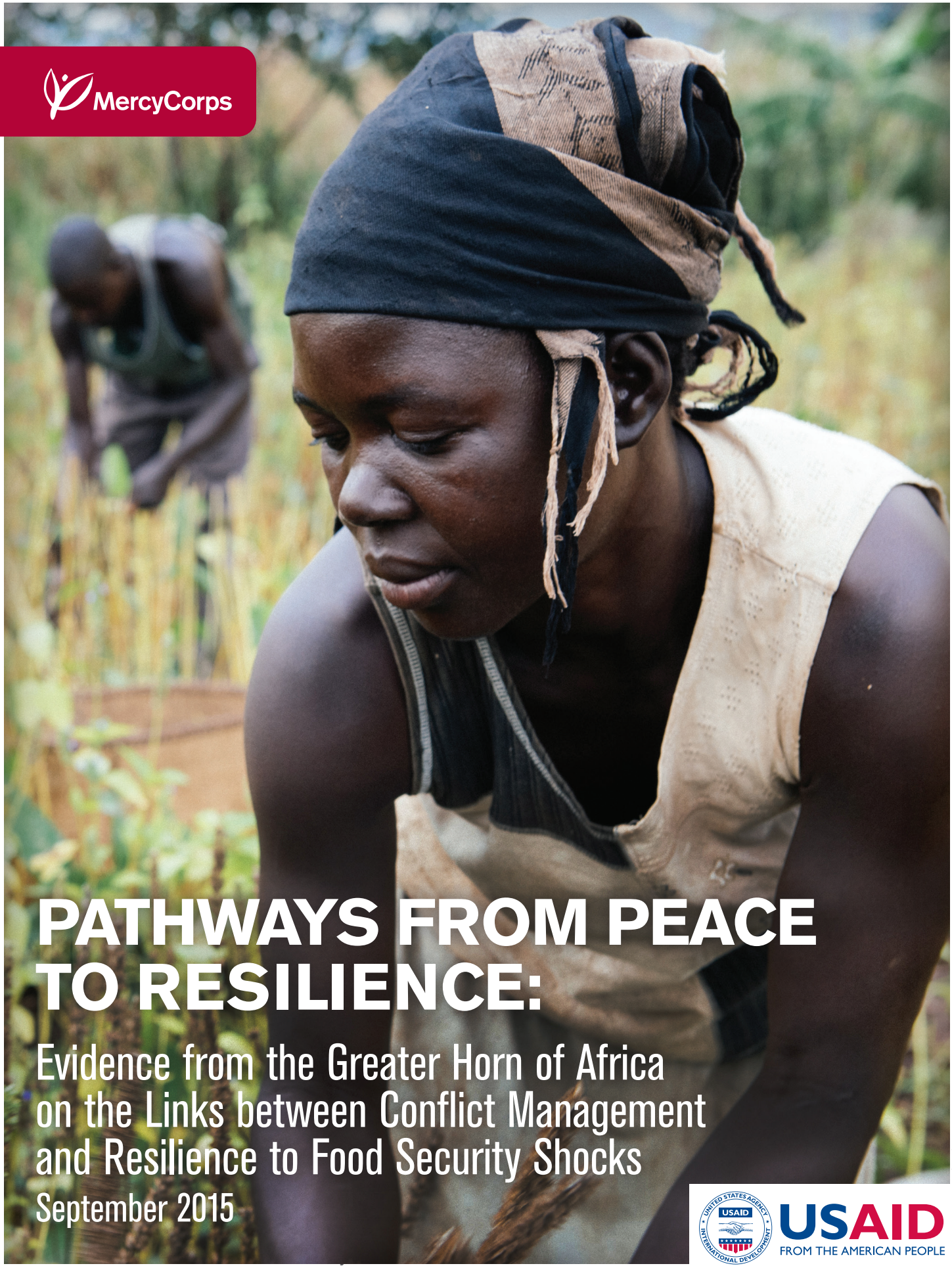

MercyCorps

PATHWAYS FROM PEACE TO RESILIENCE:

Evidence from the Greater Horn of Africa on the Links between Conflict Management and Resilience to Food Security Shocks

September 2015

C. Robbins for Mercy Corps

USAID
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Building resilience has become a primary development aim in the Horn of Africa and other areas facing recurrent humanitarian crises. To date, the resilience agenda has focused largely on predicting and preparing for climatic shocks – such as droughts and floods – and market shocks, with little examination of conflict and other political shocks. Even less understood is how strategies to address violent conflict affect communities and households' resilience to natural and economic shocks. This reflects a troubling mismatch given that fragile and conflict affected contexts are those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and other natural hazards (Kellett & Sparks, 2012) and the evidence linking conflict to greater vulnerability to disasters (Harris, Keen, & Mitchell, 2013).

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A better understanding of the links between conflict and resilience is vital because chronic violence and instability are pervasive in many of the areas where major investments in resilience are being made. Yet how best to build such resilience in conflict contexts remains unclear. Mercy Corps under took research in the greater Horn of Africa to contribute to filling this critical knowledge gap. The central question this research seeks to answer is: **How do conflict management and peacebuilding programs affect resilience to shocks and stresses in pastoral areas in the greater Horn of Africa?**

Previous Mercy Corps research the Horn of Africa demonstrated that peacebuilding interventions can have positive effects on pastoralists' abilities to cope with and adapt to severe drought. Building on these insights, Mercy Corps developed and examined two theories to identify specific strategies within conflict management programs that appear to have the greatest efficacy in strengthening resilience.

1) **Social Cohesion Theory:** If groups in conflict have a safe space for interaction around shared natural resources, then stronger positive relationships and trust will grow between traditionally conflicting groups. This will create an environment conducive to greater cooperation over the use of natural resources. These stronger relationships better enable communities to employ adaptive capacities in preparation for shocks and stresses and facilitate quicker recovery from them.

2) **Enabling Institutional Environment Theory:** Enabling Institutional Environment Theory: If influential leaders from formal and informal institutions are better equipped and work together to prevent conflict and resolve disputes, security will improve, mobility and access to resources will improve, allowing people to better employ adaptive capacities in the face of various shocks and stresses.

Mercy Corps, with support from USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation, undertook research to test these two theories. The research was conducted in Northern Karamoja, Uganda, and in the Mandera Triangle with the aim of generating generalizable evidence across the greater Horn of Africa.

KEY FINDINGS

Household food security is gravely affected by experiencing economic and climate-related shocks. The results of this research show that the effects of such shocks on food security can be mitigated by strengthening community and institutional conflict management skills and systems. Building resilience to shocks through peacebuilding efforts, therefore, can support food security goals.

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Peace and security conditions are better where stronger institutional-level conflict management skills and systems are in place. Importantly, where government representatives and traditional leaders work together, more conflicts are resolved satisfactorily. This finding supports the value of the work Mercy Corps and its partners are doing to strengthen the skills of, and cooperation between, leaders of formal and informal governance structures that have responsibilities for conflict prevention and dispute resolution.

Greater inter-ethnic social cohesion was not found to be linked with improved security conditions nor greater food security. To achieve these interrelated goals, peacebuilding efforts need to invest more in translating improvements in individual perceptions and behaviors around conflict into changed group norms and institutional structures that can sustain peace. Strong examples of this are consensus-based natural resource agreements developed in the Mandera Triangle program and the Moruitit Resolution in northern Uganda.

Not all forms of social capital appear to be equal when it comes to building resilience. The results indicate that intra-ethnic social cohesion is linked to both increased peace and security as well as improved food security. This intra-ethnic social cohesion can manifest as a community-level social safety net, for example, where community members help each other out during times of stress. Surprisingly, higher levels of inter-ethnic social cohesion was not found to be associated with either peace or welfare outcomes. This is at odds with previous research that found higher levels of interaction across ethnic lines to be positively correlated with household food security in the face conflict and climate-related shocks (Mercy Corps, 2013). Further examination is needed to understand the contextual elements that might be required for bridging social capital to support resilience, such as the strength and legitimacy of local institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results have important implications for program and policy decision makers working in conflict-affected contexts in the Horn of Africa.

- Aid actors interested in building resilience to food security shocks in fragile and insecure contexts should gear greater investments towards conflict management interventions.
- Programs with security goals should work to improve institutional-level conflict management capacities.
- Conflict management efforts must go beyond strengthening inter-ethnic social cohesion if they are to achieve transformative change.
- Development and humanitarian actors should support interventions that strengthen the social networks that people rely on during times of stress.

1. RATIONALE

Building resilience has become a primary development aim in the Horn of Africa and other areas facing recurrent humanitarian crises. To date, the resilience agenda has focused largely on predicting and preparing for climatic shocks – such as droughts and floods – and market shocks, with little examination of conflict and other political shocks. Even less understood is how strategies to address violent conflict affect communities and households' resilience to natural and economic shocks.

This reflects a troubling mismatch given the evidence that fragile and conflict affected contexts are those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and other natural hazards The famine in Somalia in 2011 is a harrowing example of the results of the confluence of drought, political instability, conflict, and food price spikes. Further, the majority of humanitarian aid goes to responding to protracted conflict and other political crises (Global Humanitarian Assessment, 2013). An increasing amount of development assistance is being channeled to fragile and conflict affected states; in 2011, fragile states received 38 percent of all official development assistance, compared to just 31 percent for other developing countries (OECD, 2014).

