

WRITE-UP OF LAMOLA PARISH INTERVIEW

We want to find out as much as we can about the villages and your work as the rwodi kweri how you help the community organize their land and how they use the land. What we shall start with, is to draw for the map of the parish showing or indicating the boundaries of the villages. The criteria are that, one person will be drawing as others might be giving the guidance of the boundaries of the respective villages. However, for directives, the blue mark on the map extract is the main road as well as the location of the school has also been indicated. Group discussion during map drawing.

In the first place before continuing to draw, how many villages are here in Lamola?

There are six villages that are in lamola.

Initially, when met the elders and LC 2s of this parish and we were told that the land in lamola is being controlled by the kaka [the clan] and others said individuals had the control of their own land.

Therefore, from the map can you show us the village boundaries of the land that is either under the control of the kaka or individuals or else the land is being controlled traditionally?

And can the boundaries be demarcated on the map?

To me, demarcating the boundaries on the map is quite difficult but it can be explained that in the past our great grandparents allocated themselves on this land and they were mixed up with other kaka since they were not the only that constituted the kaka in that land. For example, my own grandparent had the control of this very land where we are gathered here in the school but later on another kaka came and they merged together. Since other kaka came and joined them, there was high need of providing land to this kaka [squatters] for their farming activities and living. Even this grandparent use to dig even beyond the land he has given to the other kaka. Thus, the land division was scattered and makes it difficult to draw the demarcation on the map.

For more elaborations, what the first person mentioned are true and since you requested us to draw the boundaries on the map it is difficult and what the elders and the LC 2s told you previously, in my own view of perspective, in Lamola it's even difficult to find that there is land that is being controlled by the kaka hence making the vast land to be controlled by the individuals since the area is enough for digging. And since there are many kaki [plural of kaka] which consist of the Lango, Lukwo, Jaka etc. and because they are mixed up, each individual goes to his/her own land for digging. There is no area that is specific to only a kaka hence one might have a land in another place far from his land [the kaka Lango can have gardens in the land of the kaka Lukwo and vice-versa] but to a greater extent this didn't prevent the issues of land disputes and wrangles in area. Because one has been given the land in the past to the grandparent of the other or a land given to a distance relative it causes land dispute in the process of re-attaining. It's simply because when people were returning from the IDP camp there were others who returned with hidden agenda or ill intentions of chasing away this people who their grandparents had been given the land making them to inherit the land for their survival but on the other hand they want to be expelled thus causing land disputes.

In the parish of Lamola, how is the process of using land? Do people dig in one land for a long period of time or there is a continuous shift in the digging?

The way of cultivation in Lamola is that for instance, I have 5 arcs of land or 5 gardens, in the first year I plant like simsim then the following year I will plant another crop and if I feel the land is exhausted/unfertile then automatically I'll leave the garden for another year to be used [land fallowing] as I use the remaining land for cultivation. Thus, there is continuous shifting of land for digging but there is no use of land for a long period of time. [i.e. the land is being used periodically but there is rotational use of the respective gardens].

What are the criteria of electing the rwodi kweri?

I'm Ayella Washington the rowt kweri of Langala-nabu of Okoyo village. In the past how the rwodi kweri were being elected is that the person being elected as the rwot kweri must have the knowledge of the "know how" more especially on the land. Therefore, he must first of all know how the land boundaries of individual community members. However, in the past the elders were the ones elected as the rwodi kweri but nowadays it's the younger [youths] who are being elected as the rwodi kweri because the elders would have given the right directives as former rwodi kweri and these elders can show exactly the boundaries of the land of an individual. And in case there a rise a problem of land disputes in the community it's the rwot kweri to first have the information. Nowadays these local leaders are called the rwot kweri but I don't know how they were called in the past and it's the rwot kweri who should actually know the people's interest of the land. And in case there come the problems of land disputes, will this rwot kweri have the competency of making the right decision or judgment. The judgment that this rwot kweri will make should be right incase it's to go further [High Court].

