

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- **GULU DURABLE SOLUTIONS TASK FORCE COMPLETES ASSESSMENT IN LALOGI SUB-COUNTY**
- **KARAMOJA LIVESTOCK THREATENED BY DISEASE: 5 PER CENT OF ALL SMALL ANIMALS LOST TO GOAT PLAGUE; 1.2 MILLION CATTLE AT RISK OF TICKBORNE DISEASES**
- **MORE THAN 100 CHILDREN, 80 PER CENT OF KARIMOJONG ORIGIN, REMOVED FROM STREETS OF KAMPALA**
- **HEPATITIS E VIRUS STILL UNCONTAINED IN KITGUM DISTRICT; 81 PER CENT OF FATAL CASES OCCURRING AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN**

II. SECURITY AND ACCESS

SECURITY

The security situation in **northern Uganda** continued to be stable during the reporting period, with no reports of activity by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the region. The greatest threat to humanitarian personnel in northern Uganda remains incidents of crime, including house and shop break-ins and other robberies.

However, alleged LRA activity was reported outside of Uganda, including reported movement of LRA forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). Unconfirmed press reports indicate that alleged LRA forces attacked and looted villages and abducted several hundred civilians.

In **Karamoja**, the situation remained generally insecure, with up to 77 security-related incidents, some unconfirmed, reported by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and other reliable sources. At least 23 aggressive actions by illegally-armed Karimojong were reported, in several cases into neighbouring districts of Kitgum and Pader. However, there have been no ambushes reported in the sub-region since February. Meanwhile, 10 cordon-and-search operations were conducted during the reporting period, resulting in the recovery of 10 guns according to UNDSS.

ACCESS

The stable security situation in **northern Uganda** has improved the population's access to agricultural land for cultivation with households now accessing an average of two to four acres. However, the current rains in the sub-region have rendered some roads nearly impassable, hindering the movement of humanitarian agencies to IDP camps and return areas. For example, whereas the trip from Gulu to Amuru district headquarters normally takes approximately one hour during the dry season, it currently takes almost two hours.

In **Pader District**, United Nations movements along the eastern border with the Karamoja sub-region were temporarily restricted from 1 to 17 April, with armed escorts declared necessary due to aggressive activities by illegally-armed Karimojong. That restriction has now been lifted, except for food convoys, although UNDSS recommends staff movements continue in two-car convoys or in vehicles equipped with satellite phones through May 2008. Meanwhile, the Italian non-governmental organization (NGO) CESVI, which temporarily suspended its operations in Laita and Lomoi parishes of Paimol sub-county at the end of March, resumed full operations in the third week of April.

While humanitarian access in **Karamoja** is largely unhindered, pockets of instability and continuing UPDF disarmament operations require organisations to conduct daily security reviews in preparation for movement to the field. United Nations agencies are required to use one armed escort for inter-district travel throughout the majority of the region and two escorts on the Kotido to Kaabong road. In Kaabong district, Loyoro sub-county remains the only "no go" area for United Nations agencies as designated in October 2007. Despite the security precautions place on United Nations movements, some national and international NGOs continue to operate safely in the region independent of armed escorts.

III. POPULATION MOVEMENT

The Durable Solutions Task Force, set up to oversee the implementation of the **pilot project in Lalogi sub-county** of Gulu District has concluded the integrated assessment and has been presenting its preliminary findings to stakeholders, including local government representatives (parish chiefs, LCs, sub-county authorities), United Nations agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross. Among the critical gaps identified by the assessment as an obstacle to return was the lack of basic services – particularly safe water, schools, health centres – and livelihood opportunities, as well as inadequate infrastructure and protection for returning communities. While most local sub-county institutions are in

place, their capacity remains inadequate to address the challenges of coordination and service delivery to the population. The pilot project is expected to be replicated in other sub-counties of Gulu and the other districts of Acholi and Teso sub-regions.

Region	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	1,102,438	568,058	52%	402,315	36%	132,065	12%
Lango	466,103	-	-	-	-	466,103	100%
Teso	142,951	60,000	42%	18,000	13%	100,000	70%
Total	1,711,492	623,058	37%	420,315	25%	698,168	41%

Source: IASC Working Group, March 2008.

Generally, there is an increasing trend of IDP movements out of camps to transit sites and villages of origin across **northern Uganda**. In Pader district, for instance, IDP return movements to villages of origin increased noticeably in the first quarter of 2008, particularly in the southern part of the district. However, population movement in the eastern part of the district continues to be negatively impacted by the activities of illegally armed Karimojong and lack of social service infrastructure – a common concern throughout the Acholi and Teso sub-regions. Overall, an estimated 237,920 IDPs moved out of the main camps in Pader district during the month of March, with some 56 per cent moving to 165 transit sites, while 14 per cent moved to villages of origin. About 30 per cent of IDPs remain in camps in the district.

Population movement out of camps appears to have picked up pace in the first quarter in Katakwi and Amuria districts in the Teso sub-region, with nearly half of the previous 110,000 IDPs now recorded as being in transit or villages of return. As a result, an initial five camps have been identified for phase-out in the two districts.