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A better understanding of the links between conflict and resilience is vital because chronic violence and instability are pervasive in many of the areas where major investments in resilience are being made. Yet how best to build such resilience in conflict contexts remains unclear. Mercy Corps under took research in the greater Horn of Africa to contribute to filling this critical knowledge gap.

Evidence from previous studies in pastoral areas of the Horn of Africa undertaken by Mercy Corps, suggests that peacebuilding activities can contribute to resilience to the effects of shocks on households' and communities' food security and livelihoods. Building on these insights, Mercy Corps developed two theories on how conflict management can contribute to resilience: 1) increased social cohesion developed through positive inter-communal interactions can be tapped into when a community experiences a shock; and 2) an enabling institutional environment where local leaders are better able to prevent and manage conflict will reduce the effect of conflict, economic and environmental shocks and stresses on communities.

To test the validity of these theories, Mercy Corps examined two of its programs in the greater Horn of Africa: a program on natural resource management and peacebuilding in the Mandera Triangle, and the Growth, Health and Governance program (GHG) in the northern Karamoja region of Uganda. The main approaches to conflict management employed by the two programs are: enhancing social cohesion through building dispute resolution capacities and platforms within and between communities; and strengthen the capacities of and cooperation between actors and institutions with responsibilities for conflict management.

This report highlights key results from the research in both program sites. The findings present actionable insights on how humanitarian and development actors can better analyze and address conflict as part of strategies to strengthen resilience in the greater Horn of Africa and similar contexts.

2. BACKGROUND

Over the last decade, the origins of extreme food insecurity around the globe have oscillated between conflicts, natural disasters, economic hardships – and often, in some combination of the three. In some cases, food security shocks have such a detrimental impact that communities spiral into humanitarian crisis. Many the areas of the world experience chronic and reoccurring conflict and/or natural disasters; one estimate suggests that half the population affected by natural disasters between 2005 and 2009 lived in fragile and conflict-affected areas (Kellett & Sparks, 2012). In such fragile situations, relationships and institutions are weak, and people are unable to fully recover or enter a trajectory towards improved socio-economic wellbeing. The weakened institutional and community condition characterized by fragility makes people more vulnerable to future shocks, and as they are repetitively hit by shocks quality of life declines (FAO & WFP, 2010).

Managing natural disasters in the midst of conflict and fragility is becoming even more relevant in a warming world where the death toll from conflict continues to rise (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2015). Although interstate conflicts have decreased dramatically over the last several decades, societal (or civil, ethnic and communal) conflicts are on the rise (Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2012; Marshall & Cole, 2011). From Syria to Somalia, the evidence is clear: these conflicts make already at-risk communities more vulnerable to shocks – either environmental or economic – in addition to weakening the ability to withstand future conflict and other forms of insecurity. In Somalia, for example, the presence of Al Shabaab prevented needy households from receiving humanitarian assistance during the 2010/11 drought (Dorell, 2011). And, in Syria, unusual weather patterns are contributing to colder winters, which worsen the suffering of refugees (Lyall, 2013). Climate change will undoubtedly increase vulnerability: as the planet continues to warm, more severe and frequent weather and environmental shocks are expected to occur, creating conditions for even more intense conflicts.

2.1 RESILIENCE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS

In response to growing concerns about conflict, climate and market vulnerability, many humanitarian and development practitioners have gravitated toward the concept of resilience. Mercy Corps defines resilience as the capacity of communities in complex socio-ecological systems to learn, cope, adapt, and transform in the face of shocks and stresses. "Community" or "social" resilience exists when groups and individuals cope with changes by managing the risk associated with environmental, economic or even conflict shocks throughout their networks (Tompkins & Adger, 2004). The operational definition or resilience used by this research refers to the ability of a household or community to maintain welfare and well-being outcomes in response to a shock or stress (Constas et al., 2014).

Capacities[1] that support resilience can be categorized as absorptive, adaptive or transformative. Absorptive capacities help people and communities cope with the effects of shocks and stresses and support quick recovery. Adaptive capacity is the ability to proactively adjust livelihoods and circumstances based on projected changes to minimize exposure to the effects of shocks. Transformative capacity relates to institutions, structures and norms (governance mechanisms, policies, and infrastructure) that can help prevent and mitigate shocks (Béné, Wood, Newsham, & Davies, 2012).

2.1.1 CONFLICT AND RESILIENCE

Several important distinctions must be drawn when examining resilience in the context of conflict and other political shocks, compared to discussing resilience to climatic and economic shocks. First, the causes and consequences of the conflict shock are different. Natural disasters and major economic shocks, e.g. food price spikes, are largely exogenous forces, over which affected households and communities have little control. Violent conflict, on the other hand, is often borne out of breakdowns in social cohesion and/or failures in local

1 Capacities include characteristics, abilities, and environmental assets that households and communities can draw upon.

institutions. In this way, conflict shocks are more endogenous, based on pressures to which affected communities can and do contribute. Conflict-induced shocks can result in protracted crises can spread over time to different areas[2], whereas natural disasters are typically discrete events that affect distinct geographies and populations.

Second, in is important not to conflate resilience to engaging in violence with resilience to the effects violence (USAID, 2014). A growing body of literature in the peacebuilding field focuses on the former – i.e. resilience as the capacity to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflict (see, Menkhaus, 2013; Ryan, 2013; USAID, 2012; Van Metre, 2014). This attention on reducing the likelihood or severity of conflict is important. However, by conceiving of conflict reduction as the end goal, much of this literature appears inconsistent with how resilience is being defined by major humanitarian and development agencies: i.e. as the capacity to maintain development outcomes – such as food security or health – in the face shocks and stresses, including conflict (Kurtz, 2014). The research detailed in this report strives to align with this common definition, by examining how effective conflict management can strengthen resilience to the consequences of climatic, economic, or conflict-related shocks.

In addition to the differences, there are also clear linkages between resilience in the context of conflict, climate and economic shocks. Violent conflict erodes social capital and cohesion. Yet are the very factors that help communities cope, adapt, and rebound. When relationships within and between communities, and linkages between communities and government deteriorate, people do not have the networks and access to assets that help them survive in the midst of a crisis. Insecurity also impedes mobility, as people fear to leave their homes and communities, thus constraining their livelihood strategies. In these ways, conflict can weaken household and communities' capacity to withstand and recover from climate and economic shocks.

Confronted with this dilemma, Mercy Corps asked: can elements of peacebuilding interventions build resilience to the effects of environmental and economic shocks, in addition to the effects of conflict shocks? Preliminary evidence suggests this is indeed possible.

2.1.2 PREVIOUS MERCY CORPS RESEARCH ON CONFLICT AND RESILIENCE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA


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In 2011, Mercy Corps published a report that examined if and how its natural resource and conflict management program in the Horn of Africa affected key factors associated with drought resilience. The study showed that peacebuilding had a strong impact on pastoralists' abilities to productively cope with and adapt to the 2011 drought. The report shed light on how facilitating dialogue and improving resource governance among conflicting parties can create an enabling environment for more effective development and relief efforts to take place. One of the key ways that peacebuilding supported greater resilience was by increasing pastoral groups' freedom of movement. By developing formal agreements over the use of shared natural resources among groups in conflict, the program enabled access to distant pastures, water and markets necessary to sustain pastoral livelihoods while facing drought.

Around the same time, in the Karamoja region of Uganda, Mercy Corps conducted an evaluation of a program that used cross-community economic development projects and dialogues to build trust between ethnic groups with a history of inter-communal violence. The evaluation in Karamoja found that communities in program areas experienced increased access to natural resources and

2 The forms of conflict examined by this study are limited to inter-communal violence. It does not address contexts of state-sponsored violence or war. For a treatment of resilience within politically induced emergencies, see "Stabilization and Resilience In Protracted, Politically-Induced Emergencies: A Case Study Exploration of Lebanon" (UNDP & Mercy Corps, 2015).

livelihood opportunities, and increased perceptions of security, trust, and inter-communal ties (i.e. intermarriage) compared with communities where the program was not implemented (Ferreri, Frei, Ross, & Stoker, 2011).

Given these findings, it became evident that further study was necessary to determine which type of conflict management capacities best contribute to households' resilience in the face of shocks. The research in this report focused on the role of social cohesion and institutional conflict management capacities given their prominence in many peacebuilding and good governance programs.

2.2 CONFLICT, CLIMATE AND LIVELIHOODS IN EAST AFRICA

East Africa is a region under a siege of conflict-, climate- and economic-related shocks, which collide in sometimes-catastrophic ways. It is the location of frequent drought and other extreme weather events, and home to hundreds of semi-mobile ethnic communities that compete for water and land production. The region faces conflict on regional, national and local levels, and hosts a number of unstable or authoritarian governance structures. The need to improve resilience to the impacts of these many shocks cannot be overstated.

The studies presented in this report took place in two locations in eastern Africa where Mercy Corps has been supporting conflict management and governance efforts: northern Karamoja in Uganda and in the Mandera Triangle (a geographic area covering pastoral areas in multiple countries in the Horn of Africa). Both locations are in located semi-arid environments with changing environmental variability. The populations in both northern Karamoja and in the Mandera Triangle practice a combination of pastoralism and agro-pastoralism, and many are transitioning to becoming more settled. Both communities also experience low-levels of conflict between the many ethnic groups that occupy the regions. And, both locations are experiencing "land grabs" from outside investors.