I'm Ogwang and to me, the rwodi kweri of nowadays are very young people but though young, they will have got better teaching and advice from the elders and more especially concerning the land demarcation and much emphasis is based on whose boundaries boarders whose boundaries. And because one is conversant with the land boundaries then he qualifies to be elected as the rwot kweri. Therefore, the rwodi kweri have powers to stop one person from causing land dispute toward another person. Thus, this is how the rwodi kweri are being elected.

I'm Oryem John and in the past there were leaders who were elected but I'm explaining how the rwodi kweri are currently elected. First the community members gather together like this in the process of electing the rwot kweri hence there are mainly two ways of electing the rwot kweri. The first process is that, if for instance the rwot kweri of the village dies then it's the responsibility of the community to come together and elect a new rwot kweri of that very specific village. Thus, this election is done by the community members through nominating the names of the different competent persons and if one goes through then it's confirm there and then that so and so is the new rwot kweri of the village and immediately the secretary will also be elected and confirmed.

The second process of electing the rwodi kweri could be that the incumbent rwot kweri of a respective village might be so indiscipline that can't lead the community any more. Here the community members are gathered and there will be a straight change of the incompetent/indiscipline to a more potential

person who eventually becomes the rwot kweri. And to continue on how the rwodi kweri work with the community is that since the people are for aleya [rotational digging], they will have the knowledge of the land boundaries hence in case of any land disputes it's the very community members to support or reject the judgment of the rwot kweri. On the other hand the rwodi kweri are also responsible for the maintenance of the community roads and the community mobilization for any concern toward the community.

I'm Nyeko Willy and I'm the rwot kweri of Lagwedola and I have worked as the rwot kweri for 11 years and the process of electing the rwot kweri is that in that past the rwot kweri use to be an elderly person hence my predecessor is an old person who has worked for 32 years as the rwot kweri. Therefore, I use to stay closer to him. We use to follow how he makes judgment concerning the boundaries and demarcations of the land. And because of age he had mental problems hence it was high time for the community to elect a new successor. Though the criteria of the election was to nominate names of the competent person by the community members, I was the only person nominated thus I elected as an oppose rwot kweri. However, I'm working tirelessly and all the land boundaries of the individual community members I know and before/in the process of the election they elect a neutral person as the acting rwot kweri because in case one encroaches to another person's garden with just only a metre the rwot kweri should be transparent and just to tell the encroacher to leave the garden by the metre(s) that has pass and there is no bribery and all the rwodi kweri do the work on voluntarily. In my area of operation, I have a clean sheet of work as the rwot kweri because I work in collaboration with my predecessor and the LC 2.

What are the duties and responsibilities of a rwot kweri?

I'm Lamony James and I would like to outline the duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri. First of all, personally I'm not at the age of being a rwot kweri but at the moment I'm the rwot kweri. Indeed, I succeeded one of the elders in my village because I was his secretary since I was still a young man hence he was showing me the rightful way on how a rwot kweri should work. Initially, when my predecessor go for local court of land disputes he tells me to be vigilant and watch what he would be doing and this has given me a upper hand of doing the same as he use to perform. For example there was a land dispute between some people but the LC 2 tried his level best to sort out the land wrangle/dispute but he failed till he came back to me and I intervene and eventually, I managed and ended the land dispute and up to now all this people are living together. However, the main duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri is that in case there is any kind of land dispute he (rwot kweri) is the first to be contacted and he should be ready and able to stop the land dispute.

Secondly, the duty and responsibility of the rwodi kweri are to know on how people are keeping their domestic livestock. For instance, if these animals go and destroy the crops in someone's garden, here the rwot kweri should be contacted first so that he can go and see the exact destruction of the animals in the garden. Therefore, to me these are the few duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri that I can know.

