bring in enough money for the family (FGD in Kosike on 24 July 2024).

In agreement, Musa, a district leader reported saying: “Conflicts have negatively not only affected women who carry out small trade but the local economy at large whose monetary value is low” (Key Informant interview in Amudat District on 25 July 2024).

#### **4.2.3 Restricted Movement**

Pastoralist ethnic conflicts restrict mobility of the Pokot women. With the pastoralist ethnic conflicts, the women cannot move as freely as they would desire. The findings reflected that Women suffer from restricted access to markets and resources further exacerbating economic instability as noted by Inangolet who said:

Conflicts across our areas in the region mean that we have very limited movements. As women we look out for personal security and that of our children by staying in the safest place. This affects the extent to which we can engage in other activities such as trade (FGD in Ngongosowom on 10 July 2024).

For women to be able to trade, they have to be escorted by their raiders. Another woman in the FGD confirmed this by saying, “I cannot go to the market if there is no one to escort me.” This was in agreement with the response from Jude, 48, a district official, who indicated that:

During conflicts, the engagement of women in trade and business is always on a small scale because they are restricted in their movement. They cannot move haphazardly (Key Informant interview in Amudat on 25 July 2024).

The restrictions in movement and trade hinder women’s economic empowerment and reinforce the already existing inequality gaps. These challenges necessitate holistic approaches that integrate movement and border management strategies with sustainable

development initiatives for women. Furthermore, beyond the immediate threats of conflict, women in these settings face compounded socio-economic challenges exacerbated by mental hazards and resource scarcity. The loss of income and shift to informal precarious ways of livelihoods reflect the economic fragility faced by women in conflict zones. Restricted market access and resource scarcity further undermine economic stability, highlighting the broader economic impacts of conflict.

The findings indicate that conflict severely disrupts economic opportunities for women, leading to income loss and economic insecurity. Addressing these issues requires holistic approaches that integrate targeted economic support and development programs that can help women regain stability, ensuring resilience and stability in access to resources.

#### **4.2.4 Physical and Sexual Abuse**

Sexual and Physical abuse of the women is another challenge which comes with the pastoralist ethnic conflicts. Within the Pokot community, these abuses exacerbate poverty, perpetuate cycles of inequality and exclusion, making sexual and physical violence not only a human rights violation but also a critical obstacle to peacebuilding, social cohesion, and sustainable development in conflict-affected pastoralist regions.

##### ***4.2.4.1 Physical Abuse***

During conflicts, the women are sometimes raped or killed reaping them of their dignity in society. The FGD with women indicated that, “The raping of women is a common phenomenon as some of the raiders seem to come for both the cattle and raping women” Loryem in a hysterical mood expressed her agony by saying: “I was waylaid and raped by the raiders who infected me with HIV/AIDs and since that time until now, I am surviving on drugs and God’s mercy.” Further, Napeyok added by saying: “During raids and counter raids, we women, are exposed to risks of gun fire and bullets. One of my best friends died as a

result of this during the raids.” These findings were collaborated with the views of Lokile, 26, who reported that women during conflicts run a risk of being raped, killed by the bandits, or being humiliated in a manner which they consider extreme.

Women movement get restricted during the conflicts, and they cannot move far from home in fear of being raped because the issue of rapes during the conflicts is not news, it is something that occurs repeatedly whenever conflicts occur (Key Informant Interview and elder in Kosike on 23 July 2024).

The necessity to avoid conflict areas has disrupted fundamental daily activities and social interactions, leading to significant lifestyle changes. This not only affects living conditions but also adds to the overall insecurity and instability faced by women.

#### ***4.2.4.2 Sexual Abuse***

Pastoralist ethnic conflicts promote sexual exploitation of women. The Pokot women are subjected to sexual exploitation because they are desperate, vulnerable and very poor. Certain men who have the basics of life, tend to take advantage of these women in exchange for sexual favors. Norem during FGD noted: “Sometimes when life becomes hard, we seek support for basic necessities from men who can provide but in turn some of them want to have sex with you.” These findings concurred with the views of Samalie who noted:

Women are forced to engage in uncalled for sex because of desperations arising from lack of basic commodities such as food and shelter. Those men who have these items tend to take advantage of the young women and girls (Key Informant Interview on 26 June 2024).

The conflict has shifted traditional roles, with women assuming additional responsibilities due to the absence or incapacity of their men. The lack of access to basic needs exacerbates

vulnerabilities and creates additional health risks for women and children. The increased responsibilities taken on by women reflect a shift in gender roles, which may alter traditional family and community dynamics.

#### **4.2.5 Emotional distress**

The women revealed that they have lost their loved ones due to conflict and among these were majorly loss of spouses. During an FGD, the women indicated that majority of them have become widows as a result of the pastoralist ethnic conflicts while some have lost close friends and other relatives since these conflicts often involve shading of blood. Alengot during FGD said: “Some of us have become widows after losing husbands and we have lost close friends and relatives as a result of the conflicts that have occurred in our area.”

While to some women, the death of a loved one has often resulted into emotional distress, anxiety and to some women, they have become completely withdrawn while others develop mental issues including emotional torture. Nangiroid stated that, “During raids, we are sexually starved, men travel long distances and take a long period of time leaving us alone at home.” These findings concurred with the viewpoints of Mukiise, 26, who said:

Partly owing to the trauma as result of loss of loved ones during the conflicts, there have been some mental problems registered among some women because some women cannot bear the loss of their husbands leaving them to suffer emotionally for long periods (Key Informant Interviews in Amudat on 24 July 2024)

Addressing these challenges all for targeted integrated interventions, including psychosocial support, economic empowerment programs to restore both emotional well-being and sustainable livelihoods for women.