Some notable differences also exist between the two communities. The nature of conflict, for example, is different. In northern Karamoja, large-scale and often-deadly cattle raids between ethnic groups characterized conflict in the past, but now conflict has shifted to within communities, where the presence of Ionieta (young men engaged in crime) is increasing (for more information on changing conflict dynamics in northern Karamoja, please see the complementary report *"We Now Have Relative Peace," On Changing Conflict Dynamics in Northern Karamoja"* by Kimberly Howe, Elizabeth Stites & Darlington Akabwai with support from Mercy Corps). In the locations studied within the Mandera Triangle, pervasive disagreements between ethnic groups exists, primarily over access to natural resources (i.e. land and water points), in addition to ethnic feuds characterized by livestock raids. Other pressures besides conflict are also affecting both study sites. In northern Karamoja, there are high levels of gender-based violence – including domestic violence, sexual assault and forced marriage. At the locations studied within the Mandera Triangle, high population growth is contributing to competition over natural resources and poverty.

2.3 MERCY CORPS IN EAST AFRICA

2.3.1 GROWTH, HEALTH & GOVERNANCE PROGRAM IN UGANDA

In late 2012, Mercy Corps began implementing the multi-year Growth, Health and Governance (GHG) program in northern Karamoja with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In addition to strengthening livelihoods, nutrition and health, GHG includes a significant peacebuilding effort. This work adopts a multi-pronged, gender-sensitive approach to conflict management and mitigation.

The program aims to (1) increase the capacity of traditional authorities, elders and women's groups to reduce the incidence of cattle rustling, land-related disputes and other forms of conflict; (2) improve linkages between informal systems and formal governance structures through meetings and dialogues; (3) raise awareness of conflict issues and harmful cultural practices through drama, song and dance, as well as through direct participation of traditional authorities in government meetings; and (4) enhance youth capacity to engage in peace and development activities through training, exchange visits, and facilitated participation.

2.3.2 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PEACEBUILDING PROGRAM IN THE MANDERA TRIANGLE

Mercy Corps is implementing a shared natural resource management and peacebuilding program in three Districts in the Mandera Triangle. This program facilitates community members and local authorities to identify, restore, and manage critical natural resources which are often scarce, degraded and, as a result, a source of inter-community tensions. To do this, program staff and local community leaders lead consultations and trainings on negotiation and other conflict management skills that culminate in a long-term natural resource management (NRM) plans. By improving inter-communal natural resource management, the program aims to reduce the impetus for conflict between groups that compete over natural resources.

2.4 THEORY OF CHANGE

Conceptually, if conflict damages the qualities of livelihood systems that make it possible to withstand and recover from climate and economic shocks, then building capacities that manage conflict may also support resilience. While it is also possible to undertake food security and livelihoods interventions in ways that can make people less sensitive to conflict shocks, the hope is that by addressing conflict, a major source of shocks can will be alleviated. Indeed, many peacebuilding interventions follow the same theories of change as those that seek to reduce communities' vulnerability to risks and shocks more widely, namely, through improving social cohesion and local governance (Walch, 2010). These two theories are presented in the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

Figure. 1 Conceptual framework for peacebuilding and resilience

2.4.1 SOCIAL COHESION THEORY OF CHANGE

If groups in conflict have a safe space for interaction around shared natural resources, then stronger positive relationships and trust will grow between traditionally conflicting groups. This will create an environment conducive to greater cooperation over the use of natural resources. These stronger relationships better enable communities to employ adaptive capacities in preparation for shocks and stresses and facilitate quicker recovery from them.

This theory focuses on building adaptive capacities by strengthening social cohesion within and across communities. Social cohesion is "the willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other to survive and prosper" (Stanley, 2003). During conflict, social connections and trust between communities are broken due to fighting and the resulting insecurity. Restoring those bridges can increase social cohesion. This is achieved by eliminating social divides across conflicting communities and by reducing prejudices between groups (see, for example, the Healthy Relations and Connections theory of peacebuilding from CDA's Reflecting on Peace Practice Collaborative Learning Projects (Church & Rogers 2006) as well as the Social/Cultural Contact and Cooperation and Mutual Interest theories of change in USAID's Theories and Indicators of Change briefing paper on Conflict Management and Mitigation (Babbitt, Chigas and Wilkinson, 2013).

Social capital is a key component of social cohesion (OECD, 2011). Social capital refers to the networks and relationships between people that enable a community to function effectively. According to resilience scholar Daniel Aldrich, social capital "can contribute to community resilience by providing an informal buffer to those affected by disaster, overcoming challenges to adaptation through coordinated local processes, and enabling transformative change by strengthening the community's collective voice" (2012).

Families, ethnic groups and communities generally share social capital already. Neighbors may watch each other's children or borrow small items from each other, and family members may support each other when one member falls into hardship. This is known as "bonding" social capital. Normally, bonding social capital is based on family kinship, locality or ethnicity. Marginalized communities often rely on bonding social capital to gain access to resources as a united front (Adger, 2009; T. Frankenberger, Mueller, Spangler, & Alexander, 2013; Ratner, Meinzen-dick, May, & Haglund, 2013). Studies show that the ability to draw on other members within a community after natural disasters improves people's ability to recover from shocks (Badjeck, Allison, Halls, & Dulvy, 2010; Forster, Lake, Watkinson, & Gill, 2013), indicating that intra-ethnic social cohesion is an important for household resilience. Pastoralists, for example, may loan livestock assets to friends and family members to help them recover from a shock (HPG, 2009).

Although bonded social capital is particularly strong within communities, ethnic groups and nations, it can also contribute to hostility when used against groups outside of that community. Consequently, "bridging" social capital is necessary to build inter-group cohesion that will address conflict dynamics while also contributing to resilience. "Bridging" social capital is based on economic or other external ties across distinct groups and can link these groups to outside assets and socio-economic identities (Adger, 2009; T. Frankenberger et al., 2013). It is particularly important for dynamic, mobile communities, especially those that share a resource base with others (Adger, 2009), such as pastoralists and fishers. Studies indicate that where bridging social capital is strong, pastoralist and agro-pastoralist households are able to negotiate access to resources even when affected by economic and environmental shocks, suggesting that inter-ethnic social cohesion can improve resilience in communities. Mercy Corps' research on the determinants of resilience in Somalia found that households with greater social and economic interaction across clan lines were more likely to maintain food security through the 2010/11 famine, or recover it quickly afterwards (Mercy Corps, 2013).

2.4.2 ENABLING INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT THEORY OF CHANGE

If influential leaders from formal and informal institutions are better equipped and work together to prevent conflict and resolve disputes, security will improve, which will allow greater mobility and access to resources, allowing people to better employ adaptive capacities in the face of various shocks and stresses.

This theory posits that adaptive and transformative resilience capacities can be built by a) strengthening the performance of informal and formal institutions through skill building, and b) enhancing the connections across institutions responsible for managing conflict. Formal institutions include, for example, government bodies and policies. Informal institutions include, for example, traditional leaders as well as cultural practices. According to the 'institutional development' theory of peacebuilding, conflict can be reduced "by establishing stable/reliable social institutions that guarantee democracy, equity, justice, and fair allocation of resources" (Church & Rogers, 2006). USAID adds to this with their Theories and Indicators of Change Briefing Paper, offering additional theories based on institutional development, such as Improving Skills and Processes ("if parties have skills and good processes for resolving conflicts, then they will be more successful in negotiating peace and dealing effectively with underlying causes of conflict") (Babbitt, Chigas and Wilkinson, 2013).

Improving the skills of individuals in these institutions to resolve conflict is not enough on its own to contribute to greater security. Local leaders' abilities to apply their skills are often dependent on having clear roles and linkages between informal and formal institutions. The effectiveness of individuals and institutions in managing conflict requires that both government and customary conflict managers collaborate their efforts (Logan, 2013). By improving linking social capital— i.e. relationships to, across and between layers of institutions—related to conflict management, security and mobility should improve, and therefore people will be better able to adapt in the face of economic, climate and conflict shocks and stresses (T. Frankenberger et al., 2013).

2.5 HYPOTHESES

Mercy Corps tested three core hypotheses that are evident in the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1.

Hypothesis 1: Conflict, climate and economic shocks adversely affect household food security

Before understanding how the effects of shocks can be mitigated, it is necessary to first understand how different shocks impact household food security outcomes.

Hypothesis 2: Stronger conflict management capacities among communities and local institutions promote peace and security conditions

After understanding the relationship between the various shocks and food security, we then need to see whether conflict management capacities actually improve security conditions — i.e. do they contribute to greater prevention and/or management of conflicts and disputes? The research examined two main conflict management capacities – social cohesion and an enabling institutional environment – and analyzed how they are linked to peace and security conditions.

Hypothesis 3: Stronger conflict management capacities among communities and local institutions contribute to greater food security for households' experiencing shocks

Next, we examined if and how conflict management capacities are linked to greater abilities for households to maintain or regain food security in the face of shocks. Again, two main conflict management capacities were examined: social cohesion and an enabling institutional environment.

2. METHOLDOLOGY

In both locations, Mercy Corps adopted a mixed methods approach to the research, which included both a household survey as well as individual and group interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed at two points in time: in early to mid-2013 and again in early to mid-2015. Conclusions were drawn regarding the research questions and hypotheses based on an analysis of trends over time, correlational relationships between variables of interest, and qualitative contribution analysis.

