



# CITIZENS' MANIFESTO FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE IN KARAMOJA AND WEST NILE

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# 1. Introduction and Background

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This Citizens Manifesto is anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995). This Manifesto requires that the state adopts an integrated and coordinated planning approach, takes necessary measures to bring about balanced development of the different areas and between rural and urban areas in Uganda; and takes special measures in favour of least developed areas.<sup>1</sup> It is aligned with Vision 2040 which lays out a long-term framework for “A Transformed Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30 years”. This Vision 2040 emphasises transformation through inclusive development. It also identifies strategic areas for equitable growth: infrastructure, human resource development, land use, science & innovation etc., with intent to reduce disparities. Furthermore, the NDP IV (FY2025/26–2029/30) is another major policy framework to which this citizen Manifesto contributes in creating “*Sustainable Industrialisation for Inclusive Growth, Employment and Wealth Creation*”. The current NDP commits to raising household incomes and employment, reducing poverty; targeting least developed areas, rural–urban disparities, a commitment that aligns with the aspirations of the citizens expressed in this Manifesto. The National Social Protection Policy which aims to reduce extreme poverty and socio-economic inequalities for inclusive development also fits with citizens’ aspirations. The Mission of the Expanding Social Protection Programme (ESP) includes provision of integrated, comprehensive, coordinated social protection services to address risks and vulnerabilities associated with age, gender, disability, health, employment and poverty. In respect of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) “Leave No One Behind” Agenda, Uganda, in its 2024 Voluntary National Review, states that one of its six commitments is to implement the inclusive Parish Development Model. This is expected to immensely advance the Leave No One Behind agenda.

In spite of these policy pronouncements, West Nile and Karamoja continue to remain among the poorest regions of the Country. The National Service Delivery Survey (NSDS) 2021 identifies both Karamoja and West Nile as among the poorest sub-regions in Uganda. Karamoja records some of the highest poverty rates, with low household welfare indicators and limited access to social services. West Nile, still faces high poverty incidence linked to post-conflict recovery and poor infrastructure. Nationally, Uganda’s poverty headcount ratio was 20.3% in 2021, while regional disparities persist — poverty remains above 65% in Karamoja and around 40% in West Nile. This poverty is multidimensional, reflected in poor health outcomes, limited school enrolment, inadequate water access, and poor road networks, all of which collectively undermine livelihoods and human development in both regions.<sup>2</sup>

The National Service Delivery Survey (NSDS) 2021 highlights both Karamoja and West Nile as among Uganda’s poorest sub-regions, reflecting deep-seated structural inequalities. Karamoja has the highest record of poverty rates in the country, with households showing very low welfare indicators and limited access to basic social services. Income poverty affects approximately 66% of the population, while food poverty impacts 70%, with recent data

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1 See the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, Objective XII. Balanced and equitable development

2 [https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC\\_Uganda\\_Karamoja\\_AcuteFoodInsec\\_2021Mar2022Jan\\_Report.pdf](https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Uganda_Karamoja_AcuteFoodInsec_2021Mar2022Jan_Report.pdf)

indicating a rise in overall poverty from 60.8% in 2016/17 to 65.7% despite substantial government investments.<sup>3</sup> These vulnerabilities are compounded by limited diversification into resilient livelihoods, leaving over half a million residents periodically facing hunger, particularly during dry seasons when livestock mortality surges and crop yields fail.<sup>4</sup> In West Nile, although the situation is slightly better, poverty remains high and is closely tied to the region's post-conflict recovery context, weak infrastructure, and limited livelihood opportunities. At the national level, Uganda's poverty headcount ratio stood at 20.3 per cent in 2021. However, stark regional disparities persist, with poverty exceeding 60 per cent in Karamoja<sup>5</sup> and around 40 per cent in West Nile, compared to less than 10 per cent in relatively prosperous regions such as Kigezi and Kampala. This poverty is multidimensional, expressed through poor health outcomes, low school enrolment, inadequate access to safe water, and poorly maintained road networks, all of which interact to constrain household productivity, income, and overall human development.

In terms of health service delivery, 83.3% and 59.5% of the population in West Nile and Karamoja respectively is within 5km of a government health facility compared to the 77.5% National average. West Nile performs better than this national average, with 87.3 percent of households within a similar distance to a health centre, reflecting the impact of sustained investments by government and humanitarian partners, particularly in refugee-hosting districts. The Karamoja sub-region's sparse settlement patterns, difficult terrain, and a legacy of underinvestment in public health infrastructure continue to impede access. As a result, Karamoja experiences disproportionately high rates of child mortality, malnutrition, and preventable diseases. The comparative strength of West Nile underscores how targeted investment and population density can improve service reach, while Karamoja's deficits illustrate the enduring effects of geographic isolation and limited fiscal prioritisation.

When examining education service delivery, the NSDS (2021) points to persistent disparities in access and quality across Uganda's regions. In Karamoja, educational participation remains extremely low, shaped by pastoral mobility, early marriages, and long distances to schools that discourage regular attendance. The sub-region also faces high classroom-to-pupil ratios and frequent teacher absenteeism, conditions that significantly compromise learning outcomes. Conversely, West Nile demonstrates moderate progress, mainly because of increased education investment linked to refugee response programs that have expanded school infrastructure and enrolment. Nevertheless, West Nile still faces significant quality challenges, including inadequate staffing and strained school resources. Nationally, more than 80 percent of primary-age children are enrolled in school, but Karamoja lags far behind this benchmark, often below 60 percent, with particularly high dropout rates especially among girls. The comparison illustrates how sociocultural factors, mobility patterns, and resource allocation collectively shape educational outcomes, reinforcing existing inequalities.

In the area of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Uganda's national picture remains dominated by reliance on community-based sources. The NSDS indicates that 36.5 per cent

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3 Ibid

4 Victoria Kakooza, Richard Awichi, Ainomugisha Smartson, Too Starved to Live: A Statistical Analysis to Explain the Karamoja Region, *International Journal of Statistics and Applications*, Vol. 14 No. 2, 2024, pp. 22-34. doi: 10.5923/j.statistics.20241402.02.