Though currently I'm not a rwot kweri, I'm oldest person amongst you and initially in the past I was also a rwot kweri and I know the duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri. In the past, in case there was any kind of communal digging, the person who wants the people to work in his/her garden organizes food and alcohol and keeps the rwot kweri informed of his/her of programe of the communal garden work. Therefore, it's solely the duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri to go and take the proper measurement of the garden which correspond to the number of people he has and thereafter the people come together and the owner of the garden through the rwot kweri organizes for the communal leisure hence it's the duty of the rwot kweri to bring the people together. However, the system is repeated if another person is in need. And in the past before my elction as the rwot kweri I was first queried if I had the proper knowledge of the garden boundaries. But it was good enough that I knew the area and who owns and occupies which gardens and be it that the garden is 30fts, 10fts or 5fts I knew hence it was the duties of the rwot kweri to handle people in any group that may exist in the area. The difference is that in the past the rwodi kweri were only to handle garden disputes though in the past there were less garden disputes but nowadays, the rwodi kweri has more duties and responsibilities beyond settling garden disputes. And in the past if there was any dispute within the kaka it was being handled by the rwot kaka because the rwot kaka was available.

In Lamola are the rwodi kweri being assisted by the rwodi kaka, elders and the LCs in the process of land use and setting boundaries?

To me, in the past there were no LCs and instead we had the rwot kaka and they were involved in solving the problems of land disputes and sometimes solve the problems of domestic violence. In the past there were "mulango kumi" because there was no LCs.

Before I answer the question, first of all I would like to elaborate much more on the duties and responsibilities of the rwodi kweri that was not properly explained. It is that the rwodi kweri were only and strictly to control the communal digging or any communal gathering but if there is any land dispute it was the duty of the rwot kaka to handle because the rwot kaka knows the boundaries of the people's gardens. For instance you dig beyond the garden demarcation you are taken to the rwot kaka hence the rwot kaka would mobilize for the elders of the village and they gather together awaiting for the case of the garden to be amicably settled. After querying with a lot of questions to the defendant and if the case fail to be settled by the rwot kaka, it's forwarded to the won paco and if fails again then it's taken to the mukunggu then lastly to the gombolola. Thus, in the past these were how the problems of communal gathering and land disputes were addressed.

In Lamola what are the major problems being encountered that concerns the land?

In Lamola if it's to be seen from the map, there are so many people and because there is continuous production of children on the other hand the land is also becoming smaller. And if we have many children and there is no enough land, it's where the cases of land disputes start sparking. Therefore, the major problem is the high population growth compared to the small land available.

Another problem of the land was mainly because of the “alok” [karamajong rustlers]. Because people were leaving their own land for safety, they were given land to live in but after some duration that very person brings the brother to start living in the very land that he was given or offered. And because he is your immediate neighbor, he starts encroaching in to your land and this has caused a lot of land disputes and problem.

The problems of land are so many more especially we who are at the boarder like in Akoyo and I hope you personally hear to what happens in Lamola. The problems were actually caused the elders of the past because they use to welcome anyone to settle on their land. And because this land was given by our elders and because of the many children, they are told to leave the land and go back to their ancestral land but usually they have the tendency of refusing and this brings a lot of problems like land disputes.

There is also the problem of over rearing of domestic animals which is not a problem but there are other people who don't really know how to manage these domestic animals because they usually leave the animals to destroy crops in other people's gardens. These animals are mainly the pigs and goats that destroy the maize, potatoes etc.

There are some land squatters that are bringing for us a lot of land problems. For instance like the family of George gives a piece of land to another person and in the long run it might be that both George and the wife dies leaving behind the children, this persons to whom the land has been given will decide to take over the land of the late George not even allowing the own children of the late George to live in the land. However, this has caused a lot of land problem in the area.

In Lamola how are gazette land and hunting being handled?

There still exist few gazette land but most of the gazette lands has been turned into cultivation gardens because there is high level of population compared to small land available. Therefore, the method of grazing is that the animals graze on individual land owners. However, in my parish of Ajan there still exist two gazette lands.

