

I. HIGHLIGHTS

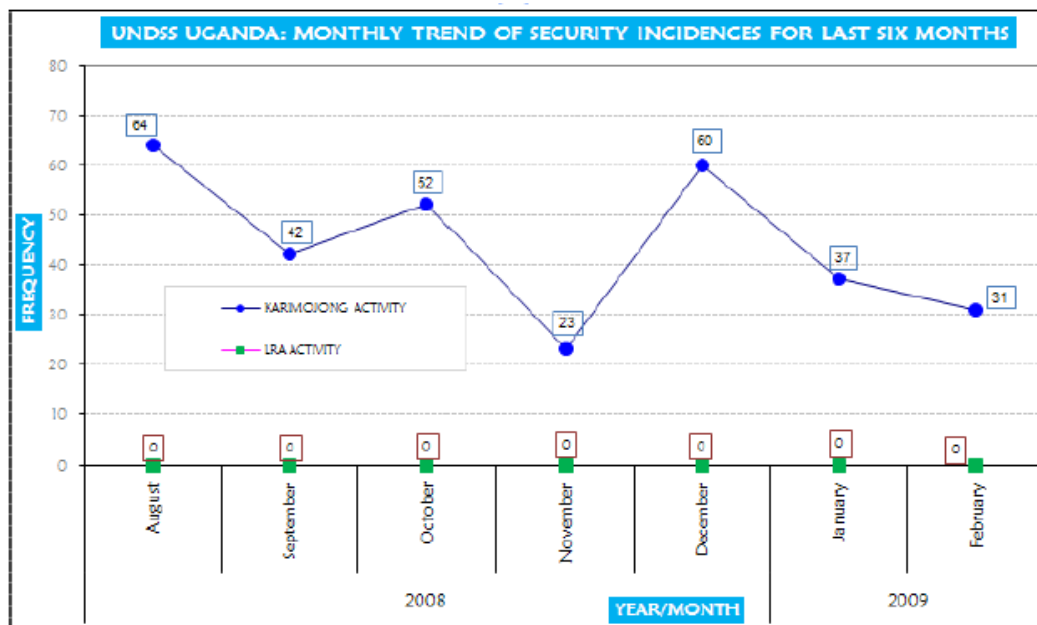
- **LESS THAN 30% OF IDPs REMAIN IN CAMPS ACROSS NORTHERN UGANDA AS OF FEBRUARY 2009**
- **FIRST CASE OF POLIO IN UGANDA IN MORE THAN 12 YEARS CONFIRMED IN AMURU DISTRICT**
- **JOINT OPERATIONS AGAINST LRA IN DR CONGO CONTINUE; UPDF HAS RESCUED 300 ABDUCTEES**

II. SECURITY AND ACCESS

SECURITY

A calm security situation prevailed in northern Uganda during the reporting period, notwithstanding anecdotal accounts of increased anxiety among the civilian population on the possible repercussions on the sub-region of the joint military operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Criminal activities continue to be of concern in the sub-region, but fewer incidents were recorded during the month. In Gulu District, tensions flared between two clans following the murder by a Special Police Constable (SPC) of a colleague at a nightclub. In revenge, members of the deceased's clan set 160 huts ablaze at Acet camp.

According to the UN Department of Security and Safety (DSS) reports, the security situation in Karamoja remained similar to the previous month, with slightly fewer security incidents reported during February than January. At least 14 deaths from eight incidents were reported.



Source: UNDSS

Access

In Karamoja, about 2,000 households displaced in Abim District over the last fourteen years due to insecurity, food shortage, resettlement programmes or floods are gradually returning to their villages of origin or moving to new locations, but are finding that many of these new sites have no access roads.

III. POPULATION MOVEMENT

Approximately 3,000 former squatters in Nakapiripirit District have settled in Okudud in Namalu sub-county on land de-gazetted by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). This area is, however, prone to flooding in the rainy season, and is devoid of a safe water source, primary school, health centre, and security infrastructure. In Abim District, some 2,000 households are slowly returning from displacement at the foot hills to home villages and sites in Nyakwae and Abim sub-counties, many of which have no roads and basic social services. In Kotido District, the authorities are finalising plans to resettle 1,500 households in Kapeta parish of Kacheri sub-county, where the land is productive enough to support agriculture, before April 2009.