5 <https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/uganda-karamoja-region-ipc-food-security-nutrition-snapshot-march-july-2022-published-may-31-2022>

of households use public boreholes, 11.3 per cent rely on public taps, and 13.2 per cent draw water from protected springs. Only 4.5 per cent of households have access to piped water within their homes, a reflection of low investment in rural water infrastructure. In Karamoja, access to safe water is particularly poor. Although boreholes are the primary source, many are non-functional, distant, or seasonally unreliable. The proportion of households using unsafe or unimproved water sources remains well above the national average. West Nile, while performing somewhat better, still struggles with an inconsistent water supply, especially in rural areas. NGO and government interventions have expanded access, but coverage remains below national urban standards, and sanitation usage remains low, contributing to waterborne disease prevalence. These findings reveal that while Karamoja’s WASH deficits are driven by its semi-arid environment and groundwater scarcity, West Nile’s challenges are largely infrastructural and institutional, rooted in weak maintenance systems rather than physical water availability.

Finally, roads and transport infrastructure generally reveal another layer of disparity. Nationally, 38.1 per cent of sub-counties have tarmac trunk roads, 76.6 per cent had murrum trunk roads, and 91.3 per cent had feeder roads. In Karamoja, only 18.8 percent of sub-counties had tarmac trunk roads, though 80.5 percent had murrum and 94.5 percent had feeder roads, suggesting a reliance on lower-grade infrastructure. West Nile fares even worse in tarmac road coverage, with only 7.9 per cent. However, Karamoja has a strong coverage in feeder roads (97.8 per cent) and community roads (97.4 per cent). In the two years preceding the survey, 68.7 percent of sub-counties in Karamoja reported new community road construction—indicating that some local investment in connectivity had happened — but none had reported on the construction of tarmac roads.<sup>6</sup> Recently, however, most of the inter-district roads especially in Northern Karamoja have been impassable with barely a layer of tarmac.<sup>7</sup> In West Nile, 37 per cent of sub-counties recorded new community road works, although without tarmac development. By comparison at a national level, 6.8 percent of sub-counties reported new tarmac trunk roads, and 30.5 percent reported new community roads. These statistics highlight the chronic underdevelopment of durable road infrastructure in both sub-regions. For Karamoja, poor roads severely constrain access to markets, health facilities, and education services, while in West Nile, heavy rains and refugee traffic accelerate road degradation and raise maintenance costs. The overall implication is that despite moderate community-level investments, both regions continue to lag behind the national average in road quality and connectivity, perpetuating economic and service-delivery exclusion.

**Table 1: Summary Comparison**

Indicator	National Average	West Nile	Karamoja
Poverty Rate	20%	40%	>60%
Households within 5 km of Health Centre	77.5%	87.3%	59.5%

6 See UBOS (2022). National Service Delivery Survey (NSDS) 2021 Final Report, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS)

7 North Karamoja locals protest over poor roads. Available here: <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/north-karamoja-locals-protest-over-poor-roads-5143874>

Indicator	National Average	West Nile	Karamoja
Safe Water Access (Piped/Borehole/Protected)	66%	~60–70%	<50%
Tarmac Trunk Roads	38.1%	7.9%	18.8%
Sub-counties reporting new roads (past 2 years)	30.5%	37%	68.7% (community roads only)
Education Enrolment (Primary)	80%	75%	<60%
Headcount Poverty (MPI)	42.1%	67.7%	96.3%
Intensity of Poverty	47.6%	51.4%	61.8%
MPI Value	0.200	0.348	0.595
Major Deprivations	Education, Sanitation	Education, Electricity, Water	Education, Health, Housing, Sanitation
Households without Improved Sanitation	51.4%	~60%	~85%
Access to Electricity	42%	<20%	<10%

**Source: National Service Delivery Survey (NSDS) 2021 Final Report, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS); MoFPED (2022) Multi-dimensional Poverty Index**

Both West Nile and Karamoja sub-regions lag behind national averages in poverty reduction and service delivery, though for different reasons. Karamoja’s underperformance stems from structural isolation, arid conditions, and pastoralist lifestyles that complicate service delivery. West Nile’s challenges are largely infrastructural, linked to post-conflict recovery, population pressures, and refugee influxes. Therefore, targeted investments in roads, WASH, and health infrastructure, alongside inclusive education strategies, are essential to bridge these gaps and promote equitable national development.

It is against this background that this manifesto has been prepared to voice out the challenges and development needs of these two regions. The manifesto is a compilation of the voices of the people of West Nile and Karamoja.

## 2. Methodology

The Manifesto has been prepared through the combined efforts of West Nile Development Association (WENDA), Karamoja Herders of the Horn (KHH) and the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE). This Citizen Manifesto involved a multi-step process, including data collection, citizen engagement, and drafting the manifesto. First, ACODE, WENDA and KHH gathered input from citizens through various channels including community engagement meetings (CEMs), community dialogues, and regional dialogues to identify and validate community socio-economic concerns, needs, and aspirations. Diverse groups including Women, Youth, the Elderly, local government leaders, indigenous

communities and civil society organisations in West Nile and Karamoja sub-regions actively participated in this process. The manifesto targeted several processes including development and implementation of political party manifestos, national budget and budget implementation process, design and implementation of government and development partners' projects, etc. among others.

## 3. Presentation of Citizens Socio-economic Concerns

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The West Nile and Karamoja sub-regions face a complex array of multidimensional challenges that cut across environmental, social, economic, and governance domains. While each region has unique characteristics, they share many structural vulnerabilities that hinder inclusive and sustainable development.

### 3.1 Environmental Degradation and Climate Change

Both regions are acutely affected by climate change. They lack adequate climate-resilient infrastructure and disaster preparedness, further magnifying food insecurity and resource scarcity.<sup>8</sup> Karamoja's semi-arid climate and West Nile's increasing rainfall variability contribute to persistent droughts, flash flooding, and erratic weather events. These climatic shocks exacerbate land degradation, deforestation, and soil erosion, undermining agricultural productivity and pastoral livelihoods. In West Nile, the influx of refugees has intensified pressure on natural resources and accelerated deforestation, particularly around settlements where reliance on wood fuel is high.<sup>9</sup> Karamoja faces severe overgrazing, expanding settlements, and conversion of rangelands, reducing the region's resilience to drought and diminishing the regeneration of natural vegetation. The voices of the vulnerable communities in West Nile have raised serious environmental and climate justice challenges. Access to natural resources is limited by high fees, affecting the livelihood of the poor people. For example, communities around Ajai Game Reserve have reported that, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is imposing a charge of UGX 20,000 to access the area for grass. The community members describe this as exceeding the value of the grass sold. In Kei Sub-County, illegal logging persists, with timber dealers reported to bribe law enforcement, resulting in widespread deforestation. Prolonged droughts have devastated crops, as it was shared by a Yumbe resident that no harvest was obtained this year. Vulnerable individuals, encapsulated by an HIV-positive woman revelations in Midigo, expressed concerns that food insecurity undermines their health, with it being stated that nothing is available to eat, yet the effectiveness of ARV drugs require proper nutrition. Corruption was also highlighted, with reports that communal land was sold without community consent in Offaka Sub-County. In addition, poor waste management in Yumbe's trading centres was reported to have caused flooding and worsened health risks. These voices underline the urgent need for responsive and equitable environmental policies that address the concerns of the most