3.1 QUANTITATIVE METHODS

The research relied heavily on quantitative data from both a baseline household survey and a follow-up survey two years later. The surveys were representative samples, based on a multi-stage cluster sample design, of households within communities targeted by Mercy Corps' programs in both locations. The total sample sizes from northern Karamoja were 557 households at baseline and 544 households in the follow up survey. These were drawn and analysed as independent cross-sectional samples. In the Mandera Triangle location, 450 households were surveyed at baseline and 350 of the same households were re-surveyed in the follow up study[3]. These samples were treated as a panel dataset.

The survey questionnaire was comprised of the following components: demographics, assets, natural resource access, income and expenditures, savings and loans, food security, inter-ethnic trust and interaction, exposure to conflict and insecurity, and experience of climate and economic shocks. (See below in section 3.3.1 for a description of the key variables measured.) Given the diverse nature of the questionnaire, multiple respondents were targeted for the interview including: the household head, spouse of the household head (where applicable), and the individual responsible for preparing food for the household. Specific details of the samples taken at both study sites are included in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of Samples at Baseline and Endline

	Northern Karamoja		Mandera Triangle	
	Baseline	**Follow-up**	**Baseline**	**Follow-up**
Respondent				
Mean Age	37.6	39.1	38	
Male	33%	50%	63%	
Female	67%	50%	38%	
Household				
	67%	73%	15%	
Head of Household has no Education	67%	61%	70%	
Livelihood				
Agro-pastoral Livelihood	0%	12%	17%	3%
Pastoral Livelihood	14%	1%	2%	7%
Farming Livelihood	83%	78%	79%	85%

*Note: Since the study design used panel data in the Mandera Triangle, some questions were not asked again during the follow-up survey.

3 The predominately pastoral livelihoods utilized by the population in the region is the most likely reason for the high attrition.

3.2 QUALITATIVE METHODS

In northern Karamoja, Mercy Corps partnered with Tufts University's Feinstein International Center to undertake the qualitative data collection and analysis for the follow-up study. Key informant interviews were conducted with 19 conflict management actors at the village, sub-county, district and regional levels, and included local councils, village elders, peace committee members, the Ugandan People Defense Force (UPDF), police, as well as district and regional officials. FGDs were conducted with men and women (separately) in 13 villages in 11 sub-counties. Interview questions were designed to understand contemporary conflict dynamics within the household, community, agricultural and pastoral areas, along transport routes, and in urban spaces. This includes the threats, trends, and impact of conflict on household livelihoods, resources, and resilience from a gender perspective. In addition, perceptions of various conflict mitigation initiatives were explored both from the points of view of conflict management actors and local populations. Further details of this research are available in a complementary report, entitled "*We Now Have Relative Peace", On Changing Conflict Dynamics in Northern Karamoja* (Howe, Stites, and Akabwai 2015, forthcoming).

In the Mandera Triangle, Mercy Corps staff facilitated eighteen focus group discussions separately with elders, women, and youth from three different sub-districts. The research team also conducted key informant interviews with a variety of stakeholders and officials, including district administrators, heads of the local security officials, and district officials responsible for agriculture and natural resource management. Participatory qualitative research activities included exercises to analyze relationships, including discussing inter-group dividers and connectors, and identify disputes over natural resources amongst groups involved in the project. Focus groups were led through a participatory community mapping exercise as well as an inter-ethnic relationship mapping exercise. The assessment team also conducted semi-structured interviews in order to explore interrelated issues of access to and tensions over natural resources, the effect of conflict and tensions on livelihoods, and the degree of effectiveness of current resolution mechanisms.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data was analyzed thematically to understand trends in conflict types and levels, patterns in the households' access to and tensions over natural resources, the effect of conflict and tensions insecurity on livelihoods and food security, and the degree of effectiveness of current resolution mechanisms.

Quantitative data from the baseline and the follow-up study was analyzed in multiple ways. Mean statistics from the baseline and follow-up survey data are used to provide contextual information. To measure and analyze resilience, the study employed the approach developed by the Food Security Information Network Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group[4], of which Mercy Corps has been a member and major contributor. This approach involved analyzing how certain capacities (in this case, capacities related to conflict management) mitigate the effects of specific shocks or stressors (economic, climatic, and conflict) on households' welfare and wellbeing (for this study, food security and livelihoods). Multi-variate regression was used to analyze these relationships and test the three hypotheses. The regression models provide insights into links between exposure to shocks, and levels of conflict management capacities, and household food security. Slightly different models were used for northern Karamoja and the Mandera Triangle based on the data available.[5]

4 For more information on the Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group, please visit: http://www.fsincop.net/topics/resilience-measurement/technical-working-group/en/

5 Full models are in the detailed reports for each of the research sites, available upon request

3.3.1 VARIABLES

The following key variables were used in the quantitative analysis models:

- **Food security measures:** Household hunger scale, 2) household dietary diversity score, and 3) the coping strategies index, which measures households' use of distressful, food consumption-related coping strategies such as begging for food or reducing the number of meals consumed.
- **Peace and security measures:** 1) conflict-related shocks included household experience of theft, cattle raids destruction of property, loss of land due to conflict, and violence against household members, 2) Freedom of movement, measured as respondents' willingness to travel to areas previously avoided during the day or night, and 3) perceptions on whether or not most conflicts are successfully resolved.
- **Environmental shock exposure measures:** Household experience of excessive or too little rain, crop or livestock disease, bad harvest, landsides or erosion.
- **Economic shock exposure measures:** Household experience of unavailability or increased price of food or livelihood inputs, no demand or drop in price of livelihood products in markets, death or migration of household member, and separation or divorce.
- **Social cohesion measures:** 1) Peaceful interaction index, measuring the extent to which households had recently engaged in social or economic activities with members of other ethnic groups; 2) bridging social capital, bonding social capital and trust indexes.
- **Enabling institutional environment measures:** 1) traditional and governmental leaders working together to resolve conflict, 2) various conflict management actors ability to prevent and/or resolve conflict, and 3) perceptions of local leaders ability to negotiate access to natural resources was also included.
- **Socio demographic measures:** The following variables were included as controls in the models: sex of the household head, primary source of household income, ethnic affiliation, education level of household head and household size.

3.4 LIMITATIONS

Using perception-related and self-reported data imposes a risk of measurement bias in the models as well as the potential for respondents to inflate responses in hopes of benefiting from the program. An additional limitation is the fact that OLS-based models are only able to determine correlation – not causation – between variables. The original research design set out to understand the causal impact of Mercy Corps' programs on conflict and household food security. However, due to how the two programs were implemented, the research was unable to establish a valid counterfactual, or comparison group, needed to determine attributable program impacts.

Only the Mandera Triangle research was able to generate a panel data set comprised of the same households at the baseline and follow up survey. Given that resilience is a dynamic concept, panel data is valuable for understanding what helps households manage shocks and stressors over time. The independent cross-sectional data from the northern Karamoja site did not allow for such analysis. However, the results are still useful for understanding which factors are associated with greater or lesser resilience to which types of food security shocks.

The findings are also specific to the contexts that they are examining, both of which are areas that experience low-intensity yet pervasive conflict between ethnic groups in both northern Karamoja and the Mandera Triangle. Finally, the lack of any major shocks occurring in either site during the study period made it difficult to analyze household resilience – and what contributed to it – based on the research methods and models employed.

4. FINDINGS

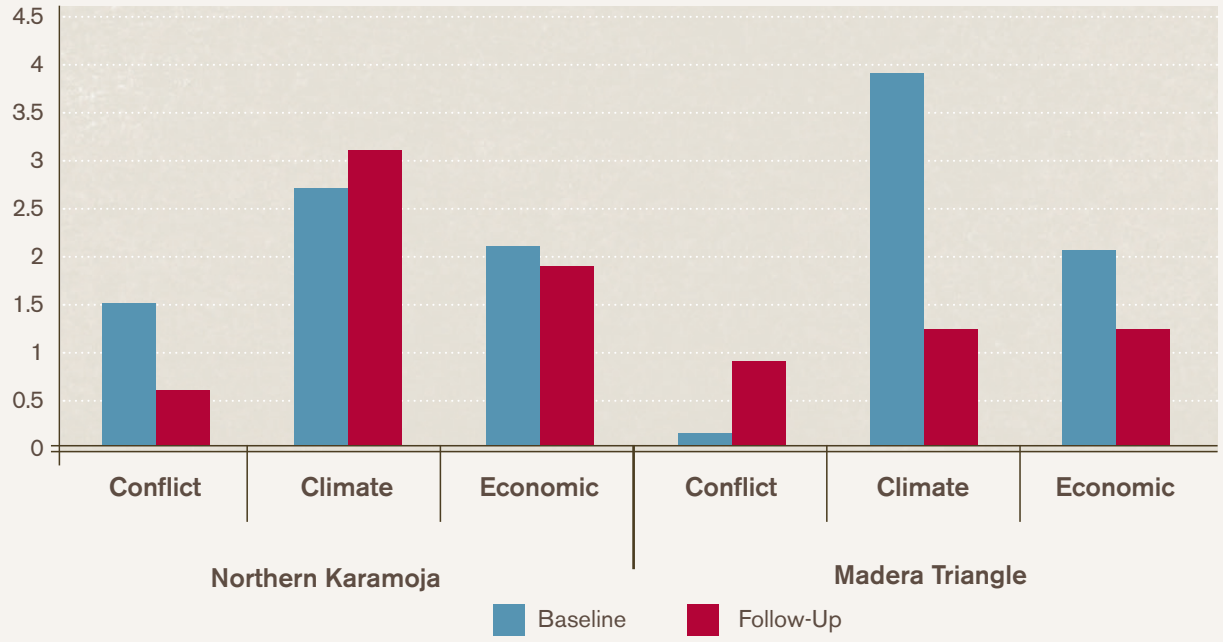
4.1 EFFECTS OF CONFLICT, CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC SHOCKS ON FOOD SECURITY

HYPOTHESIS 1: ***Conflict, climate and economic shocks adversely affect household food security***

MAIN FINDING: Greater exposure to climate and economic shocks is linked to greater food insecurity, while conflict shocks have mixed effects on household food security outcomes.