#### 4.2.6 Unreported woes

The unreported woes were also highlighted as one of the negative impacts of pastoralist ethnic conflict that Pokot women go through. In FGD Women, indicated that in some instances not only do they lose their loved ones but also property leaving them completely devastated. Lopure, reported:

We have experienced escalating incidences of insecurity related to cattle rustling and boundary disputes. Almost every month, tens of lives are lost and hundreds of livestock stolen by bandits who operate with impunity, but they are never punished (FGD in Ngongosowom on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

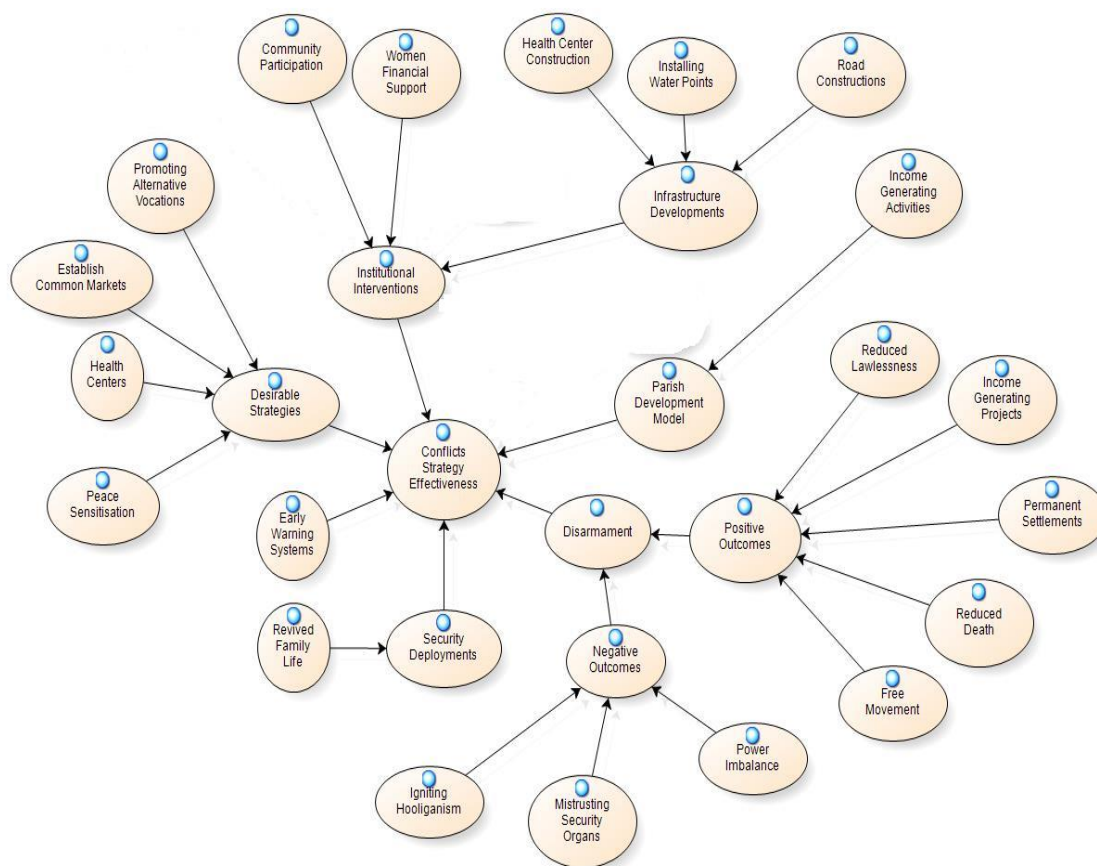
These findings agreed with the views of an elder and a resident in the area, James 50, who said:

The unfortunate side of this situation is that, often these incidences go unreported and in many occasions the culprits walk freely within the community and these issues remain unresolved. In situations of conflicts resulting from cattle raids among communities, there is limited information on both the nature of protection women and girls receive, as well as the extent to which they access social services including education, health care, and legal protection (Elder in Amudat on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

In conclusion, pastoralist ethnic conflicts severely impact the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women. These conflicts lead to the loss of loved ones, displacement, health risks, and economic instability due to restricted mobility and limited access to resources. Women face physical and sexual abuse, increased vulnerability, and heightened mental distress. The trauma and disruption to daily life exacerbate their challenges, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions to ensure their safety, well-being, and socio-economic recovery.

### **4.3 The contribution of strategies implemented to enhance socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat.**

Government and non-governmental organizations have introduced various initiatives aimed at enhancing the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District, with the goal of improving their living conditions and addressing vulnerabilities arising from pastoralist ethnic conflicts. Several strategies were identified and endorsed by both women and local leaders as key interventions implemented by the government and other stakeholders to support women affected by these conflicts. The primary approaches include government-led initiatives such as the Parish Development Model, security and disarmament measures, **and** community-driven programs, as well as political, economic, and peacebuilding efforts spearheaded by non-governmental organizations. These interventions are designed to address both immediate and structural challenges to women's socio-economic welfare. The **concept map below** highlights the strategies that have been implemented, as well as those identified as desirable but not yet fully executed.



**Figure 4. 3: Concept Map for strategies implemented to enhance socio-economic welfare**

### **4.3.1 Government and Other Stakeholders Interventions**

Strategies such financial support and community engagement interventions for fostering the socio-economic empowerment and resilience for women have been implemented. Providing women with access to financial resources, savings groups, and livelihood grants enhances their ability to meet household needs. At the same time, community engagement initiatives create platforms for women to promote social cohesion and participate in decision-making processes thus enhancing the socio-economic welfare of women.

#### ***4.3.1.1 Organised community support for income generation***

Participants revealed that prior to the interventions, the socio-economic situation of Pokot women in Amudat District was dire, characterized by limited access to resources and opportunities. However, they noted that the government and other stakeholders have since

injected resources and implemented initiatives to improve their livelihoods. Several interventions were identified by participants, particularly in the form of financial support aimed at empowering women to achieve their economic goals and generate sustainable income despite prevailing economic challenges. Chief among the institutions driving these initiatives are both local and international non-governmental organizations. As observed by Lorengenyra during a focus group discussion:

Before, we were badly off, but the government has put in place a number of initiatives. There are programs to organize women into groups that can be supported by different stakeholders. There has also been much support to empower us through government and NGO initiatives such as savings and loan associations, which have improved our ability to provide for our basic needs. The challenge, though, is that not all women benefit” (FGD, Kosike, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

This testimony illustrates that while significant progress has been made in enhancing women’s socio-economic welfare, challenges remain in ensuring equitable access to the benefits of these programs. The interventions not only provide financial resources but also foster collective organization and empowerment, reflecting a multi-dimensional approach to addressing the impacts of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on women’s livelihoods.

Participants emphasized the notable improvements in their socio-economic conditions compared to the past. Lorwem, for instance, noted, “Through these group initiatives, I can now afford to buy basic needs like soap, salt, and clothes for my family, which was not the case before.”