<sup>8</sup> See KIDP3, 2021, pp. 50, 116, 124; ACODE KHH\_WENDA Statement UWEWK2025, 2025, pp. 5-6.

<sup>9</sup> Geoffrey, K., & Tumwine, F. R. (2023). The Impact of Refugee Settlement on Landscape and Green Environment in Yumbe District West Nile Sub Region, Uganda. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 10(4), 139–152. <https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.104.13682>

under-privileged.

### 3.2 Human–Wildlife Conflict in West Nile and Karamoja Sub-regions

Human–wildlife conflict in Uganda’s West Nile and Karamoja sub-regions has become one of the most pressing conservation and livelihood challenges. The conflict reflects deeper structural tensions between conservation policy, land rights, and rural poverty. Communities living adjacent to protected areas such as Ajai Wildlife Reserve in Madi-Okollo District (West Nile) and Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve in Nakapiripirit and Amudat (Karamoja) face increasing restrictions on resource access, limited consultation, and recurrent wildlife incursions. Thus, human-wildlife conflicts remain a major challenge, especially crop destruction, property damage, attacks on people and even deaths.<sup>10</sup> While both reserves were established to safeguard biodiversity and promote eco-tourism, the conservation agenda has often displaced traditional users, undermining livelihoods and straining relations between Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and surrounding communities.

**West Nile: The Case of Ajai Wildlife Reserve:** Communities surrounding Ajai Wildlife Reserve experience daily encounters with wildlife and regulatory restrictions that have deepened poverty and insecurity. Residents from Pawor and Ogoko Sub-counties report crop destruction by elephants, buffaloes, and hippos, which has led to food shortages and fear among households. In Tamwele Village, a buffalo attack that killed a boy underscored the danger of living near unprotected boundaries. In spite of these losses, no compensation from the wild life management has been provided, leaving families feeling abandoned by the state.

Human–wildlife conflict in Ajai is compounded by restricted access to resources. Communities are barred from collecting basic necessities such as firewood, grass, and poles, or they must pay prohibitive fees (ranging from UGX 5,000 to UGX 20,000 per day). Arrests and detentions for such minor infractions have been reported, including cases of women and children detained for gathering soft brooms. These enforcement measures have eroded trust between UWA and the community, transforming conservation into a source of social grievance rather than shared responsibility.

The failure to erect a perimeter fence despite promises since 2016 has worsened wildlife incursions, while the illegal expansion of reserve boundaries into community land has displaced families without compensation. For instance, residents of Degia Village lament losing ancestral farmland to UWA without any form of restitution, highlighting how conservation has become synonymous with dispossession and impoverishment

**Karamoja: The Case of Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve.** In Karamoja, the upgrading of Pian Upe Reserve into a National Park has intensified friction between pastoralist communities and conservation authorities. The Uganda Wildlife Authority’s unilateral demarcation of boundaries and enforcement operations have provoked resentment and allegations of human rights abuses, including forced evictions, property destruction, and violence against

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<sup>10</sup> SafeWorld (2024). Human-wildlife conflict in protected areas of Uganda Understanding the impact on communities

civilians. For pastoralist households, Pian Upe represents a vital dry-season grazing refuge. The reserve's wetlands and grasslands sustain the region's livestock economy, valued at approximately USD 444 million annually, contributing nearly 40% of Uganda's cattle milk and 27% of national beef output. Restricting access to these resources threatens not only household survival but also regional and national food systems.

Reports of UWA rangers beating farmers, burning homes, and confiscating tools near new boundary markers have left communities alienated. Moreover, the timing of enforcement actions—often coinciding with election seasons—has always fuelled political mistrust and perceptions that conservation is used to intimidate local populations. The loss of community infrastructure within protected boundaries further complicates the situation. Schools, boreholes, and grazing points have been destroyed or rendered inaccessible after being deemed to be inside Pian Upe. The demolition of a district-built borehole and school in Nakapiripirit exemplifies how inter-agency conflicts and rigid conservation enforcement harm both development and community welfare.

**Conservation, Resource Access, and Livelihood Impacts:** Both Ajai and Pian Upe illustrate how conservation without community inclusion undermines the very goals it seeks to achieve. The promotion of wildlife protection has restricted access to land, water, and natural resources that are crucial for rural livelihoods. In West Nile, conservation regulations have displaced traditional economic activities such as broom-making, charcoal burning, and subsistence harvesting of grass and poles. The imposition of fees and arrests has effectively criminalized poverty, with women and children disproportionately affected. These restrictions have led to livelihood erosion, forcing some residents into illegal activities within the reserve out of desperation. In Karamoja, exclusionary conservation policies have curtailed pastoral mobility, which is the foundation of the region's transhumant livestock economy. By denying dry-season grazing rights in Pian Upe, conservation has disrupted herd management systems, exacerbated drought vulnerability, and triggered conflict over dwindling pasture. The lack of resource-sharing frameworks, despite clear legal provisions under the Uganda Wildlife Act (Cap 315)—reflects institutional inertia and disregard for a co-existence model historically practiced in the area. Moreover, both regions face compensation gaps. Victims of wildlife attacks, crop loss, or land acquisition rarely receive payment under the Uganda Wildlife Compensation Scheme (2022), which remains underfunded. This neglect deepens community resentment and delegitimizes conservation as an equitable public good.

### 3.3 Food Insecurity and Livelihood Vulnerability

Food insecurity is pervasive in both West Nile and Karamoja and is driven by recurrent droughts, rainfall unpredictability, and declining agricultural and pastoral productivity. In Karamoja, a majority of the population remains trapped in subsistence agriculture, with limited access to markets, technology, and extension services, despite considerable investments. Increases in the frequency and severity of droughts and crop diseases further undermine household food reserves and contribute to hunger.