Can you mention the number of land disputes that are there within six villages?

In Akoyo village there are 10 land disputes since it's a bigger village.

I'm the LC 1 of Awali wang lobo and I say that there are a lot of land disputes and it can be categorized into two. The first is the case of ancestral land disputes and this the disputes that if it's unsolved within the community then it's forwarded to high court and in most situation the elders and the rwodi kweri can't finish such kind of disputes. But land disputes concerning boundaries of gardens are handled and finished by the rwodi kweri, LCs and the community members. And in most cases the disputes of garden boundaries is just from one person to the other and whenever people start the season of digging, it's the period that the disputes starts. On the other hand, the young boys in the respective homes might want to have is personal garden and at times I blame the parents because a parent will say the place where so and so is living is our own land therefore, the child will automatically go without proper

consultation and starts claiming for the land but usually there will be mutual understanding hence they the land be divided and the boundaries marked

What are the problems the more disadvantageous group like orphans, LRA returnees and generally the women (widows) in Lamola faces?

I will talk about the girls who might have return to their home from her husband's home and it could be that she has decided to return due some problems from the husband's home and she might have returned with her children. Therefore, the problems arise in such a situation where by she has returned with the kids and I too have many children to cater for, I will give her piece of land for digging but she will not accept claiming that the land belongs to all of us since it's our father's land. Thus, this will bring a lot of problems and personally I will instruct her to go back to her husband and this causes for them a lot of problems.

The problems that the widows are facing is that the in-laws will give a piece of land to her clearly showing the boundaries and if the husband dies, in the long run the in-laws might decide to take away the land since the husband has died or else that very land might be deliberately given out for hire. Though you may have children or not you are expelled. And if expelled where will these children live in the future?

In Lamola parish we have the LRA returnees. There are others who are equally leading good life but there are also others who are facing a lot of problems. Firstly, there are others who have been born in captivity and the father could have die in the bush hence the mother return and start living with some of the relatives. These returnees are mostly encountering the problems of stigmatization and traumatization.

Secondly, these returnees are not being provided with the proper care by the family members and thirdly, the returnees are not considered as any person developmental in the future. They generally don't have a proper living and it's either the poor mother or the grandmother to provide the basic requirements which are not even there or enough. Some of the returnees don't know there exact homes but could know the name of the place because the father could have died hence they will be looking for the relatives in that area and later if this returnee starts living in that area some of the community members will start tracing if at all the child is for the late father. This is the major problems the returnees are encountering in the parish of Lamola.

How do the rwodi kweri handle the problems of land disputes in Lamola? And in case of the land disputes, is it forwarded straight to the LC 1 or LC 2?

I as a rwot kweri, this happened to my immediate neighbor .There was a problem of land disputes which another person encroached beyond the boundaries of the other. However, in such a situation all the community members are gather together and the complainant and the defendant are both asked briefly to narrate about the problem of the disputes. Thereafter, the all people will move directly to the garden where the encroachment has generally occurred. This will give the guide line for a proper ruling by the rwot kweri because the people will see exactly whether there was any trespass and if there was

trespass, then the defendant will be asked to clarify whether it's true that the land belongs him or not. And if the ruling is done, there will be witnesses from both sides for the future use in case it happens again but if we fail because they have failed to understand our rulings then we forward them to another level of authority for further rulings but all in all the fact remains that at least we have tried.

Generally, that is how we the rwodi kweri handle the problems of land disputes in Lamola and like that land dispute of my neighbor, they both agreed that we should wait during the dry season the boundaries will be properly seen.

Are there any people who come from the Ker-kal kwaro as the rwot moo in settling the problems of land disputes?

At the level of the rwodi kweri the rwodi moo don't come but when there are difficulties in settling the land disputes then the rwodi kweri merge together with other high authority and therefore the rwodi moo will come for the intervention. However, the rwodi moo comes only in situation where the case can't be solved by the rwodi kweri.