A number of programs have been designed to support small businesses, enhance agricultural productivity, address immediate needs, and create opportunities for economic growth,

including resource distribution and support for local markets. These interventions have significantly improved the economic conditions of women, who previously lacked such opportunities. Lotorob, a male participant, observed,

A number of non-governmental organizations have distributed cassava stems and sweet potato vines and have supported us by creating markets for the products produced in our communities, which was not the case before. We even get good prices for these products now.

The study findings further indicate that key economic strategies such as establishing common markets, improving health services, and creating water points are critical for both economic development and conflict resolution. Participants emphasized that these initiatives were absent in the past, and their introduction has greatly facilitated women's livelihoods. These interventions are aimed at supporting groups of women to work collaboratively, build their capacity, and invest resources into tangible initiatives to improve their socio-economic conditions. Nalelemu, during a focus group discussion, stated, "Establishing common markets and improving health services at conflict hotspots has enhanced economic development and reduced conflicts."

In agreement, Mark, a 35-year-old community leader, noted during a key informant interview,

The government and other actors have set up common and joint markets along the borders, for example, Kaita and Kacheliba markets, which have facilitated trade for small-scale enterprises managed and owned by women. All these initiatives were not in place before, but now they have been created, making our work much easier (KII, Amudat District, 11 August 2024).

The success of these economic strategies is evident in the distribution of resources, support for local markets, and enhanced income-generating opportunities for women. Nevertheless, the findings highlight that sustainable development and alternative livelihoods remain critical to addressing ongoing economic challenges. Continued community engagement, capacity-building, and training are essential to ensure the long-term impact and resilience of these interventions.

#### ***4.3.1.2 Enhanced Participation in Dialogue Meetings***

Promoting community participation emerged as a key strategy for improving peace and socio-economic welfare. Participants emphasized that dialogue meetings and educational initiatives have contributed significantly to reducing conflicts and fostering harmonious coexistence. Lopiyong, during a focus group discussion, noted,

Government and other stakeholders have made efforts to educate the masses on peace, and ongoing dialogue meetings are crucial for reducing conflicts and fostering peaceful coexistence. Things are much better now than they were before.

In agreement, Loruke, a male participant, added,

With continuous education, communities are learning about peace, and through ongoing dialogue meetings, harmony is prevailing in the community. We can see improvements compared to the past, and we shall soon be like other neighboring communities.

These observations align with the perspectives of key informants. Stephen remarked,

Any interventions to help women overcome the fears created by past conflicts in Amudat are being brought on board by as many effective actors in the community as possible to promote peace” (KII, Amudat, 5 August 2024).

Musa further highlighted the district's efforts, stating,

The district continues to develop programs to encourage community participation in security issues, including empowering women through the Uganda Women Empowerment Programme (UWEP), supporting youth self-employment and entrepreneurship initiatives, and implementing various programs aimed at enhancing security in the district. Compared to before, these efforts have noticeably improved community engagement and safety” (KII, Amudat, 17 July 2024).

These testimonies illustrate that community participation and dialogue initiatives have markedly improved conditions compared to the past, contributing to enhanced peace, security, and women's active engagement in development processes.

#### ***4.3.1.3 Easy Access to Social Services***

The findings indicated that government policies and infrastructural developments have significantly improved access to social services in Amudat District. Key developments include the construction of health centers, installation of water points, and road improvements, all of which have contributed to broader economic growth and conflict resolution goals. Participants highlighted that these interventions have markedly enhanced the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women compared to previous conditions. Stephen, 39, noted during a key informant interview,

Health centers have been established in communities and settlements, for instance, Atakas, Kosike, and Abiligep, among others. These have helped to reduce child and maternal deaths in the areas where they have been constructed. Things are much better now than they were before” (KII, Amudat, 5 August 2025).

Similarly, participants in focus group discussions emphasized the positive impact of water and road infrastructure, which has improved access to markets, health services, and educational facilities. For example, one participant Nyawera remarked,

Before, we had to walk long distances to reach the nearest health center or market, and it was very difficult. Our safety was often jeopardized, as some women were at risk of sexual assault along the way. Now, with improved roads and water points, life has become much easier and safer for women and children.

However, some participants noted ongoing challenges and the need for further improvements. Mark, 35, observed,

There is still a need for modern health centers that can readily accommodate cases with various ailments. While access has improved compared to before, upgrading these facilities will further enhance women's welfare (KII, Amudat, 2025).

These testimonies illustrate that easy access to social services has improved significantly compared to past conditions, contributing to better health outcomes, economic participation, and overall socio-economic welfare for Pokot women.

#### **4.3.1.3.1 Installation of Water Points**

Other than the Health Centers, the findings indicated that several water points have been constructed in the community by actors such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Lemorut, during a focus group discussion, noted:

Before, we had to walk long distances to fetch water, and it was exhausting and unsafe, especially for women. Now, we see that some new water points have been constructed in our community, and this is good for our animals and us as women, as it reduces the time and risk involved while looking for water.

These findings were consistent with the account of Jude, 48, a community leader, who observed:

The big dam for water being constructed at Kosike is a sign of hope. A development partner, together with Kalia Peace Village, established the water points. This water is used for both domestic purposes and for animals, which has greatly reduced the long treks women used to take to fetch water. It has also enabled micro-irrigation for vegetable gardens, boosting local food production and income. (Key Informant Interview, Amudat, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024)

The participants' reflections highlight that while the community previously struggled with water scarcity and safety risks, the installation of new water infrastructure has markedly improved access and livelihoods. During a mixed FGD, Lopus, a male participant, further emphasized the importance of sustaining these gains:

There is a need for continued focus on sustainable economic development, alternative livelihoods, and dialogue with the community on possible action plans and training opportunities (Key Informant Interview, Amudat, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024)

Overall, the findings suggest significant improvements compared to the past. Continued support for water infrastructure, combined with livelihood and economic development initiatives, is essential to maintain and enhance these positive impacts. This aligns with the broader importance of promoting infrastructure development to facilitate trade, alternative livelihoods, and long-term socio-economic development.

#### **4.3.6 Parish development Model**

The findings indicated that the Parish Development Model (PDM) is a new approach introduced in the area to financially empower women who have been affected by conflicts. In

a focus group discussion with women, participants observed that the model has enabled them to start their own businesses and improve household livelihoods. Morylem noted:

Before, many of us struggled to meet household needs and could not start any business. The Parish Development Model has supported our households to start businesses. Some of us have been given cassava stems and sweet potato vines, which have helped us improve agricultural production.