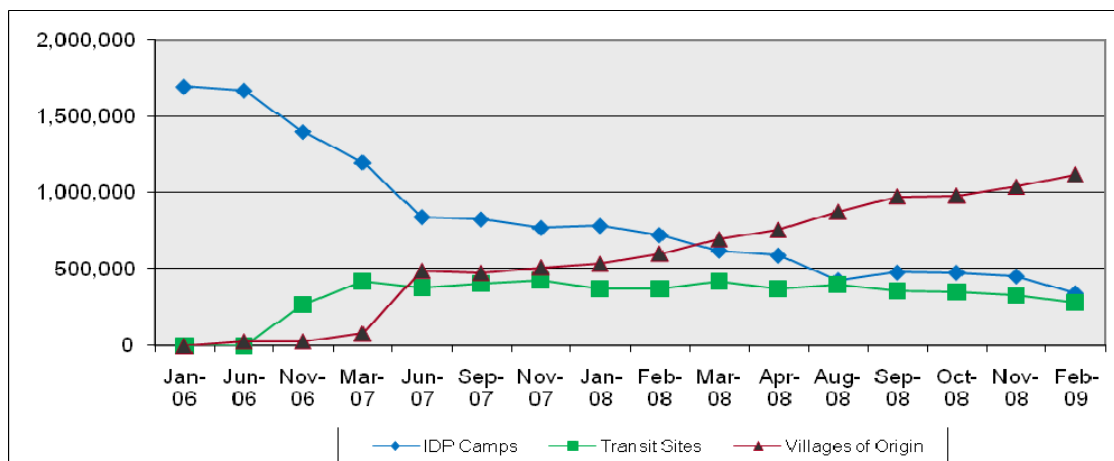
Meanwhile, more than 29 women and 41 children from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who have been living with UPDF soldiers in Karamoja since October 2008 were repatriated during the reporting period.

The newly-released figures on population movement in northern Uganda show that the return is proceeding across the Acholi region, with only 30% of original IDPs remaining in camps as of February 2009. This represents a 9%

decreased since November 2008. According to the new figures, some 79,000 additional Acholis returned to their villages of origin in the three months since 1 December 2008, either from the IDP camps or from transit sites.

Region	District	Original camp population (end 2005)	Estimated camp population	% of original camp population	Population in transit sites	% of original camp population	Population in villages of origin	% of original camp population
Acholi	Amuru	204,000	88,000	43%	70,000	34%	46,000	23%
	Gulu	257,000	61,000	24%	20,000	8%	176,000	68%
	Kitgum	310,000	102,000	33%	62,000	20%	154,000	50%
	Pader	339,000	78,000	23%	128,000	38%	162,000	48%
	Acholi Total	1,110,000	329,000	30%	280,000	25%	538,000	48%
Teso	Amuria	72,000	9,000	13%	3,000	4%	60,000	83%
	Katakwi	71,000	7,000	10%	-	-	55,000	77%
	Teso Total	143,000	16,000	11%	3,000	2%	115,000	80%
Grand Total¹		1,253,000	345,000	28%	283,000	23%	653,000	52%

Over time, the following trends in population movement in northern Uganda can be seen. (The chart below includes former IDPs in Lango, all of whom had returned to villages of origin by end March 2008, when the displacement was determined to have come to an end by the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in Lira. Since there is no further movement, the Lango figures are no longer included in the above matrix.)



IV. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

EDUCATION

During the month, a campaign to encourage parents to provide packed lunch for pupils was launched in Amuru District, in line with the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy. The National Packed Lunch campaign aims to reduce short-term hunger, enhance pupils' concentration in the classroom and, consequently, improve their academic performance over the next three years. But other critical challenges in the sector will require attention as well, not least the high drop-out and absentee rates. According to the District Education Department, 41% of all enrolled Primary One (P1) pupils in 2008 were unable to make it to Primary Two (P2), while 31% of all pupils usually drop out before reaching Primary Six (P6). Moreover, an estimated 20% of school-aged children are not in school, nor are about four fifths of the required 848 teachers in the district's government-aided schools. In Pader, an ongoing recruitment exercise is expected to fill 185 positions, but the district's ceiling of 1,810 teachers for 218 primary schools is insufficient to raise the teacher-to-school ratio to national standards.