What do you do as the rwot kweri and LC 1 for instance the District, Government or any NGO wants to buy land in Lamola?

Well, in Lamola the incident of selling land like such has not yet happened and usually land is sold in terms of plots only for construction. The buying of land is mostly done by the LCs and some few witnesses.

In Awali wang lobo it has not happened because most of the land has its individual owners and in case the NGOs wants to buy, it needs a land that is really open and big but it might also be difficult because land is becoming limited in the area because of the increase in population. though this kind of buying by the NGOs hasn't happened and if it is to happen, then we have to look for someone who could be having a big land like more than an acre and has the motive of selling it. However, they should make an agreement and there will be the village leaders like the LCs to sign as witnesses.

What would you do in case a rich person who hails from Lamola wants to buy a big land for development?

This will still depend on the owner's decision whether to sell or not in case of any development like for hospital. For example in Akoyo there was a Health Centre that was constructed to help the people suffering of oluluc [nodding disease]. This happened because the kaka of Jaka accepted to provide the land for the construction of the Health Centre.

Initially, one person mentioned of having more than 5 acres of land. In such a situation if someone wants to buy the land, does he consult the kaka or he makes his own decision to sell the land?

At first it was mentioned that the selling of the land depends on the owner's decision and on the other hand the kaka of the dogola could be consulted. For instance I personally have about 3-4 acres of land and someone wants to buy like 2-3 acres, I personally don't have the authority of selling that land.

First I must gather my kaka of my dogola and explain to them the reasons to why I would like to sell the land. Thereafter, if the magnitude of selling the land is genuine then then kaka of my dogola will give a go head of selling the land but, if they reject my idea then I will have no right of selling the land. The first question they could ask is that, "can't the problems be solved by the specific dogola before having the idea of selling the land"?

Do you have the fear of losing your land? If so what are the fears?

There is fear because the government has started scaring the community by grabbing the lands and for example in Amuru and if this is to happen in Lamola you are the right people to give us the first hand and better information.

In Lamola we have the fear of the land being grabbed because there is an increasing population and therefore in may be 50 years to come there might be less or no land and secondly, there is a case of acquiring some letter for the land. Others have the tendency of going to the bank to acquire loans simply for the gut of money and later I fail to refund the money to the bank automatically I will lose my land. Does it mean that the letter will make you people of Lamola to lose your lands?

First my fear is that since there are a lot of land disputes and the government intervenes by changing the land bill act by amending that the land should not be owned by indigenou but the government, then obviously we shall lose our land. Therefore, to me I feel like the land bill that was amended should continue thus favoring the indigenou but the lands should not be owned by the government. Secondly, since we are at the boarder in the past there were some of the people who came to live in our land but up to now they don't want to return back to their land since there is security but on the other hand the government even don't want us to chase away the people in our own land hence making us to have the fear of losing our land. This is because their numbers are increasing as well as the numbers of us the indigenou. Therefore there will be no enough land to accommodate the rapid increasing population and because of this, we at the boarder we are going to lose our land in the future.

As the LC 2, my fear is that the data that is being collected could be simply to know the size of the land where there are a lot of land disputes and wrangles. Therefore in the sense that the squatters in the past had been offered land for living on the other hand their population is also growing and in the long run they might occupy our land. For instance the data collected shows that in such a place the dispute of land is for 20 acres and since there is dispute further more they would want to know that since he is having 20 acres how much piece of land does he still own? And if it's proved that he still have some acres then it might be grabbed on the basis that he doesn't know how to utilize the land and that is where my fears are dwelling.

My fear of losing the land is because of the land bill because in some years to come we have to start paying taxes for the land and in case one is incapable of paying the taxes, therefore, the government will decide to remove the land from an individual owner thus, this is causing a lot of fear of losing the land.

What should the people of Lamola do in order to maintain or prevent their land from getting lost and what are they doing to avoid losing the land?