Households in northern Karamoja and the Mandera Triangle both experienced a variety of small-scale shocks and stressors during the study period. Figure 2 shows the mean number of climate-, economic- and conflict-related shocks experienced by households in both locations in the 12 months prior to the baseline and follow-up surveys. Conflict-related shocks have decreased between the baseline and follow-up study in northern Karamoja, but they have increased in the area of the Mandera Triangle studied. In the Mandera Triangle, experiencing economic and climate-related shocks has decreased fairly dramatically between the two surveys.

Figure 2. Mean number of shocks experienced by households in the previous 12 months



The research examined the ways in which different types of shocks affect household food security. All forms of shocks undermine food security, but the exact impacts differ between shock type. Table 2 summarizes the relationship relationships between households' experience of shocks on three measures of household food security: household hunger, dietary diversity, and use of distressful coping strategies.

Table 2. Effects of shocks on food security

	Greater Household Hunger	Higher Dietary Diversity Score	Greater use of Distressful Coping Strategies
Northern Karamoja			
Mean Age	++	+++	+++
Mean Age	++		+++
Mean Age		−−	
Mandera Triangle			
Number of Conflict Shocks			−−−
Number of Climate Shocks			++
Number of Economic Shocks	++		++

(+) represents a positive relationship between indicators, with more (+) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger

(–) represents a negative relationship between indicators, with more (–) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger

4.1.1 CONFLICT-RELATED SHOCKS

The study examined conflict-related shocks at a household level, including being a victim of theft, cattle raids, violence against a household member and destruction of homes or loss of land due to conflict.[6]

The frequency of conflict shocks was higher in the baseline sample than in the follow-on sample in Uganda, with theft of money and violence against a household member occurring most often. Qualitative research in northern Karamoja, detailed fully in "*We Now Have Relative Peace," On Changing Conflict Dynamics in Northern Karamoja* (Howe, Stites, and Akabwai 2015, forthcoming), also indicated that conflict between ethnic groups has decreased markedly over the past few years. Two of the most commonly cited examples that came through in the qualitative research of institutional-level initiatives that reduced conflict was the disarmament process as well as new local policies that aims to reduce cattle raiding (the "Moruitit Resolution"). The forced disarmament process, spearheaded by the GoU and is implemented by the UPDF, began in 2006. It is perceived as successful in removing "most" guns, and that *"those with guns are too afraid to show them"* for fear of arrest and prosecution.[7] The "Moruitit Resolution", which was spearheaded by Mercy Corps under a prior conflict management program, involves both formal and informal conflict management actors and is a mechanism that requires cattle thieves from returning double the number of animals stolen plus one additional animal. Indeed, the number of households who reported being aware of cattle raids in the six months prior to the study changed from 58 percent in the baseline sample to 28 percent in the follow-up sample. However, in northern Karamoja, a rise in intra-communal insecurity also occurred – such as theft – according to focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

In the Mandera Triangle, the level of conflict experienced was relatively low, but incidence of conflict shocks increased between the baseline and follow-on study. One reason why conflict-related shocks appear to be greater in the Mandera Triangle during the follow-up study is that during the baseline-study the studied districts were experiencing a relatively stable period. This stable period followed a period of intense, violent conflict between groups over land, when members of opposing ethnic groups in a short-time period killed hundreds of people. In the aftermath of this violence, substantial efforts to maintain peace were undertaken, resulting in an abnormally stable period of time. In the follow-on study, theft or destruction of assets and violence against a household member were experienced most frequently among conflict shocks. Inter-communal strife between ethnic groups over land and other resources was a primary cause of discontent, according to focus group discussions.

6 In Uganda, data regarding cattle raiding was lost and therefore not included in the analysis.

7 This was voiced in two female focus group participants in separate villages in Kaabong District.

In northern Karamoja, households that experienced more conflict-related shocks (such as theft or loss of land, for example) also experienced more hunger (not having enough food) and greater use of distressful coping strategies (such as borrowing food or limiting meal portions), which indicated weaker food security. Counter to what was expected, households that experienced more conflict-related shocks in northern Karamoja consumed a more diverse diet. Households that experienced more conflict-related shocks in in the Mandera Triangle enabled fewer distressful coping strategies. These are both indicators of better household food security status. One possible reason for correlations between indicators of better food security and greater likelihood to experience conflict is that the households that experienced conflict-related incidents may have been better-off economically than those who had not experience conflict-related shocks. It is not that more conflict incidence is causing the improvement in food security, but that the relationship goes the other direction—that households who have more food and assets may more likely be targeted for theft or cattle raids.

4.1.2 ECONOMIC SHOCKS

The study examined a number of different economic shocks, including poor market conditions for sellers or buyers and the loss of household members through death, divorce or migration. In both northern Karamoja and in the Mandera Triangle, study participants reported supply shortages and high prices in local markets as the most common economic shocks experienced. Economic shocks also appear to be linked to more adverse food security conditions. In both locations, households that experienced more economic shocks consumed a less diverse diet (in northern Karamoja), and experienced deeper hunger and employed more distressful coping strategies (in the Madera Triangle).

4.1.3 CLIMATE-RELATED SHOCKS

Households' exposure to climate-related shocks was measured using a variety of indicators: experiencing too much or too little rain, crop and livestock disease, bad harvests and landslides. Overall, in both study sites, households experienced fewer climate-related shocks at the follow-on study than at the baseline. However, in both places, more households reported experiencing too little rain or drought during the period preceding follow-on study than they did at the baseline. Climate shocks had similar apparent effects on food security as economic shocks did. In both Uganda and the Mandera Triangle, households that experienced more climate shocks used more distressful coping strategies – such as borrowing food or consuming less-prefered foods – all else equal. Hunger was also greater in northern Karamoja for households that experienced climate shocks.

4.2 EFFECTS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES ON PEACE AND SECURITY

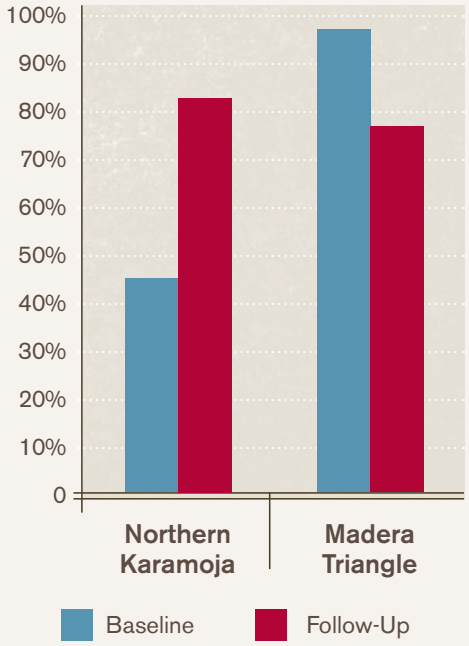
HYPOTHESIS 2: ***Stronger conflict management capacities among communities and local institutions promote peace and security outcomes conditions***

MAIN FINDING: In both study sites, an enabling institutional environment appears to be the most consistent predictor of peace and security. In Uganda, certain forms of social cohesion were linked to higher levels of dispute resolution and freedom of movement.

To better understand the status of and trends in conflict prevention and management efforts, respondents were asked a series of questions on number of conflict-related shocks, satisfaction with conflict resolution, and mobility.

Satisfaction with the resolution of disputes in the Mandera Triangle fell from 98 percent of households agreeing that "conflict in my area has been resolved satisfactorily" to 78 percent. In northern Karamoja, however, satisfaction increased from 45 percent in the first sample to 83 percent in the second sample (see Figure 3). These changes in perceptions mirror the frequency of conflict-related shocks, which appear to be decreasing in northern Karamoja, and increasing in the area of the Mandera Triangle studied (see Figure 2).

Figure 3. Percent of households that agree that conflicts are resolved satisfactorily



Other indicators suggest there has been an improvement in security in both locations, where it appears that the freedom of movement has generally improved, with fewer households reporting fear of engaging in different activities – such as participating in livelihood activities away from the home. Likewise, fewer households reported avoiding certain areas in either the day or the night during the follow-up study than during the baseline study (see Figure 4).

The research attempted to identify factors that are driving the changes in conflict prevention and resolution. Specifically, it examined the apparent contributions of intra- and inter-community social cohesion, and the capacities of local actors with responsibilities for managing conflict.