In West Nile, food markets are strained by droughts, inflation, declining soil fertility, and competition for land and water due to population growth and large refugee influxes. The majority of households remain dependent on rain-fed farming, making them highly

vulnerable to climate variability<sup>11</sup> Livelihoods and food security in West Nile are severely affected by restricted access to natural resources, climate change impacts like drought and floods, and declining crop yields. Communities face crop destruction from wildlife, land disputes, and limited alternative income sources. High living costs, market exploitation, and inadequate agricultural support worsen their situation, while vulnerable groups such as HIV-positive individuals struggle with nutrition. Additional pressures come from deforestation, refugee influx, and mining restrictions. These challenges call for urgent, integrated policies that support sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, and equitable resource access.

### **3.4 Water Insecurity and Resource Conflicts**

Both regions struggle with significant challenges in water availability and quality. In Karamoja, only 39% of the population has access to clean water; in West Nile, the figure is slightly higher (55%) but complicated by resource strain from host and refugee populations. Water resource scarcity contributed significantly to the security challenges in the Karamoja region. The scarcity of water, exacerbated by climate change, population pressure, and weak infrastructure, fuels competition, potential conflict, and tensions between communities and between host populations and refugees.

### **3.5 Fragile Peace, Insecurity, and Conflict Dynamics**

Karamoja has for a long time been bedevilled by protracted insecurity, including cattle raiding, inter- and intra-community conflicts, and sporadic violence stemming from weak governance, the proliferation of small arms, poverty, and resource competition. Escalating cycles of raiding and retaliatory violence perpetuate poverty and inhibits development. External interventions in disarmament and peace-building have yielded mixed results, and social trust in security agencies is often low. West Nile also experiences tensions, but these predominantly stem from competition over resources—particularly between host and refugee communities—and from historical marginalisation and underdevelopment. The risk of conflict is compounded by population growth, weak forestry management, and inadequate participation in national decision-making.<sup>12</sup>

### **3.6 Poverty and Inequality**

Both regions exhibit some of Uganda's highest poverty rates. In Karamoja, three-quarters of the population live below the poverty line, with systemic challenges related to exclusion from markets, weak job opportunities, and historical adverse incorporation into national policy.<sup>13</sup> West Nile also registers high multidimensional poverty and limited access to basic resources. Labour markets are poorly developed, gender inequalities are acute, and youth unemployment is extremely high reaching 65% in Karamoja and 50% in West Nile.<sup>14</sup> The indigenous communities, the women, people with disability, and the elderly are the biggest victims of poverty and are highly affected by the poverty inequalities.

11 Government of Uganda. (2021). The third Karamoja Integrated Development Plan (KIDP3) 2021/22–2025/26

12 Adelphi & World Food Programme. (2022). Climate, Peace and Security Study: West Nile Uganda.

13 GoU (2021)

14 UOBS (2022) Multi-dimensional Poverty Index for Uganda

### 3.7 Weak Infrastructure and Limited Access to Services

Basic infrastructure for roads, water, sanitation, electricity, education, and healthcare remains inadequate across both regions. Limited rural connectivity impedes access to markets, emergency services, and social protection. In Karamoja, only 17% live within 5km of a health centre; safe water and improved sanitation are sparse, with open defecation and poor hygiene practices being widespread.<sup>15</sup> The forest dependant indigenous people such as the IKK in Kabong, and the Tepeth in Tapac, continue to be the most vulnerable communities in Kalamoja with limited access to essential services. In West Nile, the strain on infrastructure is heightened by the refugee population, leading to overstretched schooling, health services, and water points.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.8 Governance Gaps and Limited Participation

Historic marginalisation, weak representation in policy processes, and fragmented local governance undermine service delivery, accountability, and effective resource management in both regions. Development interventions too often bypass local voices and structures, while corruption and elite capture persist. The forest dependant indigenous people in Kalamoja such as the IKK have for long not participated in key decision-making structures owing to their high illiteracy rates, and limited resources to engage in active and competitive politics. Their representation in governance is limited and their voice is not heard.

### 3.9 Gender Inequality and Social Exclusion

Women and girls in both regions face entrenched discrimination, limited educational opportunities, early marriage, uneven access to livelihoods, and underrepresentation in leadership positions. The burden of unpaid care work remains heavy, while gender-based violence persists and is often underreported. In West Nile, gender inequality significantly limits women's and girls' access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Girls face high school dropout rates due to economic pressures, while women and girls carry the heavy burden of water collection, which affects their time and safety. Maternal health is compromised by poor access to healthcare facilities, inadequate medical resources, and lack of emergency transport services. In addition, women's livelihoods suffer from restrictions on natural resource use and exploitation in agricultural markets, further deepening economic vulnerabilities.

In Karamoja, social exclusion compounds these challenges, affecting the indigenous people such as the IKK who live near protected areas, people with disabilities, and marginalized youths. Many are denied access to essential services, justice, and economic opportunities, and are often excluded from conservation benefits and employment. The intersection of these inequalities—with climate change and governance issues has intensified their vulnerability them—creating layered vulnerabilities that disproportionately impact these vulnerable groups.

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15 Government of Uganda. (2021). The third Karamoja Integrated Development Plan (KIDP3) 2021/22–2025/26

16 See Adelphi & World Food Programme. (2022).

### **3.10 Pressures from Migration and Refugee Influx**

Uganda hosts more than 1.8 million refugees, of which more than 950,000 are in the West Nile region. This puts unique pressure on land, water, services, and job markets, and generates tensions with host communities. Patterns of migration (rural-urban and across borders) are also increasing in Karamoja in response to insecurity, poverty, and environmental stress. Therefore, the main challenges facing West Nile and Karamoja are deeply interlinked and require coordinated, multi-sectoral interventions focused on resilience, inclusive governance, equitable service delivery, gender transformation, and sustainable management of natural resources.

