

Karamojang



REGION

North Eastern Uganda

DISTRICTS

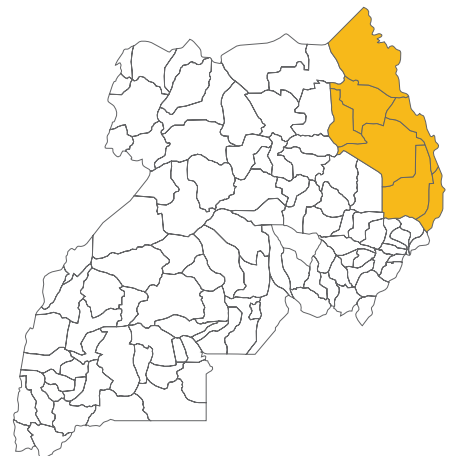
Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Karenga, Kotido, Moroto, Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit, Napak

POPULATION

1,496,117

LANGUAGE

Ngakarimojong





EBC and local pastors in Karamoja gathered to discuss the overall program

SNAPSHOT

160

Pastors & Churches
Registered

5K*

Bibles Planned
for Distribution

160

Audio Bible Listening
Groups Planned

4-6*

Gospel Films /
Month Planned

*These are estimates and may
change based on needs as the
program develops

PROJECT SUMMARY

Karamoja is home to more than 1.49 million people across nine districts in Uganda's far northeast, and it is the poorest, least evangelized region in the country. The Karimojong are listed among the unreached peoples of the world, with roughly **2 percent evangelical**, and literacy across the region runs as low as 12 to 21 percent. Pastors preach without formal training, churches meet under trees or in the open, and Bibles in Ngakarimojong, the region's primary language, are scarce.

Despite these obstacles, in a district by district assessment completed in June 2026, 207 pastors and church leaders across five districts, Napak, Naruk, Amudat, Moroto, and Nakapiripirit, asked EveryBibleCounts to bring pastoral training to the region. 160 of them met the literacy requirement and are now registered, representing 160 churches. Training begins September 7, 2026, with a first cohort of 160, a number the field team set deliberately to ensure proper care and safety given the region's poverty, distances, and logistical demands.

This is EveryBibleCounts' third district in Uganda, following Buyende and Serere, and its first true frontier location. Karamoja does not operate on the same logistics, timeline, or risk profile as our established districts, and this profile is written to give a full and honest picture of what that means. To our knowledge, it is also the first training at this depth, this length, and delivered fully in the heart language, ever offered to Karamoja's local church leaders.



Forgotten by
the world.
Remembered
by God.

JAMES KIM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EBC

BACKGROUND

Karamoja sits in Uganda's far northeast corner, home to more than 1.49 million people across nine districts (UBOS, 2024). It is Uganda's poorest region, with poverty at 65.7 percent, more than three times the national average (UBOS/UNDP). During the 2025 lean season, 45 percent of the population, roughly 600,000 people, faced Crisis level hunger or worse, IPC Phase 3 or above, with thousands already in Phase 4, Emergency (IPC, 2024 2025).

For a century, colonial administrators and later Ugandan governments have referred to the region's poverty and conflict as the Karamoja problem, a label that frames generations of neglect and exclusion as backwardness rather than history. Uganda's army has carried out repeated forced disarmament campaigns since the 2000s, and human rights monitors, including Human Rights Watch, have documented torture, extrajudicial killings, and indiscriminate detentions carried out in the name of pacifying the region. In March 2022, suspected cattle rustlers killed three government geologists and two soldiers near Moroto. The army's response included aerial bombardment, and local leaders alleged hundreds of deaths, a toll the military disputed. Cattle raiding and revenge killing still move in cycles here. The government has since worked to disarm the region and has granted EveryBibleCounts permission to operate, and we report our team's movements and personnel for everyone's safety.

Religiously, the Karimojong are listed among the unreached peoples of the world, with roughly 2 percent evangelical (Joshua Project). Literacy runs as low as 12 to 21 percent, well below Uganda's national rate of about 70 percent. Most pastors have no formal theological training and preach without ever having held a Bible they could read for themselves. Churches, where they exist at all, meet under trees. Traditional pastoralist beliefs, tied closely to cattle and ancestral practice, remain influential, and where Scripture is absent, that space is often filled with fear based teaching or a false gospel promising protection or provision apart from Christ.

Bibles in Ngakarimojong are scarce, and until now, no comprehensive pastoral training curriculum has existed in the language. Pokot is also spoken in some communities.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics, National Population and Housing Census, 2024.

UNDP and UBOS, Uganda Poverty Assessment, 2019 to 2020.

IPC, Uganda Karamoja Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, 2024 to 2025, ipcinfo.org.

Joshua Project, Karimojong of Uganda people group profile, joshuaproject.net.

Human Rights Watch, "Get the Gun!" Human Rights Violations by Uganda's National Army in Law Enforcement Operations in Karamoja Region, 2007, hrw.org.

Journal of African History, Cambridge University Press, "Natives Around the Township, State Spaces and the Struggle for Karamoja's Future, 1950 to 1966," 2024.

Daily Monitor, "Three geologists, two UPDF soldiers killed by suspected rustlers in Moroto," March 2022, monitor.co.ug.

Pulitzer Center, "The Return of Cattle Raiders, Uganda's Parched Borderlands Face a Renewed Security Crisis," pulitzercenter.org.