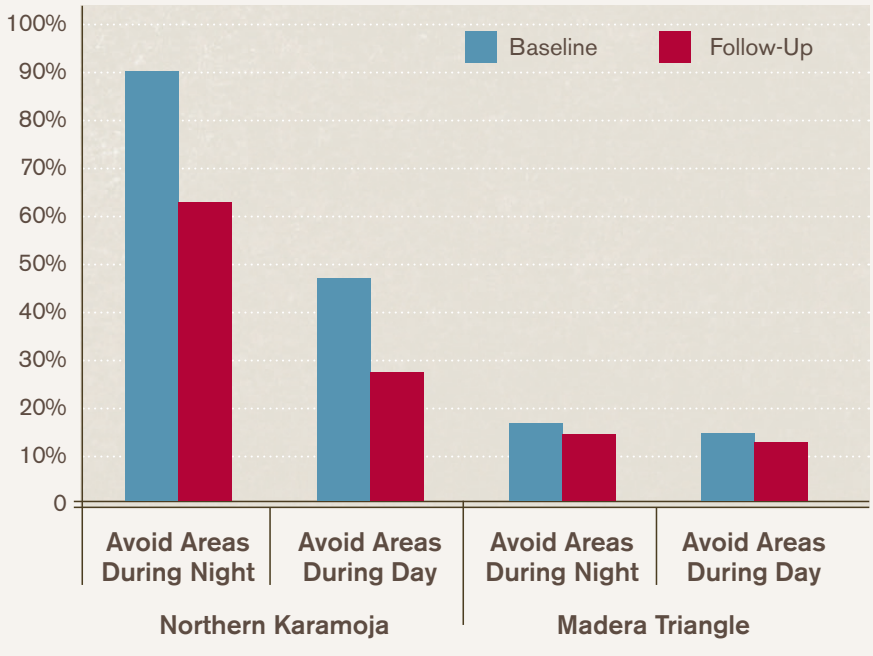
4.2.1 SOCIAL COHESION

Mercy Corps' program in northern Karamoja has worked to build social cohesion by establishing inter- and intra- community dialogue groups that frequently meet to discuss peace and security issues in and across their communities. These dialogues include members of women's groups, youth groups, elders, county and sub-county peace committees, development NGOs and CSOs in the region. The NRM and peacebuilding program in the Mandera Triangle builds social cohesion across ethnic groups by facilitating cross-community dialogues regarding access to and management of shared natural resources – mainly pasture and farm land. This process creates opportunities for different ethnic groups to interact with each other in a peaceable environment and cooperatively plan the management of key natural resources. The program both develops and draws upon bridging social capital that exists already through shared traditional values and intergroup marriage.

The study used a series of different indicators to measure social cohesion, including bonding and bridging social capital, and measures of peaceful interaction and trust with other ethnic groups.

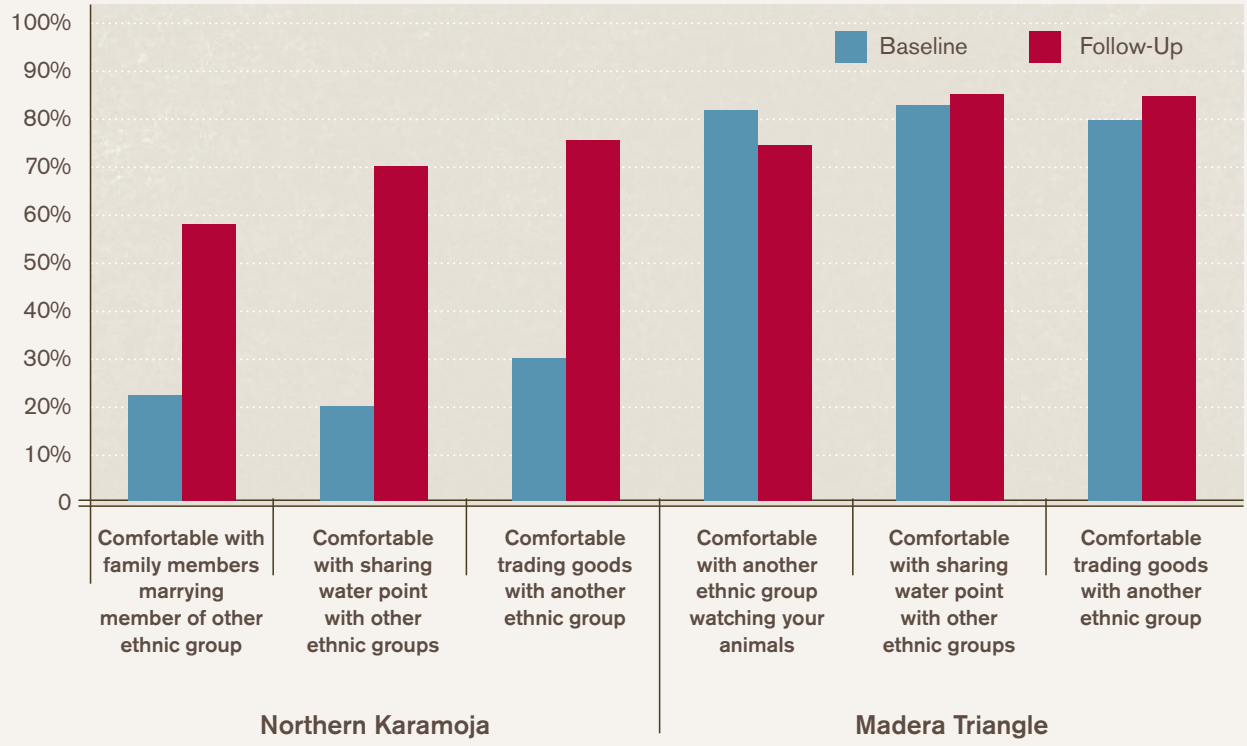
The research suggests that levels of social cohesion are changing in both locations, but in different ways. In northern Karamoja, there have been improvements in measured trust between ethnic groups from the baseline to the follow-up study, such as being comfortable with a family member marrying a member of or sharing water-points with another ethnic group (see Figure 5). However, the number of households that reported actually engaging economically and socially with other

Figure 4. Percent of households that avoid certain areas during the day or night



ethnic groups in northern Karamoja has declined between the 2013 and 2015 samples (see Figure 6). The findings that inter-communal trust and peaceful interactions moved in opposite directions brings into question the "contact theory", which holds that inter-group interactions will break down prejudices and barriers between groups in conflict, which would increase trust.

Figure 5. Mean number of shocks experienced by households in the previous 12 months



In the Mandera Triangle, levels of trust with other ethnic groups has not changed substantially between the baseline and follow-on study (see Figure 5), but the number of households that report they engage economically or socially with other ethnic groups has doubled during the same period (see Figure 6).

Despite these changes in indicators of social cohesion, in both studies there was scant evidence that social cohesion correlated with reduced conflict-related incidents – even if conflicts were more likely to be resolved. In Uganda, some social cohesion indicators – i.e. bridging social capital and peaceful inter-ethnic interactions – correlated with more conflict shocks occurring. While others – i.e. inter-ethnic trust and peaceful interactions – were linked to an increased likelihood in conflicts being successfully resolved. These mixed results do not yield an easy explanation and require further research. In the Mandera Triangle, only one indicator was used to measure social cohesion – a peaceful inter-ethnic interactions index. Households that engaged in peaceful activities with other ethnic groups (such as economic or social interactions) did not experience either better or worse security than households that did not engage in such activities (see Table 3).

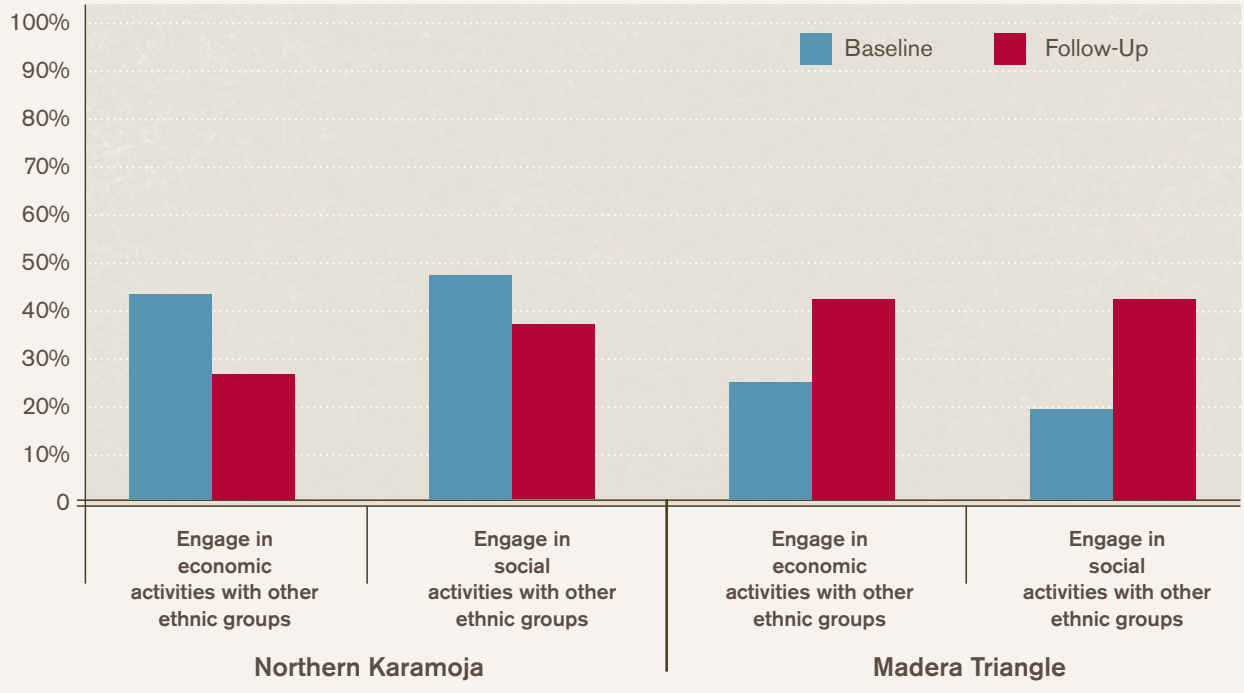
Table 3. Relationship between social cohesion conflict management capacities on peace and security