Infrastructure constraints are largely to blame for the high pupil truancy rate and teacher absenteeism, particularly in returned schools. Nevertheless, the return process continues steadily across the Acholi sub-region. Only 15 primary schools in Amuru and 2 in Gulu are yet to relocate to their original sites. The Education Department in Gulu has reported that the district has been allocated about \$126,000 from the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) effective next fiscal year (July 2009) to facilitate return. But, the department has also indicated that it requires some \$20 million over a five year period to address the gap in teachers' accommodation, given that only one in 25 teachers in the district is currently accommodated within the schools. In Pader, the number of schools with non-existent or insufficient classroom facilities has decreased from 80 in 2008 to 40 at present, but 78 have no safe water sources.

¹ UNHCR notes that the figures for each district and location are not exact, but show trends over time. In some cases, district totals do not add up to 100% due primarily to inter-district movements, which are difficult to track.

In north Karamoja, high enrolment statistics in primary schools are countered by a low pupil retention rate. As an example, figures from Kotido District during 2008 indicated that while 7,113 pupils were enrolled in P1, only 1,524 were in P3 and less than 500 were attending P7. The district intends to establish a sector working group specifically to review this issue. Additionally, the Ministry of Education with support from partners is conducting a headcount of teachers and pupils in all schools receiving food aid in order to gain a better understanding of the factors affecting enrolment and retention.

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

In Pader, the quarantine on animals and the ban on animal slaughter in Agago County due to the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) have not been lifted, but the District Veterinary Office is planning an assessment of the situation to inform recommendations on the way forward. The quarantine has affected restocking programs not only in Pader, but also in neighbouring Kitgum, where surveillance has revealed no cases of the disease. Kitgum completed livestock vaccination against FMD in October 2008, and will soon start vaccination against *Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR)*. In Karamoja, a total of 717,684 goats and sheep had been inoculated against PPR, while vaccination of 770,000 cattle against Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia (CBPP) was ongoing during the reporting period. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF) has also indicated it now has in stock vaccines for Newcastle Disease in stock and asked districts in the region to collect.

Some 15,000 households in Gulu are expected to benefit from a Voucher for Work programme, by exchanging their labour for agricultural input. The programme targets economically active low-income small farmers in Bobi, Lakwana, Lalogi, Odek, Ongako, and Paicho sub-counties.

The Food Security and Agricultural Livelihoods (FSAL) Cluster will produce an overview report and guiding principles on seed and livestock fairs based on the discussions at two workshops held in Lira and Moroto.

In Karamoja, general food distributions (GFD) under the largest Emergency Operation (EmOp) ever conducted in the region began within limited locations in Abim, Kaabong and Kotido. Distributions to schools and health centres continued regularly. The EmOp aims to provide food rations to more than 80 percent of the region's population over the next nine months.

GOVERNANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVELIHOODS (GIL)

In Gulu and Amuru, funds for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) worth about \$255,000 have been released but implementation of the programme has been delayed pending completion of the vetting process. Under the programme, community projects will be implemented in eight sub-counties (Awach, Bobi, Bungatira and Lalogi in Gulu, and Atiak, Koch Goma, Purongo and Pabbo in Amuru).

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND HIV/AIDS

A polio outbreak has been confirmed in Amuru District following testing of a sample from a 16-month old child from Awer IDP camp (Kilak County). Initial results from two other children from Labongogali camp, also in Kilak, returned positive for the same strain - the Wild Polio virus Type 1. Given that Uganda had been polio-free since 1996, health actors suspect that the virus originated in neighbouring South Sudan or eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo where outbreaks of the disease were reported last year. In both Gulu and Amuru, district authorities have intensified hygiene promotion and sanitation campaigns in all sub-counties, while surveillance has been heightened at the border with Sudan and in Kitgum and Pader, where authorities are on high alert. The Ministry of Health plans a mass vaccination campaign in 25 at-risk districts in March.

