The Traditional Adakar Leaders’ Lokichoggio Border Harmonisation Meeting

Dr. Darlington Akabwai
THE TRADITIONAL ADAKAR LEADERS’
LOKICHOOGGIO BORDER HARMONISATION MEETING
OF 15 TO 16 DECEMBER 2001

by

Dr. Darlington Akabwai

Produced by
Community-based Animal Health and Epidemiology (CAPE) Unit
Pan African Programme for the Control of Epizootics (PACE)
Organization of African Unity/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (OAU/IBAR)
Introduction

During the Toposa-Nyang’atom – Kwatela/Turkana meeting at the Diocese of Torit Camp in Lokichoggio, on 6 to 7 December 2001, the participants resolved to change the venue of peace meetings from town centers to grazing lands due to the following reasons:

- Poor attendance because people have to be brought from far and diverse places
- People are kept away from their animals for long periods leading to anxiety
- The main victims of the raids, innocent children and women, are left out of the discussions
- The choice of participants is poor, mostly comprising town dwellers who cannot articulate the concern of the communities

Incidentally, the Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology Unit (CAPE) of the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU/IBAR) had noticed these shortcomings and had already carried out two women alokita peace crusades in Karamoja land and Toposa lands respectively. Following are the events of the Border Harmonisation Meeting that was held in Nanam Location, the preferred venue.

The Objectives of the Meeting

- To select dates to return stolen livestock as discussed in the meeting
- To nominate peace committees from the Toposa and the Turkana
- To schedule future activities that will help sustain new peace pacts
- To decide on comprehensive punishment for those who violate the peace pacts
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Participants’ views
Mariao Siaang’ale

Mariao Siaang’ale, a Turkana elder from Lokichoggio Division, praised the Turkana elders and chiefs for the efforts they made in returning the cows of Lomerimoe and Lokapelimoe from Solia Songot Epiding.¹ “These Toposa men must be happy because their animals have been returned and the culprits jailed,” he beamed. The elder requested both communities to monitor the whereabouts of their youth and give an account of their activities. “This is the only way that we can arrest mischief and realise lasting peace in the region,” he explained. Siaang’ale advocated for corporal punishment for offenders and advised the elders to set up peace committees that will receive information on any suspicious activities indicating the planning of a raid. He discouraged the habit of some Toposa clans of making peace with some ngipiding’a² to access luscious pasture for their animals, but are also willing to join the Nyang’atom in attacking other peaceful ngipiding’a. “We cannot tolerate a neighbour who tells us to leave one window open for eating, for such tendencies often cause us to drift away from our goals,” he warned. He appealed to the two communities to waive the recovery of stolen animals saying, “This business of chasing stolen animals is impossible because no one is willing to separate the cow from its calf.”

Lotiang’ Lokapelimoe

The Toposa elder and Chief from Natinga Payam Kapoeta County, Southern Sudan responded to Mariao’s comments by accusing the Turkana of breaching the current peace pact as has been demonstrated by the youth that raided a Toposa manyatta soon after the peace meeting in Lokichoggio. He questioned the Turkana people’s commitment to peace asserting that if they were really for calm, they would have warned the Toposa of the impending raid.

Lokapelimoe joined the other elders in encouraging the communities to abandon the idea of recovering lost animals, saying, “A bull that has been branded and is well-known in the village cannot be taken away.”

Aadung’ Lotonia

The Turkana elder from Lokichoggio supported the idea of forgetting the past and starting afresh. He dared anybody who feels capable of taking on the task of recovering stolen animals to venture and inform him of the success. He charged the Toposa of masterminding banditry and he insisted that the Turkana did not know how to steal until the Toposa taught them. “We only knew how to carry out traditional raids using spears, bows and arrows and targeting kraals but you introduced killing of people, even innocent charcoal burners and women fetching firewood,” he accused. He told them that it is immoral to kill people who do not own cattle or guns, referring to the charcoal burners and women. “No, we shall not copy that one,” he swore.

Lotonia complained about highway banditry along the Lokichoggio-Nadapal-Narus Highway. He exonerated the Turkana people from Solia and Lokume Emoru in Mogilla Ranges from blame, insisting that the problem was only common along the highway and not in the manyattas.