Teach us the truth
and train us to
do the work ourselves

LOCAL PASTOR,
KARAMOJA

WHAT WE FOUND

In June 2026, our team spent days assessing the region district by district, sitting with regional pastor leaders. In Pupu Village, where there is no church, no latrine, and no Scripture, 37 people gave their lives to Christ in a single evening. At Loputuk Baptist Church, a congregation of three faithful leaders meets with no building and no roof but the sky. These pastors do not want a photograph. They do not want to be treated like a tourist stop, or pitied for their poverty. They have been visited before, promised things before, and left behind before. What they asked for instead was simple: teach us the truth, and train us to do the work ourselves.

STRATEGY AND PARTNERS

EveryBibleCounts is extending its proven Scripture Stewardship Model: Shepherd the Word, Send the Word, and Sound the Word, into Karamoja as its own district, alongside Buyende and Serere.

SHEPHERD THE WORD

An 11-month, systematic pastor training delivered fully in Ngakarimojong. Our full curriculum, more than 700 pages and already proven across two districts, is being translated into the heart language by a translator who was already there. He met our team on our very first visit to the region, and his own resume includes translation work for Jesus Film and Audio Bibles, the very tools EveryBibleCounts deploys through Sound the Word. He is Karimojong himself, within the tribe, and already carries the trust of his own people, a dependability no outside translator could offer.

SEND THE WORD

This same conviction shapes how Scripture reaches trained pastors and their households, so the Word remains long after our team leaves. Because literacy varies so widely across the region, we match the format to the person. Printed Bibles go to those who read. Audio Bibles go to those who hear best. Study Bibles go to the leaders equipped to dig deeper. No one leaves empty handed, and no one receives a tool they cannot use.

SOUND THE WORD

More than 160 Audio Bible Listening Groups are planned across the region, with two Jesus Film teams deployed 4-6X per month to villages that have never heard the gospel told clearly in their own language.

We are not arriving as strangers. Pastor Joshua Oriide, a church planter from Teso already laboring in the region, opened the door and is hosting our work at his own church. Regional pastor leaders walked with our assessment team from village to village. The local government has granted permission to operate, and we maintain ongoing communication with regional authorities regarding our team's movements.

Karamoja fits within EveryBibleCounts' three year proof of concept model. 2026 is the year we prove Buyende and Serere can teach their own people and that Serere can send trained leaders to a new location. Karamoja is that new location, and its entry moves our 2027 goal, breaking into a frontier translation

WHAT IT WILL TAKE

Karamoja does not run on the same logistics as Buyende or Serere, and understanding that difference matters for anyone evaluating this project.

- Pastors travel long distances, in some cases four to six hours one way over rough terrain, so monthly truck transport is required to bring them safely to training and home again.
- Local food supply cannot meet demand in the hardest hit districts, so food must be sourced and transported from outside the region.
- Cold mountain nights mean pastors who stay overnight require real bedding, not a mat on the ground.
- Training sites like Moroto currently lack basic sanitation, so latrine construction is a first step rather than an afterthought.
- This region carries an active security history, so our team coordinates with regional government and security authorities and reports personnel movements as standard practice, not an exception.

None of this is overhead in the ordinary sense of the term. It is the baseline cost of operating faithfully in the hardest ground EveryBibleCounts has entered.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND RISKS

Every project profile should show what makes a plan work and what could make it fail. Karamoja carries real advantages that other frontier attempts do not have, and it carries real risks that our other districts do not. Both deserve a clear look before anyone commits further, us included.

STRENGTHS

- Hosted by an established local partner, Pastor Joshua Oriide, already laboring and planting churches in the region, avoiding foreign dependence from day one.
- A curriculum translator already inside EveryBibleCounts' own network, previously trusted with work for Jesus Film and Audio Bibles, the very tools EveryBibleCounts deploys through Sound the Word. He is Karimojong himself, within the tribe, and already carries the community's trust, a dependability no outside translator could match.
- Explicit, self initiated demand. 207 pastors and leaders across five districts asked to be trained, rather than the reverse.
- A proven, already validated 11 month training model transferring directly from Buyende and Serere, rather than an untested program.
- Government permission granted, with an established practice of reporting team movements for safety and transparency.

RISKS

- Active security history. Cattle raiding, past disarmament violence, and unresolved tension in the region could affect travel, timing, or team safety.
- Severe poverty and hunger, 65.7 percent and 45 percent respectively, could affect pastors' ability to attend consistently without direct provision of food and transport.
- Low literacy, 12 to 21 percent, may limit the pace of Scripture engagement relative to Buyende and Serere.
- Curriculum translation into Ngakarimojong is still in progress and must be completed on schedule for the September 7 launch.
- Harsh climate, including cold nights and long dry seasons, adds real cost and risk to logistics that our other districts do not carry.
- Higher per pastor cost relative to Buyende and Serere means this project depends more heavily on continued external funding, particularly in year one.
- Health risks are real and significant. Karamoja carries one of the highest malaria burdens in Uganda, with prevalence among children under five measured at 34 percent in 2019, nearly four times the national rate, alongside continued risk of waterborne illness.
- Dignity and trust are fragile. Pastors here have explicitly said they do not want to be treated as objects of pity or tourism, and a misstep in how this project is presented or run could undo hard won trust.



We will stand in the fire with them until they come out like gold.

PASTOR ANDREW
COUNTRY DIRECTOR, EBC

THE INVITATION

Karamoja is ready. 160 pastors are waiting, leading 160 churches that have never had a teacher trained in the Word. We cannot do everything for them, but we can shepherd them with the truth, send them the Scripture in their own language, and sound the gospel into villages that have never heard it clearly. EveryBibleCounts is not bringing a new gospel to Karamoja. We are putting the gospel back in the pulpit, back in the manyatta, and back in the hands of the men God has already placed there.