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**Effects of Neglecting Culture in Child Protection and Development in Pastoral Communities of Karamoja: A Case Study of Rupa Sub-County in Matheniko County, Moroto District Karamoja Region**

The study was about the effects of neglecting culture in promoting child protection and development in pastoral communities in Rupa sub-county in Moroto district -Karamoja region. It was meant to identify the cultural institutions, values, norms that enhance child protection and development and correspondingly establish the effects of cultural neglect in child protection and development. The study also highlights factors which influence cultural neglect in child protection and development in order to find solutions and recommendations to such problems through the analysis done by the researcher after data collection. Three hundred and sixty seven (367) respondents were randomly selected for the study. Primary data were collected through indepth informant interviews and focus group discussions. Various agency and government of Uganda publications and textbooks were used then as sources of secondary data. The research findings identified the following existing traditional institutions and practices which traditionally provided a platform for enhancement of child protection and development: the clan system, adolescent sexuality, courtship rape, marriage using animals, polygamy, care of orphans and widows, child birth, protection of children from evil or harm, naming of children, ownership of non-biological children, gender roles and livelihoods, mainstreaming of pastoralist protection issues, education, traditional healing/health care, nomenclature, disarmament/restoration of law and order in Karamoja, role of elders, congregating under trees (usually outside the manyata). The effects of neglecting culture in child protection and development were discussed alongside the above identified existing norms, institutions and values. Majority of these cultural institutions hold positive aspects of traditional child protection mechanisms which have been neglected due to the limiting factors such as: chronic insecurity and violence, rampant incidences of sexual abuse/rape, human sacrifices, failure of the current generation set to hand over power to the next generation set, decline in power of the traditional systems to regulate conflicts, poverty, chronic insecurity, women's role in raiding, pride in raiding, extended drought, lack of economic activities, loss of parents or guardians. However, neglecting some cultural practices was viewed as yielding positive effects for child protection and development. The study findings revealed that whereas there are both positive and negative effects of neglecting culture, the negative effects are more detrimental to child protection and development. Introduction of modern formal systems for child protection and development are not given ample time to evolve. Advocates of change are eager to see results of change in the short term. Both the Karimojong and the development partners (Government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), private sector) need to take into consideration the role of culture in designing development programmes in order to develop appropriate sustainable child protection and development programmes for Karamoja with specific focus on Rupa sub-county. The research will contribute important and useful information to policy makers and development partners who are interested in promoting child protection and development in Rupa sub-county and to the government that is currently implementing the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) in Karamoja. This study will also help scholars in the academic field to undertake further research into issues of culture and development and it is important that this study was carried out to help Moroto district in designing its District Development Plans. NGOs and UN agencies will

be able to evaluate the relevance and the effectiveness of their programme interventions using the recommendations of this research.

**Keywords: Pastoral Communities, Child Protection, Karamoja**