Lokinei Acalung’imoe

The Toposa leader’s contribution was brief. He proudly announced that his epiding at Moruangipi is peaceful hence there was no need to convene a peace meeting for them. However, he decided to attend this meeting to witness the reconciliation of other ngipiding’a. He blamed the administration of Sudan and Kenya for inefficiency and laxity in punishing criminals. Acalung’imoe compared the present administration with that of colonialists and found the former defective. He said, “The present day government seems to have relegated its power to the people who rule

¹ A Turkana word for a mountain pass where people have settled because of easy crossing to grazing fields on the other side of the mountain
² Many mountain passes
by the gun. If no action is taken, these criminals will be
governing us.”

**Sekon Ekaale**

Sekon Ekaale, a Turkana leader from Natapar Location, Kibish Division of Turkana District, confessed that he is yet to meet a peace loving Toposa. He accused them of distabiliising peace that was brokered between the Turkana and the Nyang’atom because it is their nature. The elder defended the governments from accusations of inefficiency when dealing with raiders and recovering stolen livestock and rebuked the people for impatient. He urged them to wait for the law to take its course instead of retaliating through counter-attacks. Ekaale singled out Nanyang’achor and Napuatasikiria Payams as the places where evil plans originate. He reminded Long’urameri, the Toposa chief of Nadapal Payam, that the absence of the Peimong at the meeting is a sign of trouble in the future.

**Philip Naajo**

Phillip Naajo, a respected Toposa chief from Narus in Kapoeta County of Sudan appealed for honesty in returning stolen livestock to the owners. He welcomed the suggestion that the Turkana should reciprocate Toposa hospitality by visiting Lopua Location in Toposaland. He feels that if the Turkana spent a night there, the two communities would be encouraged to start grazing their animals together without suspicion. The chief endorsed the payment of heavy fines by those found violating the peace pact. He asked the participants to suggest punishments that will deter raiding. He also appealed to the two communities to elect sincere and hard working elders to sit in the peace committees.

**Amoni Ebei**

The Turkana elder from Nanam thanked the participants for the large turnout that he attributed to commitment to the peace process. However, he cautioned them against empty words that will be ‘blown away by the wind’ and forgotten as soon as they disperse from the meeting. Ebei advised that conflict management is never easy and cannot be entrusted to one person. “For instance, the youth cannot go to raid without the blessings of the elders or the chiefs,” he expounded. He warned the communities against fueling animosity and encouraged them to influence a peaceful coexistence with the neighbours. He recounted an incident where he recovered calves from a Toposa herd that the Turkana had stolen. He showed honesty by returning all the calves even though the Toposa were not aware that they had lost more animals. “This case is well known to the Toposa and Apetang’imoe who can bare me witness,” he claimed. But Ebei could not attest the same of the Toposa. “When did they ever reciprocate our good gesture and returned animals stolen from us?” he asked. He challenged them to tell of any one incident when the Turkana killed a Toposa who had come to trade when the communities were at peace. He beseeched the Toposa to take the peace meetings seriously, then he mocked them saying, “If this meeting is but your usual spying mission, then let me help you by pointing out the exact whereabouts of our cows. They are at Nanam, Lopotikol, Lomuria and Ekakale.” He advised them, sarcastically, to come and collect the cattle in the usual manner. “Only this time round, we are vigilant and we will be ready for you,” he warned.

**Nakwaare**

The elder from Turkana repeated the message of moving ahead and letting go of the past. He advised the communities to protect the peace pacts jealously and disclose any information that will lead to the capture and punishment of those planning raids.

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3 Administrative divisions, a term used by the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM)
4 This is a Toposa clan that resides at Moruangiipi, and along the Lopotikol River. They graze their livestock near the Turkana of Lorionotom and Lokwanamoru mountains, who call themselves KADU
5 A Toposa elder from Solia-Songot Epiding
Lokorot Long’urameri

Long’urameri had kind words for the government. He appealed to the participants to recognise the organisers of the peace meetings. “They are working under the auspices of the governments that we keep castigating. These people are using the most lenient way when they give us a chance to come together and iron out our misunderstandings,” he explained. He singled out raids and disease as the two most dreaded enemies of the Karamojong Cluster communities but added that the two can be controlled if there is peace. According to the elder, only peace and accessibility to veterinary drugs will save the communities of the cluster from extinction. He cited the two drawbacks as reasons why the governments are commitment to the peace initiative. The elder emphasised the need to include women in the peace process because they are the innocent victims who suffer most from the aftermath of raids. “The man killed could be her husband, and the girl or boy killed her son or daughter, while the livestock driven away is her only source of livelihood,” he explained. Long’urameri rationalised that women are capable of imparting messages that touch hearts, and arouse sympathy in any person, young or old, male or female.