First of all what should be done to avoid losing our land is that the people that we have provided them with the land should not be accepted to again give the land given them to their friends because in the future there will be no enough land to accommodate the people. The friend that has been given the land will also try to give part of the land to another friend which will make it to be a continuous trend. Therefore, we the local leaders should not tolerate the coming of intruders to our land so that we can live as our grandparents use to live hence it will avoid or prevent the loss of the land making us to protect our land without any external threat.

Before I can mention the ways of protecting our land, I start with what I didn't mention in the fear of losing our land. The most touching aspect of losing our land is the document letter but the fear is that the amount to be paid for the letter might unaffordable thus loss of the land. therefore, for us in Lamola in order to protect our land we should try our level best to get this letter though it's expensive it will be the first thing that would keep our land safe from getting loss. I hear the called it land certificate.

Another possible way of protecting our land is that for instance I have 5 children who are boys and I have land that my late father has given me. Before his death he was giving land to his sons with strong emphasis of not causing land disputes against the other sons [my brothers]. Therefore, if we the parents could adopt that kind of spirit and show our sons the land he will own. This will reduce land disputes thus preventing our land. Here the children will know that if he loses the land he will have nowhere to survive hence he will utilize the land accordingly as well as preventing the loss of the land.

As the LC 2 initially mentioned of not accepting intruders in our land therefore the people of Lamola should come with one strong resolution or guide that no one in Lamola should not dare to sell any piece of land to any person because if we entertain the selling of land it means we don't want the land since once sold it will never be attained any more just as human beings, if they die he/she will never rise again. However, if this is avoided then it shows that we are collectively protecting and preventing our land from getting loss.

If we are to go back, there was a question on disadvantageous group people which the widows are inclusive. However, I would like to know if the problems these widows are encountering are being handled by the rwodi kweri or else it's taken for granted that it's a domestic issue that can be solved by the in-laws and other family members? If a widow forwards a case of land disputes, do the rwodi kweri intervene?

In the case of bigger land disputes which involves the kaka then that is forward to the higher authorities but if a widow forward the case of land dispute to the rwot kweri then obviously we shall intervene by gathering the dogola where the widow comes from and we help out where necessary but if we fail then we call for intervention of the elders of the village. Elders gives advices differently, there others that give it softly but there other that give it bitterly with curses/omen. Therefore, I such a situation the defendant should accept to contain the widow and there should be no more disputes.

Hence, we are considering the widows in the village as any other person without division and to a greater extent the widows have the full right of owning the land of the late husband.

The widows are being helped by the rwodi kweri in case they forward their complaints of land disputes but most of the widows usually like forwarding these disputes to the respective kaka of the affected dogola. If forwarded to the rwodi kweri she will also be helped accordingly. For instance she reports that there is a dispute over her garden then the rwodi kweri will know that this widow lives in his area of jurisdiction and later people will be gathered and she is sorted rightfully though they (widows) like the reporting to kaka of a specific dogola.

Is the Lamola ancestral land for a single clan or it's for many different clans?

Lamola parish started long time ago and the reason to why it's called Lamola is because it has formed a kaka. The kaka Lamola migrated from Pader district and they have settled here and because they were so many, it was then decided to call this place Lamola parish. However, there are also other different kaka that are here in Lamola though the kaka of Lamola is the largest of all other kaka. Does it mean the other kaka just joined the kaka of Lamola? Yes, other kaka joined the kaka of Lamola.

Is there rwodi of Lamola who plays a role in solving land disputes?

Lamola as a kaka has their clan leader and in case they are informed then they can provide the help of settling the land disputes where they can afford. This is because they have a committee of the land and for other committees for other issues.

What are the people's decisions of acquiring a collective land certificate for the land of Lamola parish or the people do want acquisition of individual land certificate?

To me, I think that if there is a collective land certificate then it's not good but it's better if each dogola attains individual land certificate. This is because if there is a collective land certificate then other dogola will not get this certificate for their land.