This was confirmed by Lochorobot, a male FGD participant in Kosike, who stated:

The Parish Development Model has supported households to start businesses, and the distribution of cassava stems and sweet potato vines has increased the marketable products produced in our communities.

The model is grounded in the idea that once women have the necessary resources, they can improve their welfare and that of their families. Promoters of the model have specifically targeted women for the distribution of cassava stems and sweet potato vines, aiming to enhance agricultural production. These agricultural activities are not only for household consumption but also partly commercial, allowing participants to generate income and support their families. Participants' accounts suggest that compared to the past, there has been high improvement in economic opportunities and household resilience, demonstrating the positive impact of the Parish Development Model on women's livelihoods.

#### **4.3.2 Disarmament**

Disarmament is a major exercise undertaken by the Government of Uganda's army to ensure that locals do not possess firearms, which could be used to harass, kill, or destroy property in Amudat and neighboring communities. The qualitative findings indicated that this intervention has produced both positive and negative outcomes. On the positive side,

participants highlighted that disarmament has contributed to improved security and reduced violent conflicts. One community member reflected:

Before disarmament, we were always afraid to travel or farm because armed groups could attack at any time. Now, we feel safer, and our children can go to school without fear.

A female participant added:

Before, fetching water or going to the market was risky because of people carrying guns. Now, after the disarmament, we can move around more freely and feel much safer in our community.

Another participant, a male farmer, emphasized the change in daily routines:

Before, I had to hire guards when going to my fields because of fear of attacks. Now, I can farm without extra protection, and my family can eat regularly from our own crops.

Despite these gains, some participants noted challenges, including the perception that not all firearms were surrendered and that some disarmament operations were forceful. Nevertheless, the consensus was that the exercise has significantly improved the sense of security compared to the past, enabling community members to engage in daily activities with less fear and risk.

Overall, while disarmament has had mixed outcomes, the findings highlight the substantial improvements in safety and quality of life, reinforcing the need for complementary measures such as community sensitization, conflict resolution programs, and livelihood support to sustain peace and reduce reliance on arms.

#### ***4.3.2.1 Positive outcomes***

Disarmament in the Pokot community has yielded several positive outcomes, particularly for women's socio-economic welfare. It has fostered free movement, improved access to and markets, promoted relative peace and enhanced women engagement in economic activities.

Nakiryra revealed that:

Disarmament allowed homesteads to thrive and thus people can now have permanent settlements and live in peace without a constant fear that at any moment, the women could be attacked, killed or destroyed by neighbours who have guns (FGD in Ngongosowom on 9<sup>th</sup> , July 2024)

These findings were in agreement with the views of Nangiro, another woman who further indicated that there is reduced death, and that the women can now move freely to engage in activities such as trade and agriculture without any fear. The days of the restricted movements are over with the disarmament in many areas. She stated:

In areas where the deployment has taken place effectively, we can freely move, and the best news is that our loved ones cannot be killed just like in the days when the raids were very common and the conflicts at their worst among the communities in Amudat (FGD in Kosike on 23 July 2024)

Joint Disarmament was undertaken to ensure that there is peace and serenity in the area. This approach has been conducted by the security forces of the government of Uganda, sometimes in partnership with the government of Kenya. This was noted from an interview with Stephen, a leader of the area who said:

Joint disarmament by the two governments of Uganda and Kenya have been undertaken to avoid one side selling of firearms to the other. This has brought in some

stability in the area and the women are in a better position to live meaningful lives (Key informant Interview in Amudat on 24 July 2024).

#### ***4.3.2.2 Negative outcomes***

Whereas there are positive outcomes brought by disarmament, there have been some negative outcomes registered as well, one of them was igniting banditry. Moryelem in a FGD stated that, “Few former raiders who managed to hide their guns during the disarmament, now terrorise the areas and the residents are helpless in the face of such powerful teams of bandits.” This was supported in an interview with Jude, 48, a leader in the area who reported:

Disarmament is one policy that has been faulted for enabling re-emergence of banditry, robbery, and proliferation of thugs within many areas of the region. Complaints were also raised by the citizens regarding the manner in which the UPDF were running and implementing the disarmament process. There has been a lot of mistrust arising from the unprofessional conduct on the part of the army (Key Informant Interview in Amudat subcounty on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

In addition, the findings indicated that mistrust among communities is arising from a cross-section of the population which is aware of the weaknesses within the disarmament program. The people who are being terrorized after freely giving away their guns, now regret it and feel that they should have never trusted the government in the first place because apparently the government cannot protect them from their enemies who attack with guns. This is coupled with power imbalance that was reported as a result of raiders who kept their guns and are now they are highly dangerous and can readily attack the unarmed civilians without any fear. In an interview with one of the community members, Mark, 35, explicitly revealed this concern.

The disarmament process has left the Karamojong in particular, bitterly complaining of the one-sided nature of the disarmament operation which has disadvantaged them tremendously, demeaning their capacity to ‘defend’ against raids from neighbouring Pokot from Kenya. Some of the Uganda Pokot meanwhile allegedly ‘sneaked’ their guns to their kinsmen on the Kenya side where disarmament was not done but was being planned for. At times of raids, the Pokot of Uganda retrieve these guns and proceed to terrorize ‘defenceless’ ethnic groups within the Karamoja region (Key Informant Interview in Amudat on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024).

While disarmament promoted, free movement, relative peace and stability, it also exacerbated certain vulnerabilities, leaving women to bear the brunt of disrupted livelihoods and weakened coping mechanisms. There is for to adopt a holistic approach sustainable approach that combines peacebuilding with livelihood support for enhanced socio-economic welfare of women.

#### **4.3.5 Early Warning systems**

The study established that government has also ensured that there are early warning systems, and this was advanced by Lalanga who said: “we as women, do not always get the information directly, that the raiders are coming but sometimes our husbands warn us when they get to know.” This was further confirmed by Lopule, a male participant who reported that: “The information warning us about planned attacks of raiders is usually shared among us the men, women most of the time are engaging in domestic work so they do not receive this information directly, however, their husbands or brothers tell them.” These findings collaborated with the viewpoints put across by Stephen who said that “The ministry of internal affairs has built capacity of security personnel so that they offer warnings prior to attacks from the raiders.”