Ng’alimae Nakitibo

Ng’alimae Nakitibo, the first woman to address the meeting, confessed of a deep-rooted cry from inside her for the loss of her children and cows. “Let’s reconcile and spread the hide of the old white bull⁶ to signify the end of our differences that have been planned by a few evil elements in our midst who want to benefit from our mistakes. Such reconciliation will stop the loss of many animals and people,” she pleaded. She requested the two communities to stop accusing the authorities of cowardice and inefficiency because the government is merciful and patient with them. She warned that the government is so powerful and is capable of hitting back at the detractors.

Akolom Loyanae

Akolom Loyanae, a Turkana woman from Natapar Location in Kibich Division, Turkana District, was very skeptical about the Toposa visiting Nanam for the peace meeting. “Have you just come to wreck our grazing areas?” she enquired. “If you were serious about peace, why have you not gone to Lopotikol⁷ like we agreed during the last meeting. The Turkana cattle are already heading there so you should also head there if you are serious about peace,” she berated them. She warned the Turkana of Toposa treachery saying, “If you see them coming deep into our grazing fields, be sure that they are interested in spying on our livestock in preparation for a raid.” Loyanae reminded the Turkana of one elder’s allegation that there are bandits hiding in the bush as the communities are negotiating peace. The woman, like the rest of the elders, advocated for stiff punishment for offenders and asked the two communities to hurry and find a solution to the problem of returning stolen animals before the peace agreement is sealed.

Lotoom Ichom

The Turkana elder from Songot Hills was disappointed in fellow elders who ask people to choose between peace and war. “Such people have never experienced the depression and mental torture that others go through after a raid,” he lamented. He was horrified at the magnitude of loss he would incur if people paid attention to such inflammatory statements. He explained that all his livestock are grazing at the border of Sudan and Kenya and if war were declared, then his losses would be unconceivable. Ichom cautioned Ekipor and Apang’isepon, the Turkana elders from Mogilla Ranges, to desist from making statements that expose the arigan⁸, while they will run away to safety. He asked

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⁶ This is a traditional symbol of peace that is sealed by slaughtering a white bull and eating the meat together.
⁷ Lopotikol is the location of a violent attack by Toposa youth, where 130 Toposas and 30 Turkans were killed. The two communities, in an earlier meeting, had agreed to meet here and make peace right at the place where previous peace pacts were violated.
Lokapelimo, the Turkana elder, why he did not bring young people from his village to the meeting. “This really makes me wonder if you are for peace. If this is really peace, then it is yet to be proved because the Toposa never kept their word after the last peace meeting,” he challenged. Ichom was bitter about the killing of his children and he complained about failure of Toposa leaders to arrest and punish those responsible. “Even Apang’itomon, the Paramount Chief, knows about my case,” he declared. Ichom advised the two communities to begin a new chapter and set up peace committees that will facilitate the return of stolen animals.

Ekipor Eleya

Eleya, a respected elder from Turkana and an ekasikout9 from Mogilla Ranges, pointed out that Lukumong’ and Peimong clans, that are suspected of raiding, were glaringly absent. He advised the communities to guard their ngipidinga jealously against greedy people. He gave an example, saying, “If we, the Kwatela, plan to raid the Dodoth and their immediate neighbours, the Lukumong’, deny us access because they are at peace with them, then let us also stop them from disturbing our peace by asking for passage to raid our neighbours.” Eleya encouraged the participants to report any elements that are out to disrupt peace. The elder expressed joy from having the Toposa staying with them in Nanam, a place that has been a battleground for the two communities. He urged the organisers of the peace meetings to give the Turkana a similar chance to go and find out if the Toposa are committed to peace by welcoming them warmly in their midst. Eleya requested the two communities to begin grazing livestock together to end suspicions that have existed between them. He suggested Lokume-emoru, the Turkana grazing grounds, as a suitable venue for such a meeting that will witness the assembling of all families from Turkana and Toposa.

Hon. John Munyes, the Member of Parliament for Turkana North Constituency

The MP stressed the critical role that guns play in fuelling conflict in the Karamoja region. He elucidated to the participants that this is the reason why President Yoweri Museveni has initiated the disarmament program in Uganda because it will be difficult to know peace with guns in their midst. Munyes directed the administration to ensure that any Turkana wishing to enter Uganda leaves his gun behind. “If we cannot adhere to this condition, the Uganda Government will not allow us to graze our animals in their country,” he emphasised.