### **3.11 Poor Service Delivery**

#### **3.11.1 Health Care Services and Nutrition**

In Karamoja, only 17% of the population live within 5 km of a health facility, versus over 86% nationally. Many must walk 20–30 km to access a referral healthcare unit. On the ratio of health workers to the population, there is a staggering 1 doctor per 50,000 people, and each nurse/midwife attends to roughly 16,882 births; which is far-flung from WHO's recommended 1 per 175. Health facilities are sparse, and maternal mortality is significantly high (750 per 100,000 live births vs. the national average of ~435). Many rural areas remain hard to reach due to poor roads, limiting access to health and education. The situation among the indigenous people is even worse, as many of the IKK cannot even read and write. Health services in West Nile show persistent disparities between towns like Arua and rural villages. Sub-counties such as; Wandi, Kei (Yumbe District); Ajira, Kijomoro, Oleba, and Oluvu (Maracha District); Rigbo, and Uleppi (Madi Okollo District); and Athuma and Nyapea (Zombo District) do not have a single health facility. This means that residents in these sub counties have to travel long distances to access health care services or resort to private health care providers which are most times expensive. Child immunisation and skilled deliveries fall below national averages in several districts. The health sector in West Nile was widely identified by citizens as one of the most severely challenged. Communities reported acute shortages of health workers and essential medicines, particularly in hard-to-reach parishes. In Ndavu Parish, Pawor Sub-County, it was revealed that only two nurses are available to serve the entire parish population. It was reported that patients who do not arrive early are often turned away without seeing a health worker, and even those who are attended to frequently find no medicines available.

The lack of ambulances and emergency response services was also raised as a critical concern. In Onyomu Parish, Okollo Sub-County, it was noted that pregnant mothers were routinely dying enroute to hospitals. Many of such women were always being transported on bicycles due to the absence of emergency vehicles for such a need. The condition of health care infrastructure was equally criticized across the region. In Longira Parish, Koboko District, it was reported that the local health centre operates without running water or electricity. Health workers were said to be doing their best, in spite of working under inhumane conditions that compromised not only their safety but the safety of their patients. These concerns reflect the urgent need for comprehensive improvements in staffing, medical supplies, emergency transport, and health facility infrastructure across West Nile.

### **3.11.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

The region is marked by critical WASH service gaps. Only 40–80% of residents at the district level have safe water access, and sanitation remains severely limited. Thus, there is a need for development of a sub-regional SSIP to mobilise resources to meet the unique sub-regional. In West Nile, regional coverage remains uneven, and sanitation infrastructure still lags behind the rest. Key issues of water and sanitation in West Nile have been prominently raised by citizens, who expressed serious concerns over limited access to safe and clean water. Many communities continue to rely on unsafe sources such as streams and unprotected wells. In Longira Parish, Ludara Sub-County, Koboko District, it was reported that water sources were routinely shared with animals, leading to frequent illnesses especially among children due to the lack of alternatives. In Akuluze Village, fears were expressed that the only available stream may be responsible for cases of typhoid and other stomach-related illnesses, as no borehole had been sunk in the area. Sanitation was found to be equally poor, particularly in trading centres where public toilets were absent. In areas like Payila and Ajuimuni in Madi Okollo District, widespread open defecation had been observed due to the lack of decent and useable faecal/urinal disposal facilities. It was noted by a community elder that the absence of latrines in these commercial centres had especially affected women and girls. In addition, delays in repairing broken water points were highlighted as a recurring problem, with some boreholes reported to have remained non-functional for years in spite of registering numerous complaints submitted to the relevant authorities. These challenges underscore the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to improve water supply and sanitation infrastructure across the region.

### **3.11.3 Education**

At around 11% compared to 73% nationally, literacy rates are exceptionally low. The Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) curriculum has improved accessibility since 1998. However, infrastructure and teacher shortages continue to exist, particularly in remote areas. Teacher-pupil ratios often exceed 1:70, with limited infrastructure and classroom space. Schools benefit minimally from WASH-in-schools' programmes, but coverage is still low. School completion and national exam pass rates remain among the lowest countrywide.

In West Nile, Influxes of refugees have strained schools in areas like Madi Okollo and Yumbe. Many schools lack classrooms, WASH facilities, and have adequate learning materials. Financing gaps limit the provision of learning materials and staff retention. West Nile was among the poorest-performing regions in 2024 Primary leaving Exam Results (PLE), signalling stagnant learning outcomes despite external support. Obongi, with 3 first grades performances in PLE and Madi Okollo with grade four were the worst performing districts in the 2024 PLE countrywide. A number of critical challenges in the education sector have been highlighted by citizens across West Nile, with inadequate school infrastructure being of the foremost concern. Many schools were reported to lack essential facilities such as classrooms, desks, latrines, and accommodation for teachers. In Onyomu Parish, Okollo Sub-County, it was reported that learners were being taught under trees and in dilapidated structures.

It was further noted that children sit on the floor and that lessons were often disrupted by rainfall due to leaking roofs. In Gbulukuatuni Parish, Rhino Camp Sub-County, the complete absence of a school was cited, with children said to have been walking more

than 7 kilometres to the nearest learning centre. This situation had led to high dropout rates, especially among younger children. The shortage of teachers and lack of staff accommodation were also raised as serious issues. In Panduku Parish, concerns were expressed about pre-primary education. This level was noted to be unavailable and that teachers were being particularly demoralized by long-distance commuting and the absence of nearby housing. In addition, weak supervision and lack of accountability were identified, with school management committees described as inactive, resulting in poor performance and resources mismanagement.

### **3.11.4 Roads Infrastructure**

The upgrade of Moroto–Nakapiripirit Road had improved connectivity. The Kitgum–Kidepo Road, which was under development (2024–2028), was hoped to enhance access from Kitgum to Karenga and Kidepo. However, there were roads that were in poor states; impending connectivity and service delivery in Karamoja Sub-region. These included; Moroto–Kotido road, Soroti–Amuria–Otuke–Abim–Kotido–Kaabong road connecting to Karenga district. Others included Kopoth–Kotido, Nakapelimoru–Patongor to Moroto road, through Panyangara. In West Nile, the paved roads like the Karuma–Olwiyo–Pakwach–Nebbi–Arua Road improved connections to Arua. However, many feeder roads remained in poor condition, hindering rural mobility. Many major of the roads in the region were in a terrible state including the Nebbi–Goli–Paidha, Nebbi–Goli–Customs, Nebbi–Goli–Paidha–Nyapea–Warr–Vurra, Arua–Nebbi, Koboko–Yumbe–Moyo, Pakwach–Wadelai–Inde–Arua, Obongi–Sinyanya–Adjumani, and Midigo–Bugo–Kerwa roads.