In conclusion, while early warning systems have been implemented as strategies to reduce the risks of cattle raiding and pastoralist ethnic conflicts, their effectiveness in enhancing the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women remains limited. The inadequate access to information, and exclusion from decision-making structures exacerbates the situation. This calls for strategies targeting deliberate efforts to ensure women's inclusion in dissemination channels and community security dialogues and early warning systems.

#### **4.3.6 Desirable strategies**

Despite the above various efforts, the study findings revealed that there is still need to sensitise the Pokot public about alternative economic means that they can undertake. Anna FGD participants stated, "Sensitization on trade and alternative livelihoods is needed to uplift our local economy and reduce reliance on traditional raiding practices." These views concurred with those of a local leader during Key informant Interview, John 43, who stated: "People need to do something else beyond cattle keeping so that it is not taken as the main source of income." In agreement, Jude 48, another local leader emphasised that: "Alternative means of survival is one strategy that will be very necessary in ensuring that there is a good environment for the women", while Stephen 30, concluded by saying notably:

There is an apparent lack of appreciation of the value of trade in uplifting the lives of the people. Informed sensitization on the proper practice and benefits of trade needs to be undertaken to interest especially the indigenous Karamojong and Pokot in particular to embrace trade as a viable alternative livelihood means (Key Informant Interview in Amudat on 25 July 2024).

Increased awareness and education about trade and alternative livelihoods can help diversify income sources and reduce dependence on traditional, conflict-prone practices. This recommendation reflects a proactive approach to enhancing economic stability and reducing

conflict. The findings highlight the importance of promoting trade and alternative livelihoods as a means to improve economic conditions and mitigate conflict.

While various efforts are being made, the findings indicated the need to strengthen community participation. Mukiise, 26, emphasized the need for concerted efforts among the various stakeholders in the region to ensure that peace prevails not only among the Pokot but among all the conflicting communities, she said:

Peace promoters need to work with Karamoja peace actors to support the need to promote and re-focus their strategy to peace resolution by encouraging and promoting reconciliation aspect among conflicting communities. This process helps fighting communities to consider their mistakes genuinely than blaming or pointing fingers at one another without reflecting on what each one of them has done to the other (Key Informant Interviews in Amudat on 25 July 2024).

Community-focused peacebuilding efforts and empowerment programs address both immediate and long-term needs. Peace education and dialogue foster a culture of peace, while empowerment programs enhance economic independence and social stability for women. The findings suggest that combining peace education with economic empowerment is an effective strategy for improving the socio-economic welfare of women. These approaches not only address conflict but also promote sustainable development and self-reliance. Sensitization efforts are crucial for fostering these changes and supporting long-term socio-economic development.

In conclusion, various strategies, including financial support, community empowerment, peacebuilding, infrastructure development, and disarmament have positively impacted the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat. The Parish Development Model and joint disarmament efforts with Kenya have shown progress, but challenges such as

banditry, need for sensitization and alternative livelihoods diversification remain. Continued focus on sustainable development, promoting trade, and increasing community participation are essential for long-term improvement.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of the findings of the study on the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women living in areas affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts in Amudat district. The chapter is structured around the study's core research objectives, offering a detailed assessment of the women's socio-economic situation, the perceived impact of pastoralist conflicts, and the effectiveness of existing strategies aimed at improving the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women. Drawing from the qualitative data, the chapter identifies key themes that illuminate the lived experiences of Pokot women within a conflict-prone pastoralist context. It concludes with a synthesis of the findings, followed by targeted recommendations to enhance the socio-economic empowerment of Pokot women. Finally, the chapter outlines priority areas for future research to deepen understanding and inform more context-sensitive and sustainable interventions in similar settings.

#### 5.1 Discussion

##### 5.1.1 Women's socio-economic welfare in pastoralist ethnic conflicts

The findings of the study showed that the socio-economic conditions of women in conflict affected regions was poor; characterized by dire health conditions, which include limited access to healthcare, high maternal mortality rates, increased disease burden and poor nutrition. These disparities are exacerbated by geographic isolation, poverty, and patriarchal control over resources. The livelihood Theory explains how these challenges are interconnected, with cultural norms that limit women's control over resources significantly impeding their access to healthcare. This finding aligns with studies by (Khan & Digal, 2023; Lenah, 2016), who emphasized the vulnerabilities of women in conflict-prone areas. The study introduces a new insight by examining how conflict-induced displacement further

exacerbates women's health challenges, an area that warrants further exploration. Future research should investigate how displacement impacts healthcare access and overall well-being in pastoralist settings.

The study findings indicated that the Pokot women face systemic marginalization, particularly in decision-making processes and exclusion from control over this vital resource, despite their significant role in managing livestock. This gendered power imbalance is explained through Women empowerment theory, highlighting the lack of agency among women, especially in economic spheres. The study confirms the results of other studies by (Ayele, 2019; Ogalo, 2017), who documented the systemic exclusion of women from decision-making roles in pastoralist societies. Fernandez-Gimenez et al. (2021), who noted pastoralist women faced varied degrees of marginalization based on age, marital, and socio-economic status. Future studies should delve into the role of gendered resource control and its impact on women's economic independence, focusing on policy interventions that could increase women's participation in resource management.

Cultural norms in the Pokot community deeply shape women's socio-economic roles, often restricting their access to resources and decision-making power. The study found that cultural expectations, particularly regarding gender roles, exacerbate women's workloads, especially during times of resource scarcity driven by climate change. Livelihood Theory provides insight into the ways Pokot women's welfare is limited by vulnerability and constrained by assets yet reinforced through social capital and institutional support that enhance resilience or empowerment. These findings resonate with those of Ayele (2019), Ogalo (2017), and Galwab et al. (2024) who observed that patriarchal structures in pastoralist communities marginalize women, thereby intensifying their vulnerability and limiting sustainable livelihood opportunities. This was also in agreement with the findings of Hando

(2023), Anbacha and Kjosavik (2019), Galwab et al. (2024), and Tenaws (2021) who observed that climatic changes affected the pastoralist women most, further intensifying their work burden and vulnerability. However, this study introduces a new perspective by examining how climate change exacerbates gendered cultural norms, an area that warrants more attention in future research. Future studies should explore the intersection of climate change and traditional gender roles, particularly in resource-scarce pastoralist settings.

