

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FOR PROGRESS ORGANIZATION-CEPO

Strategy for mitigating the cattle raiding in South Sudan

Background

Cattle raiding and theft among the South Sudan pastoralists communities is taking a lot of human lives in hundred including properties. Recently it is realized that the scale of the cattle raiding and theft is taking larger shape with bad characters of taking women and children especially in cases of revenge. The pastoralists are turning to kill women and children as an approach of punishing the opponent severely

Within period from December 2011 to February 2012, over 2000 human lives were lost and women and children score the high death rates due to cattle raiding or revenge due to cattle raiding. Therefore CEPO is for lobbying for this strategy to be discussed by the national parliament for adoption if it is appropriate for mitigating the issue of cattle raiding or theft. Before discussing the strategy CEPO feel to give some context analysis on cattle raiding or theft as below;

Key reasons behind the cattle raiding or theft

1- Fighting poverty:

Cattle are key source of livelihood for the pastoralists' communities. CEPO has come across to so phrase spoken by various pastoralists' communities' members in various locations across south Sudan as follow

- a) *"Cattle is our bank";*
- b) *"Cattle is our shop";*
- c) *"Our future demand on cattle" and*
- d) *"Without cattle we have no life"*

Those phrases give a strong meaning on what are cattle in the life of pastoralists. Pastoralists' youth during CEPO investigation of the recent Jongeli Lou-Nuer-Murle violence told CEPO investigators that, *"it is not negotiable if one can have access to cattle in any possible means"*. Here is the fact that makes the community, family and parents of the young pastoralists support cattle raiding or theft as an approach of making wealth. Therefore cattle is value in the life of the pastoralists means source of income or factor for addressing poverty

2- Social prestige:

To have recognition in the pastoralists' communities is the answer to the question *"how many cattle one (male) owned?"* The number of cattle one owned gives one the social position in the community. The pastoralists' communities turn to delegate or listen to community members when the community members owned good number herd of cattle in the community. Wife of husband with many cattle takes the leading role among the women of the community. Here is point where sometime women take sides with cattle raiding or theft. Same scenario is among the young male pastoralists who believe among their society that manhood of young male pastoralists is defines by his brave in conducting cattle raiding

or theft successful. Young pastoralists' male(s) that are successful in raiding or theft are the ones leading the hierarchy of command among the youth. Therefore any youth being individual or group that want to assume statues of leading, commands and respect among the pastoralists young generation and targeting same objective in his elder hood must conduct cattle raiding or theft regularly and successful and revenge any cattle raided. Additionally, the young pastoralists believe that revenge due to cattle being raided or some community members were killed is a justification of informing the opponent that the members of the deceased person(s) are not threaten by the act of the perpetrators.

High marriage dowry

Due to the way how the pastoralists value cattle in their life in the recent years. Lady marriage has become as a source of gaining number of cattle. The pastoralists' marriage through competition is losing its original meaning by the demand of the high dowry in form of cattle.

The CEPO proposal strategies for mitigating the cattle raiding or theft

1- Strengthening police services

The police services in the areas of the cattle raiding or theft must be strong enough in comparison to the capacity of the raiders or theft. The police empowerment should start from having adequate equipments for response to the raiders; by equipment CEPO meant guns and bullets including effective and efficient means of mobility for truckling down the raiders or criminals

2- Strengthening the local government structures

- a) The local government officials especially Payam directors, Boma directors and the chiefs should be oblige to handle the issue of the cattle raiding after they are well equipped with strong polices services officers.
- b) Judiciary at the county level or the customary court be harass on the perpetrators of cattle raiding or theft in order to create fear of crime

3- Cattle raiding leaders given assignment

Assigning the leaders of the cattle raiders responsible such as reporting any attempt for cattle raiding by their opponents or some members of their respect community

4- Disarmament of the civilian population

- a) The illegal arms at the hands of the civilian population must be collect but event and comprehensively
- b) After disarmament the government must provide adequate protection of the civilian population rather than the youth taking lead in protecting their community from criminals

5- Initiation of Livelihood opportunities

Since the value of the gun is a mode of making wealth, in order to render the value of the gun useless, there is need for creation of livelihood opportunities for the youth and the rest