### **3.11.5 Agriculture**

An agro-pastoralist economy dominates, with low, erratic rainfall and severe soil erosion challenging farming.<sup>17</sup> Livestock remains the primary livelihood; crop farming struggles without reliable inputs or extension services. Regional development plans aim to diversify livelihoods—promoting fodder and cash crops via strategic investments (KRDP 2024 35).<sup>18</sup> In West Nile, Agriculture is more diversified: cash crops, food crops, small-scale irrigation, and livestock are common. However, extension services remain limited in rural communities. In the West Nile Region, one extension worker has to serve an average of 2000 farmers. The situation in West Nile starkly contradicts established guidelines for agricultural support. A 2021 report by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) highlights a troubling reality: on average, a single extension worker in the region is responsible for 2,000 farmers, which is four times the recommended workload. In Zombo District, only 36 officers are tasked with serving 64,342 farmers. Maracha has just 17 for 36,000; Yumbe, 46 for 98,000; and Obongi, 17 for 6,600. This glaring shortfall results in an overwhelming ratio of farmers to extension workers, severely hindering the ability of agricultural extension workers to reach and support farmers efficiently.

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<sup>17</sup> aflinstitute.org

<sup>18</sup> aflinstitute.org+1aflinstitute.org+1

## 4. Citizen Demands: Expectations and Outcomes

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### 4.1 Inclusive and Accountable Governance

The people in West Nile demand for strengthening participatory governance structures at all levels, to ensure meaningful engagement of all citizens including, indigenous people, women, youth, persons with disabilities, elders, and marginalized minorities in decision-making processes. Local governments and development interventions must be responsive, inclusive, and transparent, fostering social contracts as entitlements rather than favours and prioritising community ownership of policies, projects, and resource management. Special focus must be placed on the adverse incorporation of communities into national policy and on empowering citizens as rights-holders, not passive recipients of aid or top-down interventions. Therefore, it is important to:

- Strengthen accountability mechanisms such as social audits and community-driven monitoring (barazas). These must be institutionalised for effective oversight and local ownership of development initiatives
- Strengthen Citizen Participation: Involve communities in budgeting and project monitoring through regular barazas
- Combat Corruption: Audit public projects and punish mismanagement of funds.
- Participation of Marginalised Groups: Ensure that women, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities and refugees are included in decision-making.

### 4.2 Peace, Security, and Social Cohesion

It is vital to have a holistic approach to peace and security, as addressing of the root causes of conflict, insecurity, and cross-border tensions take root. Key priorities include:

- Promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and transitional justice mechanisms that consider intergenerational and cross-border grievances and integrate formal and traditional conflict resolution systems.
- Supporting the capacity of local councils of elders, leaders of the indigenous people, women, and youth to mediate, prevent, and resolve conflicts, particularly over natural resources, land, and migration corridors.
- Strengthening joint security patrols and the management of conflict hot spots, while upholding human rights in all disarmament and security operations.
- Mainstreaming gender-transformative programs in peace-building to empower women and youth as agents of peace, economic revitalization, and social change.
- Building regional collaboration to address arms proliferation and the commercialisation of raids, and fostering inclusive community security systems.

### 4.3 Justice, Rights, and Equity

There is an urgent call for equitable access to justice and services for all, regardless of gender, generation, disability, or social status. This includes:

- Removing barriers to justice by improving physical access to courts, witness protection, and culturally sensitive legal support.
- Affirmative action for marginalised and indigenous populations, ensuring fair allocation of resources, participation in leadership and decision-making processes and protection of land and resource use rights.
- Addressing historical and ongoing exclusion, discrimination, and stereotypes that hinder the realization of full citizenship for all.

### 4.4 Sustainable Livelihoods and Economic Transformation

We urge investment in the transformation of pastoral, agro-pastoral, and diversified livelihoods that are resilient and environmentally sound. Priorities include:

- Supporting climate-smart agriculture, livestock development, and livelihood diversification, especially models suited to local ecologies.
- Promoting local value addition, agro-processing, and small business development, with special support for youth, women, and persons with disabilities.
- Enhancing market access, finance (such as microloans and savings schemes), and infrastructure for production (irrigation, livestock watering points, storage, and roads).
- Fostering co-operatives, producer associations, and innovation hubs for entrepreneurship and technology adoption.
- Encouraging formal and informal resource-sharing agreements, especially for water, pasture, and land, to prevent and resolve conflicts.

### 4.5 Access to Quality Services for All

We demand universal access to basic public services provided equitably and at adequate standards:

#### 4.5.1 Education:

We demand investment in education at all levels, with targeted measures to address gender barriers, early pregnancy, school dropout, and access for children in hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups. This requires construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure (classrooms, desks, latrines), recruitment of adequate teachers, and provision of teacher accommodation, especially in hard-to-reach areas. We expect improved learning environments, reduced teacher absenteeism, and enhanced quality of education for all children. Citizens of West Nile are urgently calling on the government and development partners to prioritize investment in the region's education sector, particularly in underserved

and hard-to-reach areas. Among their key demands is the construction of classrooms and teachers' accommodation in community schools such as Odukudu and Olodiova in Pamvara Parish, Ogoko Sub-County, where learners currently study under harsh and inadequate conditions. They are also advocating for the establishment of new primary schools in overpopulated or remote areas like Menjere and Osukia Parishes in Kei Sub-County, and Paraboki Parish in Pawor Sub-County, to ease congestion and improve access to education. Furthermore, communities are pushing for the coding of community schools, including Odrubu in Ajibu Parish and Olyevu in Pawor Sub-County, so they can benefit from government funding and official support. Existing schools such as Uleppi Primary School in Laura Parish and Pawor Primary School in Pawor Parish also require urgent upgrades, particularly the construction of additional classrooms and staff housing to retain teachers and enhance the learning environment. These demands reflect the collective desire of West Nile's citizens to see tangible improvements in education infrastructure that will ensure every child has a fair chance at learning.