How did Lamola parish/community start before the coming of the British and during the reign of Obote 1, Amin, Obote 2 and Museveni?

Before the coming of the British, we initially had rwodi and the rwodi of Lamola was called Aliah Aboga and later when the British came and they started actively working in the region, the kaka Lamola was already in existence however, the British came and just joined them. The Lamola clan were mostly still in Pader district in a place called Puranga and later from Puranga they decided to come here in Lamola though their rwodi Aliah Aboga was in Awere. However, there were some minor problems like war. And because there was war because of land dispute, there were other smaller rwodi like rwodi Olal Adiri thus, rwodi Olal Adiri started fighting so as he could have the whole control of Lamola parish and even in the past there was war that happened between the Langi and the Acholis causing atrocities. Later, rwodi Olal Adiri started reporting to the British about the war and atrocities caused thus leading to the arrest of our rwodi. After rwodi Aliah Aboga was imprisoned in a place called gang ming [house of stupidity] and later he died from there and never returned to us here in Lamola.

And in Obote 1 regime there wasn't any change because he personally continued with the system of the British kind of governance after attaining independence.

In Amin's regime there was a very small change because Amin created gombolola for example Awere was one but later he created Odek connctets wtih Lalogi and the other side Loyo connects with Palwo. He also divided Gulu and Kitgum though Gulu was the overall.

In Obote 2 regime there wasn't any change because he continued with what Amin was doing and the maintenance of the created gombolola.

In Museveni's regime it's that he created a lot of districts, sub-parishes and villages thus there is just a continuous development. In Lamola parish, do we have sub-parishes? There are sub-villages in Lamola parish and this comprises of the rwodi kweri.

How were land issues in Lamola as people were in the IDP camp?

Before the people went to the IDP camp there wasn't much land disputes as of the current situation. And when people started returning from the IDP camp, there started land disputes because others were selling some land hence it was money and poverty that created all these problems of land disputes. In process of returning back home there were a lot of divisions amongst most the family members because the nephews and the girls who have returned from her husband were being chased away from home simply because of land hence causing land disputes.

There were other people who could just construct their houses in some place leaving his own land with the prime target of taking the land since the owner of that land has persistent body weaknesses. This is done deliberately so that he can have the asses of expanding/annexing the land toward his original land.

During Museveni's regime, before overthrowing the government people were living well and there were no cases of land disputes since in the past our grandparents had given land to the relatives, friends etc. there wasn't any dispute hence when people were in the IDP camp people started facing a lot of problems. The land that was left behind and there wasn't problem. The problem started as people returned back to their respective homes and all these problems to me I throw the causes on the local politicians because they were saying that the government is going to take away the land but it was a logic of campaign. However, people returned but those ones who had been given land rushed for the land and they were stopping the owners of the land from coming back to their lands hence this sparked the problems of land disputes.

I kindly request that I start from the regime of Obote 2. To me in the past in Lamola parish people were not many as earlier on stated. Since the return of Obote from Tanzania there were a lot of problems the Karamajong caused that affected the Acholis, Itesos and the Langi of which it displaced a lot of people more especially from the Lango northern sub-region hence they allocated themselves in Lamola and that is why in Lamola there are so many kaki. Not only that, with the people going to the IDP camp, the traditional ways the Acholis use to have it disappeared because the traditional culture of life wasn't being maintained and people in the IDP camp use the lead their own ways of life.

The kind of tradition that our grandparents had totally perished and anything being done is done on the aspect that “an arwot ki ota” [literally meaning I’m a king for my own house] making people not to care about their own mothers, brothers etc. and this made people to reach an extent of hiring garden for cultivation and this became part of the Acholis that can’t be rubbed off. This kind of life from the IDP camp people had it at the back of the minds even on the return process hence they had developed the mentality of selfishness. And to continue, there were big army detachments in almost the Acholi land and this has caused a lot of displacement in context that there is development thus people started thinking that there is something wrong somewhere and the government started the infrastructural development like roads, health centres, school etc. and this made people to see that the government is trying to grab their land. That is why even nowadays if the government wants to bring any development in any place it will really take a long process for the owners of the land to accept. Therefore, to me this is what is happening in Museveni’s regime. Lastly, with the increasing population most of the people have become more selfish as land issues are concern.