	Number of Conflict Shocks	More Disagreements Resolved	Increased Mobility
Northern Karamoja			
Intra-Communal			
Bonding Social Capital Index			+++
Inter-Communal			
Trust Index		+++	
Peaceful Interaction Index	+	++	
Bridging Social Capital Index	++	−−−	
Northern Karamoja			
Peaceful Interactions Index			

(+) represents a positive relationship between indicators, with more (+) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger
(−) represents a negative relationship between indicators, with more (−) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger

The limited differences found in peace and security outcomes for households reporting higher social cohesion with other ethnic communities may be taken as evidence that changes that occur at the individual and personal level are unlikely to have a discernible impact on peace and security more broadly unless it translates into actions at the socio-political level (CDA).

Figure 6. Percent of households engaging in peaceful activities with other ethnic groups

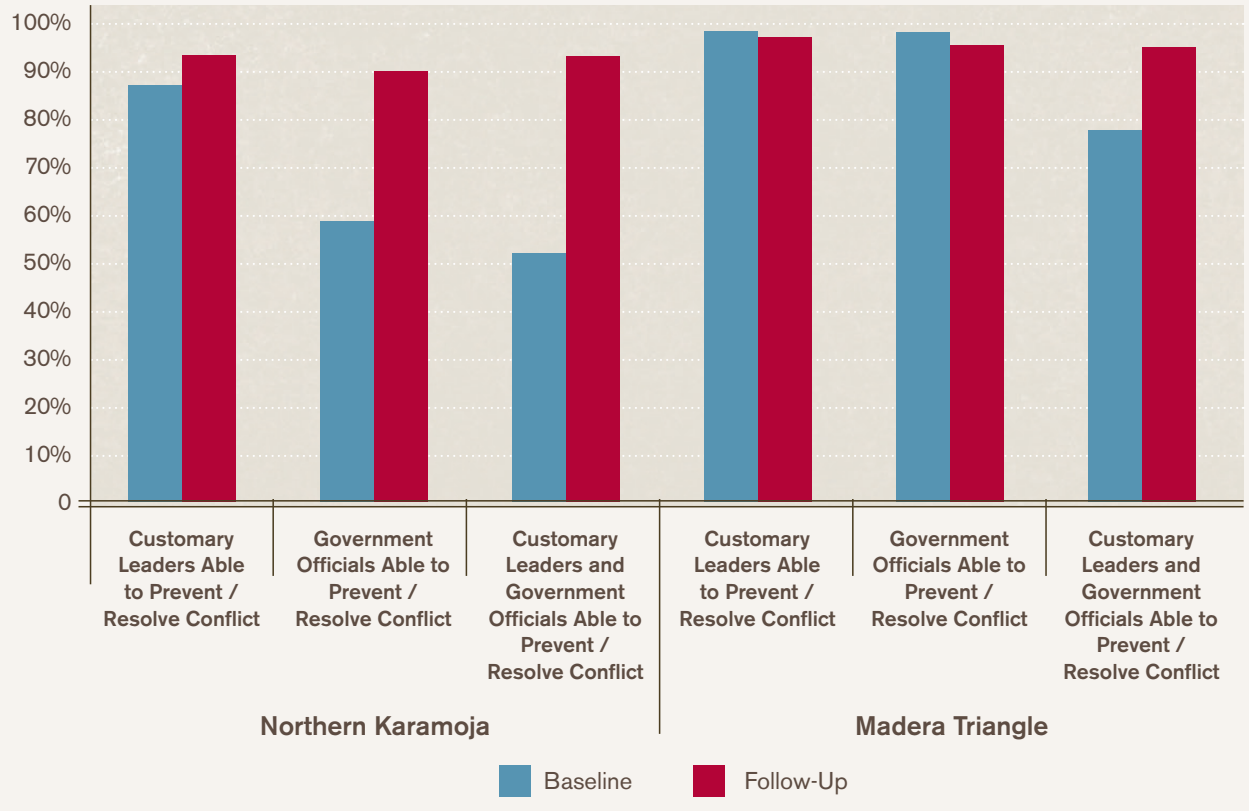


4.2.2 ENABLING INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In northern Karamoja, Mercy Corps has worked to build an enabling institutional environment by strengthening the capacity of conflict management actors, such as peace committees, and by networking informal conflict management institutions (i.e. traditional leaders and elders) with governmental bodies. Mercy Corps in the Mandera Triangle has worked towards a similar goal by facilitating governmental and traditional leaders to develop intra- and inter-communal NRM by-laws.

The effectiveness of local leaders and government officials to prevent and resolve conflict is seen as high in both the Mandera Triangle and in northern Karamoja (see Figure 7). In northern Karamoja, the percent of households that agreed that customary leaders were effective at preventing and resolving conflict changed from 88 percent to 93 percent, and the portion of households that perceived governmental officials as effective grew from 59 percent to 90 percent. In northern Karamoja, qualitative information indicates that institutional conflict management initiatives, such as the disarmament process as well as the Moruitit Resolution, are perceived to be the most significant factor contributing to increased security in recent years. In the Mandera Triangle, both baseline and follow-up surveys showed an extremely high proportion of households that believed customary leaders or governmental officials to be effective at managing conflict.

Figure 7. Percent of households that agree conflict managers are effective and work together



The perceived effectiveness of conflict management actors, however, may do little to actually curb the amount of conflict experienced. In both countries, none of the measures of, institutional conflict management capacities correlated with fewer reported conflict incidents (see Table 4).

Table 4. Relationship between an institutional conflict management capacities and peace and security

	Number of Conflict Shocks	More Disagreements Resolved	Increased Mobility
Northern Karamoja			
Linking Social Capital Index	--		---
Local leaders and government work together to resolve conflict		+++	
Elders are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict		+	
District Authorities are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict			+++
Sub-county peace committees are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict		-	--
Police are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict			
UPDF is able to prevent and/or resolve conflict		+++	+
Women or women's groups are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict		+++	-
Youth or youth groups are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict		+++	+++
Mandera Triangle			
Local leaders are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict			
District government is able to prevent and/or resolve conflict			
Local leaders and government work together to resolve conflict		++	*
Local leaders negotiate access to natural resources		++	

(+) represents a positive relationship between indicators, with more (+) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger
(–) represents a negative relationship between indicators, with more (–) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger
* represents a relationship that embodies perfect collinearity

Conflict management capacities do appear to be linked to a greater likelihood that more conflicts or disputes will be resolved, even though they do not appear to be linked to preventing the outbreak of violence. Conflict management initiatives that include traditional leaders in the process are linked to better peace and security outcomes. In both northern Karamoja and the Mandera Triangle, when governmental bodies and traditional leaders work together to resolve conflict, there appears to be a greater likelihood that conflict will be resolved. Bringing together traditional and governmental conflict management actors to work collaboratively to resolve conflict is an important component of both the programs in northern Karamoja and the Mandera Triangle (see Table 4). The perceived effectiveness of formal/informal leaders to manage conflict is likely directly related to community perceptions of the legitimacy and authority of these structures. In contexts where legitimacy is questioned, the effectiveness of an enabling institutional environment to mitigate or resolve conflict may be limited.

At both sites, the percent of households reporting that they were aware of instances where community leaders and government officials worked together to resolve conflict grew (from 79 percent to 96 percent in the Mandera Triangle and from 52 percent to 93 percent in northern Karamoja) (see Figure 7). In the Mandera Triangle's agro-pastoralist districts, key informant interviews indicated that government officials work closely with traditional leaders in order to resolve conflicts. These traditional and formal partnerships were considered to be highly effective at resolving conflict, according to focus group discussions.

Better conflict management capacities among local actors and institutions are theorized to improve mobility due to improved security, which is important for livelihoods – especially those dependent on livestock. In both the Mandera Triangle and the in northern Karamoja, the relationship between institutional capacities and freedom of movement were mixed. Several of the findings point to the importance of the ability of formal institutions (i.e. the district authorities and the UPDF in northern Karamoja) and the importance of formal and informal institutions working together (in the Mandera triangle) to manage conflict in terms of improving mobility (see Table 4). As noted previously, in northern Karamoja, focus group discussions and key informant interviews pointed to the importance of institutional conflict management initiatives, such as the disarmament process as well as the Moruitit Resolution, in increasing security in recent years.