#### **4.5.2 Health:**

Improvements to health infrastructure and services, including primary care, maternal health, outreach, and qualified staff in all communities. This demands increased recruitment and retention of health workers, consistent availability of essential drugs, improved health infrastructure with running water and electricity, and provision of functional ambulances. We desire accessible, quality healthcare services, reduced preventable deaths, and improved public health indicators. As a region West Nile demand substantive investment in the health sector. We demand that; Government constructs health facilities in Rodo, Machabo parishes in Kei Sub-County Yumbe District; Government constructs health facilities in Wandi sub county in Yumbe District; Ajira, Oluvu, Kijomoro, and Oleba Sub Counties in Maracha District; Aii-vu Sub county in Terego District; Rigbo and Uleppi Sub counties in Madi Okollo District; and Athuma and Nyapea Sub-Counties in Zombo District. We further demand that the Government to elevate Pawor HCIII in Madi Okollo to HCIV; and Ogoko HCII in Madi Okollo to HCIII. In addition, we advocate for provision of ambulance for Chakulia HCIII in Koboko District.

#### **4.5.3 WASH:**

Access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, including innovative, climate-resilient solutions for human and animal needs. Citizens of West Nile are strongly advocating for urgent interventions in the water sector to address the persistent challenges of access and reliability. Among their key demands is the drilling of new water sources in water-stressed parishes such as Chakulia and Longira, where communities continue to rely on unsafe and unreliable sources. They are also calling for the immediate repair of existing boreholes, particularly in areas like Oribu Parish where multiple water points have remained non-functional, severely impacting daily life. In addition, residents are requesting the extension of piped water systems to underserved wards and parishes, including Ayavu Ward and Onyom Parish, to ensure a more sustainable and equitable supply of clean water. These demands reflect the community's desire for long-term solutions that safeguard health, reduce the burden on women and children, and promote overall well-being across the region.

#### **4.5.4 Roads:**

Prioritising road construction and maintenance to ensure all-weather access to essential services, markets, and administrative centres. This will facilitate more effortless movement of people and goods, boosting local economies and improving access to education and healthcare.

#### **4.5.5 Social Protection:**

Social protection and social security should be provided to all vulnerable groups, moving from poverty-targeted handouts to universal, inclusive systems that reinforce the social contract.

### **4.6 Environmental Sustainability and Climate Justice**

We recognise the centrality of environmental stewardship and climate action to our survival and prosperity. We therefore demand:

- Scaling up climate-resilient infrastructure, such as rainwater harvesting, drought-resistant crops, reforestation, and restoration of degraded rangelands.
- Developing and scaling up climate-resilient water-for-production initiatives, such as small-scale irrigation schemes and livestock watering points, to support drought-prone agriculture and pastoralism. This will enhance food security, improved livestock health, and greater resilience to drought cycles
- Strengthening early warning systems, climate education, and local capacity for disaster preparedness and response.
- Integrating community-led adaptation into all development plans, with equitable access to resources and prioritisation of vulnerable groups (women, youth, refugees, and host communities).
- Integrating robust climate change adaptation strategies into local development plans, specifically focusing on early warning systems and disaster preparedness. The communities are better equipped to anticipate and respond to climate shocks, minimising losses and displacement.
- Promoting participatory and gender-inclusive natural resource governance, sustainable land use, and energy-saving technologies (solar, clean cooking).
- Investing in research, data collection, and knowledge sharing on climate risks, best practices, and resilience strategies.
- End Environmental Corruption: Investigate and punish officials involved in land grabs, illegal logging, and sand mining (in West Nile, in areas such as the river Acha quarry in Gbulukuatuni).

## 4.7 Strengthen Participatory and Inclusive Conservation Governance

We advocate for:

- Institutionalising community consultation frameworks: The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA) and Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) should establish Community Wildlife Committees (CWCs) in all parishes surrounding protected areas. These committees should include local leaders, women, youth, and pastoralist representatives to ensure inclusive participation in planning, monitoring, and conflict resolution.
- Requirement that any major conservation action—such as boundary demarcation, park upgrading, or resource restriction, be preceded by free, prior, and informed consultations documented through minutes, attendance lists, and published reports.
- Amendment the Uganda Wildlife Act (2019)<sup>19</sup> to explicitly require participatory environmental and social impact assessments before changes in conservation status or boundary enforcement.
- Integration of community consent procedures into the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies of UWA to align with Uganda’s constitutional provisions on public trust and local involvement.

### 4.7.1 Promote Equitable Resource Access and Benefit Sharing

The Government Should:

- Operationalize community resource use rights through the implementation of Class F Wildlife Use Rights under the Wildlife Act<sup>20</sup> to permit regulated community access to non-timber products (grass, poles, water, herbal medicine, and seasonal grazing) within protected areas.
- Develop Resource Access Guidelines for Ajai and Pian Upe, specifying zones, quotas, and management responsibilities jointly administered by UWA and local governments.

### 4.7.2 Implement Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation and Compensation Mechanisms

- Fully operationalize the Uganda Wildlife Compensation Scheme (2022): Parliament should allocate a dedicated annual budget line to the Wildlife Compensation Fund to ensure timely payments for loss of life, livestock, and crops caused by wildlife.

### 4.7.3 Integrate Conservation with Pastoral and Agricultural Development

- Align conservation planning with the livestock economy: The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) should collaborate with UWA to develop a

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<sup>19</sup> Wildlife Act, Cap 315

<sup>20</sup> See Section 35, Wildlife Act, Cap 315

Pastoralism-Conservation Integration Plan for Karamoja. MAAIF and UWA should introduce seasonal grazing corridors and rotational grazing agreements within Pian Upe, allowing limited livestock access during droughts under community ranger supervision.

- Implement a Community Livelihood Resilience Program targeting households affected by conservation restrictions, focusing on skills training (eco-tourism, crafts, apiculture, value addition) and start-up grants for women and youth groups.
- Introduce payment for ecosystem services (PES) models to reward communities for maintaining vegetation cover and reducing poaching pressure around protected areas.

#### **4.7.4 Uphold Human Rights and Rule of Law in Conservation Enforcement**

We request the Government to:

- Adopt a Human-Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to conservation: Develop and enforce UWA ranger codes of conduct with penalties for rights violations. Training modules should include gender sensitivity, conflict mediation, and non-violent enforcement.
- Create a joint oversight mechanism involving the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), Ministry of Internal Affairs, and civil society organizations to investigate and address reported abuses.
- Boundary verification and participatory mapping: The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MoLHUD) should undertake participatory geospatial mapping of Ajai and Pian Upe boundaries, using GPS coordinates and involving community representatives, elders, and local leaders. The MoLHUD should publish and publicly display boundary maps in Sub-County offices to prevent accidental trespassing and disputes.
- Secure community land rights: Accelerate issuance of Certificates of Customary Ownership (CCOs) in villages adjacent to reserves especially in Karamoja Sub-region where land is communally owned, giving communities tenure security while preserving conservation corridors. The Protected areas in collaboration with local governments should develop District Land Use Plans to allocate specific zones for settlement, grazing, and conservation buffer areas.