Meanwhile, the Hepatitis E outbreak remains uncontained as new cases continue to be registered. During the month, 178 cases and four deaths were recorded in Kitgum District, raising the cumulative total to 9,570 cases and 148 deaths since the onset of the epidemic in October 2007. An average of three cases is reported each week in Pader District, where 126 cases and seven deaths have been registered since May 2008. Particularly in Kitgum, there are concerns that the cases recorded may not be reflective of the true extent of the epidemic as some patients do not report to health facilities. Additionally, active case search by Village Health Teams (VHTs) has reportedly weakened.

The third round of Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) against mosquitoes has been completed in Kitgum, achieving coverage of 90 per cent. Kitgum is classified as a malaria high burden district.

In Karamoja, health partners have provided funding to Abim, Kaabong and Kotido districts to support supervision of Village Health Teams (VHTs) by health centre workers. Renovation of five health centres – Lorengechora (Moroto), Nyakwae (Abim), Karenga (Kaabong), Lolachat (Nakapiripirit), and Panyagara (Kotido) – is ongoing, while repair of the water system at Moroto Hospital has commenced.

PROTECTION

Due to a number of factors, including poor infrastructure in areas of return and growing anxiety about the possible impact of the ongoing military operations against the LRA on security in northern Uganda, many IDPs and those that had already left the camps are reluctant to have their huts demolished in the ongoing camp phase-out and cleaning exercise. Hut demolitions have met with resistance in Amuru and Kitgum districts. In Amuru, the exercise is currently on hold in Anaka sub-county at the request of the local authorities, but resistance has also been observed in Anaka and Purongo camps. In Kitgum, a total of 115 huts were demolished in camp cleaning exercises in Mucwini, Paloga and Labuje camps during the month, but returnees in Agoro camp protested the planned roll out of the exercise to their area.

During the reporting period, 197 households in Gulu District were affected by fires that destroyed 307 huts in Parabongo camp. The affected households have since been provided with plastic sheeting, saucepans, plates, cups and jerrycans. Fires also destroyed a total of 14 huts in the sub-counties of Paimol, Wol and Lukole in Pader District during the month.

Also in Pader, 44 huts in Pader Town Council were forcibly demolished by the local authority to clear the way for opening up of roads and sanitation lines, leaving the occupants homeless. In response, the Pader Camp Phase-Out Working Group successfully advocated for a halt to the evictions until the protection concerns of the affected population have been integrated into the exercise. A joint assessment involving the Working Group and Pader Town Council will be undertaken in March to map the way forward. Evictions were also reported in Kitgum, where residents of Paloga camp were asked by the sub-county authorities to leave, since a secondary school had been planned for the area. The residents were apparently given only two weeks to vacate the land, despite the eviction notice not set to expire for another two months. Consequently, a number of households left the camp to return to villages of origin in which they had not had time to erect proper shelters. Following intervention from the district and cluster partners, the sub-county chairman has pledged to mobilise the community to assist the affected households, particularly the most vulnerable, with temporary accommodation.

In Karamoja, an assessment by the Moroto District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) found that 21 of a group of Karimojong who had attempted to settle in an area between Moroto and Katakwi districts had been assaulted and that 30 huts belonging to the migrants had been torched.

Human Rights and Rule of Law: Implementation of a community service order has begun in Pader District as part of efforts to decongest Patongo Prison and expedite the administration of justice. The order, issued by the Grade One Magistrate, affects 50 prisoners convicted of lesser offences like theft, common assault and public affray. As of the reporting period, the population of Patongo Prison had fallen from 202 inmates to 136.

Mine Action: During the reporting period, several unexploded ordinances (UXOs) including 34 mortars, 21 rockets and 17 grenades were destroyed by the Uganda Mine Action Team in Gulu and Amuru. However, the sub-cluster has highlighted a reduction in mine action activities by some agencies due either to the conclusion of their programmes or the lack of funds.

Child Protection: In Gulu, 55 street children aged between 11 and 16 years old were registered in February, but only two were successfully re-united with their families. Worryingly, some of those registered had returned to the streets despite having been previously reunited.

The sub-cluster in Kitgum is developing an action plan to educate children and communities on protection against sexual abuse, violence and early marriage by working through children's clubs.