Unstable marriages and high rates of domestic violence are prevalent among Pokot women, with economic stress being a major contributing factor. The study found that resource scarcity and poverty often lead to marital tensions. Women's lack of economic agency, compounded by their increasing involvement in income-generating activities, conflicts with traditional gender expectations, leading to instability in marriages. The Women empowerment theory is particularly relevant in this context, as it highlights the link between women's economic dependence and their vulnerability to domestic violence. These study's findings align with Banwell (2020) and Lenah (2016), who observed that conflict zones exacerbate domestic violence. The novel contribution of this study is the emphasis on economic stress as a key driver of marital instability. Future research should explore how economic stress and women's coping mechanisms, such as participation in petty trading, affect marital dynamics and domestic violence in conflict zones.

Poverty is a pervasive issue for Pokot women, contributing to a cycle of socio-economic marginalization. The study found that women's economic dependence on male family members entrenches their poverty, exacerbated by limited cultivation space leading to food shortage and poor health. Limited access to education, shortage of clean water and other economic opportunities further the poverty levels of pastoralist women. The Ecological Systems Theory explains how poverty is influenced by factors at both the individual and

societal levels, with the interaction between household dynamics and broader societal structures reinforcing this cycle. These findings are in agreement with those of Lenah (2016) and World Economic Forum (2020) which highlight how conflicts exacerbated the dire circumstances of already impoverished populations, with women bearing a disproportionate burden. Future research should focus on interventions that empower women economically through access to education, vocational training, and microfinance initiatives to help break the cycle of poverty.

### **5.1.2 Perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of the Pokot women**

The study revealed that the impact of the conflicts on women welfare was immensely bad. The living conditions of Pokot women in conflict zones were grim, with many forced to migrate in search of food, water, and shelter, and often living in unhygienic and insecure environments. These findings are consistent with Njeri (2020) and Abdulrashid et al. (2018) who similarly identified migration and displacement as key consequences of cross-border ethnic conflicts. However, this study offers a deeper understanding of how migration due to conflict is not only a survival strategy but often results in a vicious cycle of poverty and insecurity. One significant new insight from this study is the heightened vulnerability of women during forced migrations, particularly in terms of health risks. Many women reported contracting diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, and infections while migrating, indicating a lack of access to basic healthcare in the displaced environments. This underscores the need for emergency health interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of women and children during displacement.

A striking theme in this study is the prevalence of unreported woes, particularly in relation to property loss and violence during conflicts. The study found that incidents of cattle

rustling, sexual violence, and the loss of loved ones often go unreported, exacerbating the vulnerability of Pokot women. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as those by Aliru (2023) which highlighted how women, particularly widows, are unable to claim their rights to resources following conflict. The study uncovered a significant gap in information about the unreported violence and property losses that women endure. The reasons behind this underreporting stem not only from fear of retaliation but also from deeply ingrained cultural norms and a lack of trust in local authorities. This insight suggests that addressing these issues will require not only legal reforms but also community-based sensitization programs that empower women to report abuses and assert their rights. Additionally, there is a need to create safe places where women can report violence without fear of retribution.

The emotional and psychological toll on Pokot women due to the ongoing ethnic conflicts is a central theme of this study. Women reported high levels of emotional distress, including anxiety and depression, especially after losing their spouses and witnessing violence. This finding is in line with Desmidt and Davis (2019) and Odary et al. (2020) who noted the emotional strain that conflict places on women, particularly when they lose their primary breadwinners. A key new insight from this research is the long-term emotional trauma experienced by women as a result of repeated exposure to conflict-related violence. In addition to the trauma of widowhood, some women also face prolonged emotional distress due to the instability and constant threat of violence. For many women, the inability to mourn properly due to ongoing insecurity and displacement prevents emotional healing, compounding their distress. This finding calls for targeted psychological support services that take into account the cyclical nature of conflict and the chronic nature of trauma experienced by these women.

The continuous threat of violence, including sexual and physical abuse, is a major concern for Pokot women during conflicts. Many women reported incidents of rape, physical assault, and even the death of loved ones during raids, aligning with the work of Ochieng (2017) and Singh et al. (2020) who emphasized that women in conflict zones are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation. One new insight from this study is the complex intersection of insecurity and economic survival. Many women reported engaging in transactional sex as a survival strategy due to the extreme poverty caused by conflict, which exposes them to further physical and sexual abuse. These women often face the painful dilemma of sacrificing their dignity in exchange for basic needs such as food and shelter. This insight highlights the need for interventions that address both the physical insecurity women face and the economic hardships that drive them to engage in exploitative survival strategies. Economic empowerment programs that provide women with alternatives to transactional sex are crucial.

Physical abuse, particularly sexual violence, is a recurrent and alarming theme in the findings. The study revealed that Pokot women are not only at risk of rape or killed during raids, also frequently subjected to exploitation due to their desperation for basic resources. This aligns with the findings of Kimani et al. (2021); Sani et al. (2021) who highlighted the vulnerability of women to sexual violence and death during conflicts. A particularly troubling new insight is the psychological and physical toll of rape in these communities. Many of the women who were victims of sexual violence reported living with long-term health consequences, including HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. The stigma surrounding these health conditions further isolates women, making it difficult for them to seek treatment or reintegrate into society. This study reveals the urgent need for comprehensive healthcare services that address the physical and psychological effects of sexual violence and provide support for the reintegration of survivors.

The restricted mobility of Pokot women due to the constant threat of violence is a key finding in this study. Many women reported being unable to access markets, resources, and basic services because of the fear of raids and attacks. This finding supports the conclusions of Abdulrashid et al. (2018) and Odary et al. (2020) who highlighted the impact of conflict on women's mobility and economic opportunities. A novel insight emerging from this research is the compounded impact of restricted mobility on women's social and economic networks. The study found that women not only face barriers to economic activities but also to social interactions, which further isolates them and limits their access to information and support systems. This isolation increases the mental and emotional burden on women and hinders their ability to advocate for their rights. This insight underscores the importance of creating safe spaces and mobility corridors for women, so they can access markets, social services, and community networks even in conflict-affected areas.