#### **4.7.5 Integrate conservation into local government planning:**

We request that:

- All Districts be required to include wildlife coexistence and compensation strategies in their District Development Plans (DDPs). There is a need to introduce performance indicators for district natural resource officers tied to community satisfaction, not just enforcement.
- All Districts should promote gender and youth inclusion: Design livelihood interventions that directly target women and youth, the most affected by access restrictions and unemployment. Facilitate the formation of community-based tourism

enterprises and youth ranger programs, ensuring locals benefit from conservation-related jobs.

## **4.8 Livelihoods and Economic Development**

- Promote livelihood diversification, including agroforestry, beekeeping, and eco-tourism, alongside traditional pastoralism, to create alternative income sources. This will reduce economic vulnerability, increase household incomes, and make livelihoods more resilient.
- Enhance access to financial services, including microloans and savings schemes, tailored to the needs of pastoralist and agricultural communities. This will promote greater financial inclusion and opportunities for investment in sustainable enterprises.
- Promote gender-sensitive water and environmental policies that ensure women's active participation and benefit from resource management and livelihood initiatives. This will empower women, improve household well-being, and more equitable development outcomes.
- Combat Deforestation and Land Degradation: Enforce laws against illegal logging and charcoal burning, prosecute corrupt officials, and support community-led reforestation programs.

## **4.9 Social Equity, Gender, and Generational Justice**

We affirm the rights of all generations and genders to participate fully and benefit equally:

- Mainstreaming gender and youth in all planning, implementation, and monitoring, with quotas and dedicated resources to redress inequalities.
- Supporting education, life skills, and participation of girls and women in leadership, innovation, and decision-making bodies.
- Creating focused programs for youth empowerment in entrepreneurship, peacebuilding, and sustainable enterprises.
- Protecting older persons, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups through tailored social support and policy interventions.

## **4.10 Infrastructure, Connectivity, and Inclusive Development**

We advocate for:

- Upgrading road, telecommunications, and air transport infrastructure to connect all localities, facilitate access to markets, and enable delivery of essential services. We demand the rehabilitation of the following roads; Pakwach-Wadelai-Inde-Arua Road; Payila-Ondeko-Asarua Road; Gazi-Obua-Degia Road; and Inde-Ogoko-Olali-Rhino Camp Road. Furthermore, we demand that the following roads be upgraded to a

first class murrum surface; Jaura-Okubani Road; Odrubu-Alibu Trading Center Road; Alibu-Onyom-Pawor Road; Mile 16-Ngalafi Trading Center Road; Mile 6- Bandili-Gbulukuatuni Road; and Alijoda-Uleppi-Inde Road. We also demand the rehabilitation of the following roads; Iri-Alarmva Road; and Bugo-Kuduku-Kerwa Road, as well as the road infrastructures in Luro Parish in Wandu Sub County, Yumbe District.

- To enhance connectivity, we advocate for the construction of Kiyi Bridge in Ludara Sub County in Yumbe District, and the rehabilitation of Umonda Bridge on River Namwodho in Nebbi District.
- Ensuring projects are designed and monitored with local government and community participation, for synergy, accountability, and avoidance of negative environmental and social impacts.
- Promoting rural electrification, digital infrastructure, and access to information, empowerment, and opportunity for all regions.

#### **4.11 Genuine Partnerships, Coordination, and Local Ownership**

- All interventions must be coordinated across sectors and levels, with local governments, civil society, customary leaders, and communities as equal partners.
- Fostering regional, national, and cross-border collaboration for peace, climate adaptation, and economic integration.
- Ensuring capacity-building and empowerment of local institutions to implement, monitor, and scale sustainable initiatives.
- Development partners and the private sector must align with citizen priorities and invest in building long-term resilience rather than creating parallel systems or palliative, short-term actions.

## Conclusion

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The Citizens' Manifesto for Inclusive Development and Climate Justice in Karamoja and West Nile represents the collective voice of the people, articulating their aspirations for a Uganda that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to regional realities. Despite the presence of progressive national frameworks such as Vision 2040, the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), West Nile and Karamoja continue to face deep-seated socio-economic disparities.

Citizens have clearly identified that meaningful transformation requires stronger local governance, equitable access to services, and deliberate investment in climate-resilient livelihoods. The manifesto, therefore, serves as both a policy advocacy tool and a social contract between citizens, government, and development partners.

By prioritising inclusive governance, human rights, social protection, and climate justice, Uganda can bridge regional divides and advance toward the constitutional vision of balanced national development. The aspirations captured in this manifesto are not merely demands—they are commitments to co-create a future rooted in dignity, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

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## About ACODE

ACODE is an independent public policy research and advocacy think tank based in Uganda, working in the East and Southern Africa sub-regions on a range of public policy issues. Our core business is policy research and analysis, policy outreach and capacity building. Recognised among the Top-100 Think Tanks worldwide in 2017 Global Think Tank Index published by the University of Pennsylvania. Since its founding 25 years ago, ACODE has emerged as one of the leading regional public policy think tanks in Sub-Saharan African.

## About KHH

Karamoja Herders of the Horn (KHH) is a pastoralist-focused Research and Advocacy Organisation, in the Horn of Africa, working on Land, Governance and Pastoralism. It is a community-rooted organisation committed to strengthening pastoralist livelihoods and governance in the Horn of Africa. KHH's work spans from cross-border peace collaborations to rangeland management and participatory research, to supporting communities in shaping the decisions that affect their land, mobility, and survival.

## About WENDA

Established in 1993, the West Nile Development Association (WENDA) an apex platform for regional local government coordination, uniting political and economic stakeholders across the West Nile. It represents a bloc of 12 District Local Governments, 1 City, 146 Sub-Counties, 2 Municipal Councils and 12 Town Councils. WENDA seeks to create a West Nile where peace prevails and prosperity is shared. WENDA's mandate is to foster harmony and security, champion social inclusion, and unlock the region's productive potential.



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