In Karamoja, efforts to improve child survival and development indicators have involved a series of meetings and preparations to sign the *First Call for Children*, inspired by the world declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. A children's special session has been scheduled for the first week of March in Moroto Municipality, while social mobilisation around the Accelerated Child Survival and Development indicators is ongoing.

Gender Based Violence: In Gulu, the GBV Working Group plans to increase the percentage of sub-counties with functioning GBV structures from the current 40% to 60% by the end of 2009. However, access by survivors to Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) services continues to be constrained by lack of emergency contraception and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits in most Health Centres III. In Karamoja, concern has been expressed at the absence of GBV prevention and response organisations, particularly in the three northern districts of the region.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Cluster members in northern Uganda have focused on efforts to promote hygiene and sanitation in response to the Hepatitis E and polio outbreaks, including through chlorination of water, disinfection of water tanks, distribution of hand washing facilities, construction or rehabilitation of boreholes and rain harvesting tanks, re-training of VHTs, water source committees and pump mechanics. Sanitation remains the biggest challenge, given the extremely low latrine coverage in the region. In Kitgum District, for instance, an assessment conducted in January 2009 found that coverage had in fact fallen to 24% from 34% in November 2008, a situation attributable in part to the destruction or filling up of latrines in some IDP camps.

Partners in Karamoja rehabilitated 18 boreholes and erected water harvesting tanks, mainly in the Pokot and Pian areas of Nakapiripirit District, constructed three production wells to improve the water system in Moroto Municipality.

V. SPECIAL FOCUS ISSUES

JOINT OPERATIONS AGAINST THE LRA

Operation Lightning Thunder continues in the Garamba area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo following a third extension to the deadline for withdrawal of Ugandan troops from Congolese territory. The joint Ugandan-South Sudanese-Congolese military operation against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), launched on 14 December 2008 and initially expected to last only one month was first extended until the first week of February 2009. However, following a request from the Ugandan Government, the pull-out date was later pushed to the end of February, and subsequently re-extended to the end of March. According to media reports quoting Ugandan Government sources, the operation has killed at least 90 LRA fighters – including seven commanders – and rescued 300 mostly Congolese abductees, since it was launched. Additionally, press reports during the month indicated that the LRA's deputy

commander, Okot Odhiambo, was negotiating a surrender, but that has not transpired to date. The group's leader, Joseph Kony, remains at large.

CONGOLESE REFUGEES IN UGANDA

As at the end of February, more than 48,000 refugees fleeing tensions in North Kivu province in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo had arrived in Uganda since August 2008. The number of new arrivals at registration points has, however, slowed over the past month. With the relocation of most refugees at the Matanda and Nyakabande Transit Centres nearing completion, the Government announced that the transit centres would be closed at the end of the month. A total of 8,180 refugees have been relocated from the two transit centres since August 2008: 5,928 to Kyangwali and 2,252 to Nakivale. Also during the month, UNHCR received a grant of some US\$ 1.2 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help respond to urgent needs for the refugee influx. More information on refugee response is available in UNHCR's Situation Reports; the most recent covers the period 21 February to 6 March. Please contact Vanessa Akello (akellov@unhcr.org) to receive the reports.

VI. FUNDING

As of the end of February, funding for the US\$ 225 million Consolidated Appeal for Uganda in 2009 was at only US\$ 2.9 million, or 1% of requested funds.

Funding of the US\$ 374 million appeal for 2008 remains US\$ 267 million, or 72% of the total funds required.

VII. THE MONTH AHEAD

MONTHLY CLUSTER MEETING SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS cluster 14.30 at WHO	GBV sub-cluster 10.00 at UNFPA	Child Protection sub-cluster 10.30 at UNICEF	Education cluster* 9.00 at UNICEF	
		Food Security and Agricultural Livelihoods 14.30 at FAO		Water, Sanitation and Hygiene cluster 14.00 at UNICEF	
Week 2	Heads of Cluster 11.15 at OCHA		IASC in Uganda 10.00 at OCHA		
Week 3	Protection Cluster 14.30 at UNHCR				
Week 4			Contact Group** 14.30 at OCHA		

* Education Cluster will meet on a bi-monthly basis in 2009: in January, March, May, July, September and November

** Contact Group will meet on a monthly basis in 2009, on the last Wednesday of each month.

VIII. CONTACTS

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