The Administrators

“Two stones cannot cook a meal, likewise you, the civil society need administrative support in your initiative, especially in returning stolen property,” articulated the Commissioner of Kapoeta Louis Lobong Lojore who had accompanied Hon. John Munyes to this traditional grass root meeting at Nanam. The Commissioner promised to support the resolutions from the meetings, and ensure that offenders are punished.

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* Arigan is the plural for adakar, a Turkana word for people who join to graze together for security reasons.
* A retired Turkana warrior
Recommendations

➤ The CAPE Unit should organise a traditional peace meeting at Lopotikol and invite the Peimong' and the Lukumong, the sub-clans of the Toposa
➤ The recovery and return of stolen cattle should be abandoned to allow the peace initiative to move forward
➤ A fine, of not less than ten cows, will be imposed as punishment to people involved in raiding
➤ Peace committees, that will monitor security and receive reports on the activities of the raiders should be formed
➤ The stakeholders should organise frequent grass roots follow-up meetings where elders, youth and women are represented

Conclusion

This meeting was the first one to be held at the grass roots as requested by the people. The participating communities found a golden chance to express themselves the traditional way. The old way of settling disputes gave them a greater hope that solutions to peace between them are possible. The success of the meeting prompted the Toposa to request for a return visit, by the Turkana, before their livestock begin to graze together as agreed during the meeting. However, the Turkana were not able to feed their visitors, as they would have wished, because of financial constraints. The meeting agreed to find a solution to this problem by the time of the next meeting.
# Appendix I

## Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>BY WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>ASSISTANCE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Turkana</td>
<td>Turkana</td>
<td>14 Jan 02</td>
<td>Lopotiko grazing grounds</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Toposa</td>
<td>Toposa</td>
<td>26 Jan 02</td>
<td>Lopua Lokapelot Song'ot/Solia</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forget about the stolen cattle</td>
<td>Turkana and Toposa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formation of Peace Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill livestock recovery expenses to raiders</td>
<td>Turkana and Toposa</td>
<td></td>
<td>When the thieves are identified</td>
<td>Peace committees and the chiefs to facilitate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate the meeting of the newly formed peace committees</td>
<td>Toposa and Turkana</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atan agreed upon date after first meeting</td>
<td>Lokichoggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Toposa</td>
<td>15 Feb 02</td>
<td>Lochor a Ng'amor</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide tobacco</td>
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</table>
### Appendix II

**List Of Participants**

Extended Traditional Peace Meeting Held at Nanam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>John Munyes</td>
<td>M.P Turkana North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Benedict Lobei</td>
<td>Councillor-Lorau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>William Ekuchoi</td>
<td>Councillor -Lokichoggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Alfred Kapoko</td>
<td>Councillor -Kakuma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Barnabas Lochilia</td>
<td>Chief -Lokichoggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Julius Ilcete</td>
<td>Chief -Mogila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>John Losikiria</td>
<td>Chief -Lorau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Paule Gabriel</td>
<td>Chief-Song'ot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Joseph Nakua</td>
<td>Chief -Kibish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Nicholas Ejore</td>
<td>Chief-Koyasa</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Lotoom Ichom</td>
<td>Kraal Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Maraka Lotoom</td>
<td>Kraal Head</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Edoe</td>
<td>Kraal Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Kalimapus</td>
<td>Kraal Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Namuton Dapal</td>
<td>Elder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Ekipor Asurut</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Namuton Dapal</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Ikaale Lobuin</td>
<td>Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Alex Ikai</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Lochuuro Loye</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Lookwae Esekon</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Etaaba Lokou</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Agnes Naita</td>
<td>Woman</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Akolom Mardad</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Ikali Erot</td>
<td>Youth</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Ekalale Lodea</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Erus Nang’eritoe</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Logilae Nachom</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Nakoroto Long’olan</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Lowoth Esinyen</td>
<td>Elder</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III

Peace Committees

Turkana Elders

Solia/Song’ot Epiding
1. Lotoom Ichom
2. Adung Lotonia
3. Lochoro Ng’iro
4. Maraka Lotoom
5. Kalimapus Ikimat

Ekume–Emoru Epiding
1. Lokaalei Lonyaman
2. Nang’olol Koki
3. Lochunamong’ Akonoi
4. Ekipor Eleya
5. Nakoole Napuanyang’
6. Etaaba Esinyen