4.3 EFFECTS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES ON RESILIENCE TO FOOD SECURITY SHOCKS

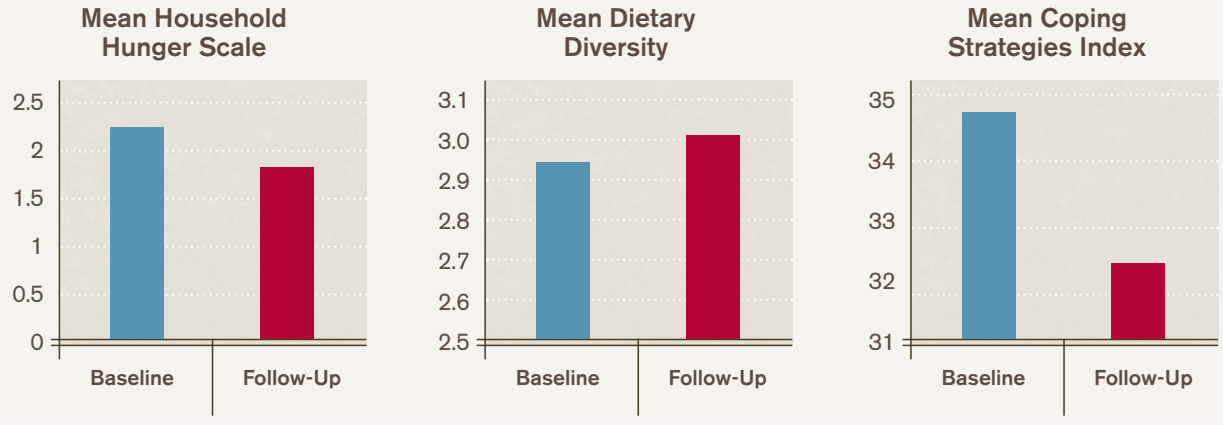
HYPOTHESIS 3: ***Stronger conflict management capacities among communities and local institutions contribute to greater food security for households experiencing shocks***

MAIN FINDING: In both study sites, greater institutional-level conflict management capacities are correlated with better food security for households exposed to economic, climate and conflict shocks. The existence of higher bonding social capital had similar results in Uganda. However, in neither location were levels of social cohesion between different ethnic groups linked to households' food security status in the face of shocks.

4.3.1 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES AND FOOD SECURITY

Despite facing a myriad of economic, climate and conflict-related shocks, households in both locations appear to be experiencing better food security compared to in 2013. Although this could be attributed to a number of factors – such as a seasonal difference in the northern Karamoja between the baseline and follow-up study – it could also indicate that households are better managing the shocks they experience. In the Mandera Triangle, where the baseline and endline surveys were conducted at the same time of the year, each indicator of food security improved during the course of the study (see Figure 8). For example, households in the Mandera Triangle experienced less hunger, more dietary diversity and used fewer distressful coping strategies (such as borrowing food).

Figure 8. Differences in food security from baseline to follow-up surveys in the Mandera Triangle



4.3.1.1 SOCIAL COHESION

Social cohesion *within* a community ("bonding" social capital) does correlate with better food security for households. In northern Karamoja, for example, households that were able to go to other people within their community for financial or in-kind support during or after shock experienced less hunger and ate a more diverse diet. As noted previously, pastoral and agro pastoral livelihoods are more likely to flourish in conditions were mobility is unrestricted. Households that had higher levels of bonding social capital also were also more mobile. This is potentially one of the reasons why households that have bonding social capital are more food secure (see Table 5).

Table 5. Effects of shocks and social cohesion conflict management capacities on food security

	Greater Household Hunger	More Dietary Diversity	Greater use of Distressful Coping Strategies
Northern Karamoja			
Intra-Communal Social Cohesion			
Bonding Index	--	+++	
Inter-Communal Social Cohesion			
Trust Index		+	
Peaceful Inter-Ethnic Interaction Index	++	-	
Bridging Index			++
Shock Experience			
Number of Environmental Shocks			
Number of Economic Shocks	++		+++
Number of Conflict Shocks	++	+++	+++
Madera Triangle			
Inter-Communal Social Cohesion			
Peaceful Inter-Ethnic Interactions Index			
Shock Experience			
Number of Conflict Shocks			---
Number of Climate Shocks			++
Number of Economic Shocks	++		++

(+) represents a positive relationship between indicators, with more (+) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger
(–) represents a negative relationship between indicators, with more (–) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger

Social cohesion *between* ethnic communities (including "bridging" social capital) has mixed links to household resilience to food security shocks. In northern Karamoja, the evidence suggests that inter-ethnic social cohesion is linked to greater food insecurity. The only exception was an increase in inter-ethnic trust, which correlated with improved dietary diversity. In the Mandera Triangle, the results suggest that social cohesion between ethnic groups is not linked to changes in household food security (see Table 5).

The reason for these results likely lies in the finding that greater inter-ethnic social cohesion was not associated with higher levels of peace and security in either study site. This represents a broken link in the theory of change, and may be one of the reasons why households that express greater inter-ethnic social cohesion do not fare better in terms of food security.

4.3.1.2 ENABLING INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The results show support for the enabling institutional environment theory for strengthening household resilience. The ability of formal or informal leaders to either proactively negotiate access to natural resources for their communities or support households affected by shocks was linked to higher food security outcomes (see Table 6).

Table 6. Effects of shocks and institutional-related conflict management capacities on food security

	Greater Household Hunger	More Dietary Diversity	Greater use of Distressful Coping Strategies
Northern Karamoja			
Enabling Institutional Environment			
Linking Index	– –		– – –
Most Disputes Resolved			
Gov't works with leaders to resolve conflicts			
Shock Experience			
Number of Environmental Shocks			
Number of Economic Shocks	++		+++
Number of Conflict Shocks	++	+++	+++
Madera Triangle			
Inter-Communal Social Cohesion			
Traditional leaders are able to prevent and/or resolve conflict	–		
District gov't is able to prevent and/or resolve conflict			
Leaders and gov't work together to resolve conflict			
Local leaders negotiate access to natural resources	–	++	
Shock Experience			
Number of Conflict Shocks			–––
Number of Climate Shocks			++
Number of Economic Shocks	+		++

(+) represents a positive relationship between indicators, with more (+) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger
(–) represents a negative relationship between indicators, with more (–) representing a relationship that is statistically stronger

IIn northern Karamoja, for example, the best predictor of improved household food security during shocks was when households were able to access financial or in-kind support from the government during or after a shock ("linking" social capital) (Table 6). This suggests that in this context where households can rely on their government and other people in power for support in the face of shocks, they are less likely to experience food insecurity. High degrees of this type of linking social capital therefore enable households to access assistance from their government when they experience shocks – including those that adversely affect food security. It is natural that a households' ability to access this resource would improve their food security outlook.

In the Mandera Triangle, the perceived ability of traditional leaders to manage conflict as well as local leaders' ability to negotiate access to natural resources was linked with lower levels of hunger reported by households (Table 6). When local leaders are able to negotiate access to natural resources, household dietary diversity was greater in the Mandera Triangle study. Considering the importance of access to natural resources for households to engage in sustainable, productive livelihoods, it is not surprising that there is a positive relationship between the ability of local leaders to negotiate access to natural relationships and better food security.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this research have important implications for program and policy decision makers working in conflict-affected contexts in the Horn of Africa.

- **Aid actors interested in building resilience to food security shocks in fragile and insecure contexts should gear greater investments towards conflict management interventions.** Food security is gravely affected by the compounding effects of conflict, economic and climate-related shocks. The results of this research show that the impact of such shocks on households' welfare can be mitigated by strengthening community and institutional conflict management skills and systems. While additional interventions are required to strengthen resilience in pastoral areas of the greater Horn of Africa, peacebuilding efforts appear to have a strong potential to contribute to food security and resilience goals in areas beset by chronic violence and instability.

- **Programs with security goals should work to improve institutional-level conflict management capacities, where such institutions are functioning.** Peace and security conditions are better where stronger institutional-level conflict management skills and systems are in place. Importantly, where government representatives and traditional leaders work together, more conflicts are resolved satisfactorily, as seen in the Mandera Triangle. This finding supports Mercy Corps' work to network formal and informal conflict management actors.

- **Development and humanitarian actors should support interventions that strengthen the social networks that people rely on during times of stress.** Not all forms of social capital appear to be equal when it comes to building resilience. The results indicate that intra-ethnic social cohesion is linked to both increased peace and security as well as improved food security. This intra-ethnic social cohesion can manifest as a community-level social safety net, for example, where community members help each other out during times of stress. Surprisingly, higher levels of inter-ethnic social cohesion were not found to be associated with either more peace or better welfare outcomes. This is at odds with previous research that found greater interaction of people across ethnic lines to be positively correlated with household food security in the face conflict and climate-related shocks (Mercy Corps, 2013). Further examination is needed to understand the contextual elements that might be required for bridging social capital to support resilience, such as the strength and legitimacy of local institutions.

- **Conflict management efforts must go beyond strengthening inter-ethnic social cohesion if they are to contribute to the transformative changes needed to strengthen resilience.** To achieve these interrelated goals of peace and food security, conflict management efforts need to invest more in translating improvements in individual perceptions and behaviors around conflict into changed group norms and institutional structures that can sustain peace. Strong examples of this are consensus-based natural resource agreements developed in the Mandera Triangle program and the Moruitit Resolution in northern Uganda. undertake joint economic development or rangeland restoration efforts.

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