### **5.1.3 Strategies employed in improving the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women affected by cross-border conflicts**

The study found that government and stakeholder strategies for improving their socio-economic situation had mixed outcomes in improving women's welfare. In particular, the interventions targeting healthcare, education, and market access, were crucial for improving the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women. Financial support programs such as savings and loan associations and small business grants helped enhance women's self-reliance. However, a significant barrier to the success of these interventions was institutional fragmentation and lack of coordination between government and non-governmental organizations. This gap in coordination has been underexplored in previous studies. Existing literature (Badejo et al., 2017; Paul, 2019) highlights the importance of institutional interventions in empowering women, especially in post-conflict settings, but few studies dig deeper into the effects of poor inter-agency collaboration on outcomes. This study suggests that a more integrated approach

is necessary to improve the delivery of services to women in marginalized communities. Effective inter-agency collaboration could significantly improve the reach and effectiveness of programs aimed at addressing the unique socio-economic needs of women in conflict-affected areas (Nansereko, 2017).

The findings revealed that community-driven empowerment strategies, including entrepreneurship training, leadership development, and agricultural support, had a positive impact on improving the socio-economic status of Pokot women. However, cultural and socio-economic barriers, such as traditional gender roles, hindered the full participation of women in these programs. Rai (2017) and Shetahun (2023) suggests that economic empowerment strategies must be adapted to the specific cultural context. The study adds a new dimension to the existing literature by emphasizing the need for context-specific empowerment strategies that account for the unique gender dynamics in pastoralist communities. Empowerment programs must navigate deeply entrenched cultural norms that limit women's participation in decision-making processes regarding resource management and economic activities. This finding supports the works of scholars such as Kimokoti (2022) and Bethuel (2022), who argue that gendered cultural barriers often impede the effectiveness of development interventions in conflict zones.

Early warning systems (EWS) were recognized as valuable tools for preventing conflict escalation. However, the study found that their effectiveness was constrained by poor communication infrastructure and the exclusion of women from these systems. Previous studies (Kimokoti, 2022) have highlighted the role of early warning systems in conflict zones, but they typically focus on institutional mechanisms and overlook the potential role of women in these systems. A new insight from this study is the need for gender-inclusive early warning systems, where women's roles in community networks are integrated into conflict

prediction and mitigation. While literature tends to focus on institutional early warning mechanisms (Shetahun, 2023) this study suggests that women's local knowledge and social networks offer valuable insights that could enhance the effectiveness of these systems. Women's involvement in early warning could also promote better preparedness and response, as they often have unique access to information and play central roles in community dynamics.

Security deployments, including the presence of local police and military forces, have contributed to improved security for women, enabling them to engage in economic activities without fear of violence. However, the study emphasized that long-term peace cannot be achieved through state-led security interventions alone. This conforms to the literature by (Bethuel, 2022; Ashraf & Ali, 2018) on security deployments in conflict zones which suggests that state interventions have a positive impact on women's mobility and participation in economic activities, but these efforts must be supplemented by community-driven security models. The study introduces a critical new insight: integrating local women leaders into peacekeeping and security efforts is essential for long-term peacebuilding. This approach has not been sufficiently explored in previous literature that aligns with Kimokoti (2022) which often focuses on military and state-led interventions. By involving women in community policing and conflict resolution, security measures become more culturally sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of women in conflict-affected areas.

The study found that disarmament initiatives successfully reduced violence related to cattle rustling. However, the long-term effectiveness of these initiatives relied heavily on providing alternative livelihoods for women. While previous research (Kimokoti, 2022; Bethuel, 2022) acknowledges the short-term benefits of disarmament, there is less emphasis on the need for post-disarmament economic reintegration programs. The study's new insight

suggests that disarmament without accompanying socio-economic support can lead to unintended consequences, such as the rise of banditry or the reintegration of former combatants into criminal activities. The findings align with existing literature that highlights the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict through post-disarmament economic programs (Paul, 2019). This study adds a new perspective on the need for long-term economic alternatives for women to ensure that disarmament efforts are sustainable.

The Parish Development Model (PDM) was found to be an effective tool for improving agricultural livelihoods for women. However, its impact was limited by challenges such as inadequate training, poor market access, and insufficient financial support. The literature on rural development (Nansereko, 2017; Rai, 2017) suggests that models like PDM can improve agricultural productivity, but they often fail to address the full range of barriers women face in accessing markets and financial resources. This study underscores the importance of adding market linkages and financial literacy training to the PDM to ensure the sustainability of agricultural empowerment programs. While existing literature primarily emphasizes the provision of agricultural inputs (Paul, 2019), this research highlights the need for a more holistic approach that considers market dynamics and financial skills as essential components of long-term development.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The discussion above on women's socio-economic welfare in areas experiencing pastoralist ethnic conflicts led to the following conclusions.

1. Women in conflict-affected regions face extremely poor socio-economic conditions.

The poor socio-economic conditions include limited market access and resource scarcity that undermine economic stability, limited livelihood options characterized by food and clean water scarcity, altered limited resource distribution patterns, dire

health conditions and unstable marriages resulting from poverty and negative cultural norms.

2. Women's welfare in regions affected by Pastoralist ethnic conflicts has been severely impacted. Women suffered loss of loved ones, displacement, health risks, and economic instability due to restricted mobility and limited access to resources. They also suffered from physical and sexual abuse, increased vulnerability, and heightened mental distress.
3. Government and stakeholder strategies aimed at improving the socio-economic situation of women yielded mixed outcomes in enhancing their welfare. The strategies, including financial support, community empowerment, peacebuilding, infrastructure development, and disarmament have positively impacted the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat. The Parish Development Model and disarmament efforts for instance, have shown progress, but challenges such as banditry remain.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions above, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in areas affected by pastoralist ethnic conflicts.

1. The government and other concerned stakeholders should make effort to address the socio-economic challenges faced by women in conflict-affected regions through integrated livelihood and resilient peacebuilding interventions. The efforts should include diversifying women's livelihood options, providing access to financial resources, ensuring its equitable distribution. Furthermore, women's participation should be made a deliberate effort to strengthen women's participation in peacebuilding and community decision-making processes.