Lorau/Lopotikol Epiding
1. Moitan Lolem
2. Eleeny Lomor
3. Ekoomwa Lopayen
4. Namooru Lokamarikit Eleya
5. Loye Lomuria

Lokichoggio Epiding
1. Lomukuny Iria
2. Ekol Lotiang’
3. Lokwawi Eloyo
4. Nariamao Ekone
5. Ekadeli Kideuwa
6. Najie Nawakiring’
7. Aloan Emuria
8. Kokuro Naboro
9. Samwel Ekwee
10. Nawoyadung’ Kuchal

Nanam Epiding
1. Aukan Loong’or
2. Loochut Ekamais
3. Esekon Maachu
4. Amoni Ebei
5. Lominto Emedot
Appendix IV

List of Toposa Participants

Solia Epiding (Ngibunio)
1. Longurabok
2. Loteam Lodukio
3. Lokura Macharipus
4. Lokale Aporokileng
5. Logie Looret
6. Lomong Nachimi
7. Lokom Aweikingimoe
8. Lowi Namunyoko- Kraal Head

Kabekenyang/ Ekume Emuru Epiding (Nyangia)
Solia
1. Philip Naajo
2. Namaase Lopir
3. Loteam Nalepyo
4. Nakwaari Lotabo
5. Losikiria Lorogoi
6. Lolukol Ismael
7. Marko Bokot
8. Daniel Lochoro Loya
9. Uleik Loperitmoe
10. Kadeko Lopir
11. Lopaayi Nayookol
12. Lookora Lokopir

Logir Epiding
1. Loyanai Chupsaita
2. Loteam Lopeyo
3. Nakinei Lotabo
4. Docha Logerio

Ngikor - Naliel
1. Lomong Allieum
2. Lokeno Nakodosio
3. Lolimo Kopirlem
4. Lodoket Loteam
5. Lokaale Patanipus
6. Napir Aurelio- Chief

Peimong
1. Lokaiimoe Loliningabok
2. Namailem Lokenoe
3. Loye Lokweei
4. Longocio Idima
5. Lokidor Lokaimoe
6. Lomilo Lokweei

Emoru Hoole
1. Joseph Lokinei
2. Hoojo Lokitibo
3. Loitelei Lomoono
4. Lokeru Lopirabok
5. Natukoi Lokeny
6. Nakiritia Peta
7. Ikudo Lotogo
8. Lomongin Nakiokol
9. Lokuuda Lokitelo
10. Loomwa Lootuk
11. Lokwang Lopuyo

Kalobeleny
1. Lopir Lotiira
2. Lotitibo Lotukoi Peter
3. Natingule Iwalio
4. Lopir Lokeeru

Nanyangachor
1. Lokinei Acheulungimoe Abongun
2. Lotogo Lokii (Nasuatkou)
3. Lootuk Loteam
4. Chumangor Lochebor
5. Lomachara Dalabok
6. Lobeyo Lokwaar
7. Lokuwa Eethe
8. Lopuke Iwalio
9. Merikol Lodukore
10. Lokoim Lodukio
11. Lotiirae Lopukei
12. Ngiro Lowangor
Namorupus Area
1. Lepondo Lopuan Lolerio
2. Najie Buyakori Adome
3. Adupa Lochilangiro
4. Koriye Lotubae
5. Lomong Lokwar
6. Lobor Kaadong
7. Lookora Lopeto
8. Lopur Lotom
9. Lotiirae

Namolokonyit Area
1. Lonok Loberetemoe
2. Nalepio Napok

Lonyang’Kapel Area (Kauto)
1. Loarakileng Lokeno
2. Alepiet Looyamoe
3. Lokwaar Lokeno
4. Lookora Iwalio
5. Loido Lomosingo
6. Nakour Lokitibo
7. Naajo Rikamoe
8. Lokorio Lopir
9. Lokirita Lokoribok
10. Abwangar Ngaari

Lotimor
1. Nangoomo Erupe
2. Baala
3. Nakuwa
4. Lotoolo
5. Apamana Lolukol
6. Lochauni Lobuin
7. Loodung Nwoos
8. Kideuwa Lotikaale
9. Erupe Nwoos
10. Timan Meyen

The Kibish Group promised to contact their elders and come with a comprehensive list of elders selected for the Peace Committees.