QUESTIONS FROM THE RESPONDENTS.

Since you heard clearly the problems that people of Lamola are facing, what best thing can you do so that our land is protected? And can your office provide a sensitization programme on how people can protect their land?

We had several meetings with the top leaders of the Acholi district like the LC 5, RDC, MPs, religious leaders and the ker-kwaro. And the main thing was about the land conflicts and it seems everybody and all the parties are very worried of what is happening in Amuru and they also have worries of the internal problems and they have requested the government to stop granting the certificate of the customary ownership because giving the certificates to individuals. This is because giving the certificates will lead to the breaking up of the clan’s land therefore, the certificates are making things to worst and in the mean time they have set up a committee to find out more about the Acholi customary land and we be helping them to do that. But I think it will be much easier for the all clan, parishes and the dogola to come together and register their land as a group and each place will have the asses to decide whether the clan or the dogola to register their land. That hope is that what will come out of this people or the group of people that own the land will be secured to own their land. Therefore, that is why they want know about the customary land and it’s hoped that by the end of the year it will be successful and that will be the time that will be right for us to come and sensitize the people but at the moment the community knows much more than the leaders about the customary land. Therefore, the sensitization is on the other direction because you are sensitizing us so that we sensitize the leaders.

In case from the high court I win the case I know I will be given a documented letter and later the case goes back to the LC 2 therefore, in such a circumstance what should I do? On the other hand, because of the land disputes, won’t the government decide to take away the land from me?

Though it’s a difficult question but, it seems to me that the LC 2 courts works best as part of the community because the government will not know about better of what is happening in the

community and this is the best way of solving things in a customary in the community. This is because the LC 2, lawyers and the judges will still depend on the community because they have the best knowledge of the boundaries and the ways of doing things in the community. That is why sometime you that disputes starts from the LC 2 court to LC 3 court and the magistrate court and the magistrate says that because this is a customary land case I can't decide it and it has to go back to the elders. However, I don't know whether it's the right answer to your question.

For instance in the LC 2 court I win but I wasn't given the letter what should I do?

It's better to go back to the LC 2 for further notices.

Mind is just like a piece of advice since your office and your ideas are so good. Therefore, the cases of land disputes should be handled from within the community members because this are the very people who knows best of the land boundaries and if is supposed to forwarded to the high court it will be wastage of money since they are found of corruption. Therefore, if you have the asses of keeping the court informed about handling land disputes at the LC 2 level it would so good.

I would just give a advice that in case you win the court and you are not given the letter. It's legally accepted that you can sue that LC for not granting you the letter. Thus, if you forward the case to the LC 2 office there is a committee that will handle the case therefore, the committee will have to ask the reason to why the letter has not been given yet it was approved and signed by the committee that you have won the case.

In case we want to acquire the certificate and there are squatters in our land, should we also involve them as part of our kaka so that we acquire the certificate?

It's a very good question but I think one of the challenges of setting up this equipment is going to make sure that ever body who has right is recognized because the land belongs to a main clan and other people, it's not actually the people who are there on the land but it's also the children who haven't yet been born, wives who haven't yet been married and the clan members who are away may seek to come back therefore the land belongs to a big group.so if you knew the ancestors who first came to this land and from Lamola ancestors and you knew roughly when that was you would say the land belongs to the descendants of this man who first came here and this might have been in the pre-colonial time i.e. the 70s or the 80s it would be better to leave the land to the descendants.

Do you people know the names of these ancestors who first came to this land and when were that?

It was rwot Aboga and the year was in 1912 because they had gone back to Puranga to collect the grinding mill using bulls because those days there were no vehicle