2. The government and other concerned stakeholders to address the multifaceted impact faced by women in pastoralist conflict-affected regions through comprehensive strategies that enhance protection, recovery, and empowerment should be developed and implemented. This should involve targeted interventions such as strengthening community-based protection mechanisms that ensures women and community safety, well-being, and socio-economic recovery through economic support and development programs that can help women regain stability and access to resources.
3. The government and stakeholder strategies should adopt a more holistic and gender-responsive approach such as inclusive dialogue platforms that empower women while amplifying the ongoing initiatives such as the parish development model, financial support and strengthening community led security mechanisms to ensure more effective and sustainable improvements in women's welfare.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the study and Areas for Future Research**

The study significantly contributes to improving the welfare of women in areas affected by Pastoralist ethnic conflicts, specifically in Amudat district among the Pokot community in Uganda. However, its limitations include the narrow geographical focus, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other pastoralist areas affected by Pastoralist ethnic conflicts. The study's phenomenological nature also restricts the understanding of the long-term socio-economic welfare of women in such regions, suggesting the need for a longitudinal approach in future research. In addition, the qualitative approach used may not fully capture the scale of the socio-economic impacts, and incorporating quantitative methods could provide a more comprehensive understanding. Future studies should aim to compare these findings with those from other pastoralist locations, use a longitudinal approach, and apply mixed methods to offer a more holistic perspective on the issue.

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## **Appendix A: Key Informant Interview Guide**

### **Dear Respondent**

My name is Rosemary Imagoro, and I am a student of Kyambogo University carrying out a study to assess socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in pastoralist ethnic conflict in Amudat District, Uganda. In this study, you have been purposely selected to participate because you are well-positioned to provide the necessary information. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time of the study. All collected data will be kept private and solely used for this study's objectives. Please provide answers to the questions that are asked of you, and I request that you allow me to record the interview so that I can accurately record your responses. This interview is intended to take about 30-45 minutes.

Do you accept to participate in the interview? Yes  No

Background information of the respondents:

Sex..... Age..... Position.....

### **Women's socio-economic welfare in pastoralist ethnic conflict areas**

1. What are the health-related lived experiences of the Pokot women in pastoralist areas of Amudat District?
2. What are other lived experiences of the Pokot women living in pastoralist areas in Amudat District?

### **Perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of women**

1. How has the pastoralist ethnic conflict changed the way of life among the Pokot women in their community?
2. Explain how the pastoralist ethnic conflict has affected the ability of the Pokot women to access/acquire, control resources, and participate in the decision-making processes including formal peace negotiations.

3. How has the Pastoralist ethnic conflict affected the livelihoods among the Pokot women?

**Effectiveness of strategies employed in improving the socio-economic welfare of women affected by Pastoralist ethnic conflicts.**

1. Explain how disarmament has helped to resolve pastoralist ethnic conflicts and enhanced welfare of Pokot community women?
2. What political efforts have been taken to resolve conflicts and promote the welfare of women?
3. What economic strategies have been and can be undertaken to resolve pastoralist conflicts and enhance the welfare of women among the Pokot?
4. How can the lives of the people be re-organized to reduce Pastoralist ethnic conflicts and enhance the welfare of women?
5. What other thoughts would you like to share?

**End.**

**Thank you for your time.**

## **Appendix B: Focus Group Interview Guide for Women and Men**

### **Dear Respondent**

My name is Rosemary Imagoro, and I am a student of Kyambogo University carrying out a study assessing socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in pastoralist ethnic conflict areas in Amudat District, Uganda. In this study, you have been purposely selected to participate because you are well positioned to provide the necessary information. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time of the study. All collected data will be kept private and solely used for this study's objectives. Please provide answers to the questions that are asked of you, and I request that you allow me to record the interview so that I can accurately record your responses. This interview is intended to take about 30-45 minutes.

Do you accept to participate in the interview? Yes  No

Background information of the respondents:

Sex.....

Age.....

Position.....

### **Women's socio-economic welfare in pastoralist ethnic conflict areas**

1. What are health-related lived experiences of the Pokot women in Pastoralist ethnic conflict areas of Amudat District?
2. What are other lived experiences of the Pokot women living in Pastoralist ethnic conflict areas in Amudat District.

### **Perceived impact of pastoralist ethnic conflicts on the socio-economic welfare of women**

1. How has the pastoralist ethnic conflict changed the way of life among the Pokot women in their community?

2. Explain how the pastoralist ethnic conflict has affected the ability of the Pokot women to access/acquire, control resources, and participate in the decision-making processes including formal peace negotiations.
3. How has the Pastoralist ethnic conflict affected the livelihoods among the Pokot women?

**Effectiveness of strategies employed in improving the socio-economic Welfare of Women affected by pastoralist conflicts.**

1. Explain how disarmament has helped to resolve pastoralist ethnic conflicts and enhanced the welfare of Pokot community women?
2. What political efforts have been taken to resolve conflicts and promote the welfare of women?
3. What economic strategies have been and can be undertaken to resolve cross-border conflicts and enhance the welfare of women among the Pokot?
4. How can the lives of the people be re-organized to reduce pastoralist conflicts and enhance the welfare of women?
5. What other thoughts would you like to share?

**End.**

**Thank you for your time.**

### Appendix C: Observation Checklist

In this checklist, the focus is on noting down some visible pieces of evidence in Amudat related to women’s socio-economic welfare for example activities, evidence of the impact of pastoralist ethnic communities, and evidence of some strategies to boost women’s socio-economic welfare, among others.

Name of the District ..... Subcounty:

Name of the Parish..... Village: .....

Field component observed	Yes/No:	Description
Evidence of women engaged in economic activities for example operating small micro businesses		
Evidence of women-led activities for example Women VSLA		
Physical wellbeing of women e.g., appearance		
Evidence of support services in the village eg health centers, schools		
Women contributing freely during the FGD.		
Evidence of fear and suspicious behaviors of conflict.		
Evidence Food availability		
Evidence of Interventions/ mitigations undertaken against conflict.		
Evidence of women in the community leadership hierarchy		

## Appendix D: Consent Form for the Respondents

I ..... willingly accept to participate in the interview/ discussion on the research study: *Assessing the socio-economic welfare of Pokot women in Amudat District: Impact of pastoralist Conflicts and strategies for improvement.*

I have been explained the purpose of the study. I had an opportunity to ask for clarification where I was not clear, and I have received satisfactory responses. I understand that the information I provide shall be used for the purpose of this study only and I also understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and I have a right to withdraw from the study at any time without any implications. In addition, I understand that the security and confidentiality of my personal information shall be observed. I also consent to audio recording of my responses and the publication of results from this study on the condition that my identity will not be revealed.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E: Introductory Letter and Acceptance Letter**

## **Appendix F: Plagiarism Test Results**