In **Karamoja**, meanwhile, population movement trends have proved difficult to ascertain fully for reasons including the pastoral nature of the communities, particularly in the northern part of the region. Kraal communities have traditionally remained mobile in search of water and pasture for the cattle, while the ongoing disarmament exercise is reportedly causing some displacement from manyattas. In Abim, district officials report that some populations that had moved to more secure areas in years past are now returning to areas of origin as the district has recorded lower levels of insecurity. Population movements into fertile areas of Moroto and Nakapirpirit district formerly vacated due to insecurity are also occurring.

IV. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

Amuru District, together with CCCM and Return and Reintegration actors, is planning a three-day meeting on land issues, including forced evictions, which is scheduled for mid-May, as well as a stakeholder meeting on durable solutions¹, camp phase-out and the Peace, Reconstruction and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda for June 2008.

In Kitgum, the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) has endorsed a recommendation to **declare Lamwo County free for the voluntary return of IDPs**. The DDMC also established a Camp Phase-out Technical Committee, tasked with developing a procedure for how camp phase-out will be conducted and assessment tools. A district-wide assessment of the return process and access to social services was also agreed. With support from CCCM partners and the district, local authorities and the communities of Amida and Labuje camps will pilot a camp phase out project, including activities such as hut demolition and levelling, filling in used pit latrines and levelling garbage heaps.

In Pader, an inter-agency assessment of 10 camps has been planned in order to determine camps to be considered for phase-out / closure. Three camps in Agago and three in Aruu counties were assessed on 16 April, while the remaining camp assessments will be completed by mid-May 2008. The assessment includes camps with both high and low rates of return.

In Teso, meanwhile, four villages of return have been identified for a model village programme that will the aim to implement an integrated programme of support for returnee livelihoods that can be copied in other villages. As above, five camps have initially been identified for phase-out.

¹ In keeping with the international principles and the National IDP Policy, three durable solutions are available for IDPs: 1) return to village of origin; 2) integration and settlement in the place of displacement (i.e. transformation of the camps into viable communities); 3) resettlement and integration in other parts of the country (i.e. in transit sites). The national Protection Cluster and Office of the Prime Minister are jointly working on guidelines on the durable solutions, which were expected to be finalized and disseminated widely in May 2008.

EDUCATION

Infrastructure challenges continue to negatively impact on access to education across northern Uganda. In Kitgum, for example, the District Education Officer (DEO) notes that classes in 32 primary schools take place under trees. A similar scenario exists in Pader, where 63 primary schools lack classrooms. The situation has been compounded by the onset of the rainy season, which makes it impossible to hold classes under trees. Some classroom tents have been provided – 28 in Kitgum district – but they are not enough to cover needs and are too small to accommodate multiple classes. Additional school rehabilitation is needed, as well as construction of latrines and water facilities, teacher housing and provision of scholastic materials. Eighteen schools will be rehabilitated by the District, with Japanese support. School enrolment and attendance rates remain lower in return areas as parents prefer to leave their children in IDP camps that have better learning facilities.

To increase access to education in the sub-region, the Ministry of Education and Sports, with support from Ireland, has launched a programme to construct 27 new secondary schools. School feeding seems to be having a positive effect on school attendance, including girl child attendance, in the sub-region.

Meanwhile, a special investigation launched by Amuru District in April found that an estimated UGX 18 million (approximately US\$ 11,000) could have been lost during the month due to payments to “**ghost teachers**”. The report noted that a number of teachers were still being maintained on the payroll of primary schools even after they were no longer teaching and/or had taken other positions. Nearly UGX 15 million has been recovered from former teachers.

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS (FSAL)

A dry spell has continued in northern Karamoja, with isolated areas receiving scattered showers. Thus, while some households in parts of Abim, Kotido and Kaabong districts have started to prepare fields for planting, the overall general food security outlook is not as promising. Herders in search of water and pasture for their cattle continue to cross from Kotido into Abim district, despite an informal embargo lodged by local government officials to prevent such movements. Neighbouring districts in the Teso, Lango and Acholi sub-regions also maintain a consensus not to allow Karimojong herders access to land and water in their districts, due to past experiences of insecurity. Other **threats to livestock livelihoods include the continued risk of disease**. The goat and sheep disease *peste de petits ruminants* (PPR) has reportedly killed an estimated 100,000 of the two million small livestock in the region. While partners are in the process of procuring 1,000,000 vaccinations against the disease, twice as many are needed for the targeted population. Meanwhile, the estimated 1.2 million cattle in the region are at serious risk of contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) and tick-borne infections. While the Government had been providing free vaccinations previously, cost-sharing arrangements were introduced in 2005 with cattle owners now expected to contribute UGX 300 per animal for the vaccines. Partners are seeking to procure some 170,000 vaccinations. Moreover, whereas vector spraying to prevent tick-borne diseases is supposed to be conducted every month, districts in northern Karamoja are currently able to provide such services only every six months.

The World Food Programme now estimates that 707,934 people will require general food assistance in Karamoja through September 2008, including 409,585 people who will receive food for four months at 50 per cent of required daily allotment (RDA) and 298,349 people who will receive food for six months at 70 per cent of RDA. Food is also being distributed under food for assets, food for education (FFE) and food for health and nutrition activities. **April 2008 market food prices in Moroto and Nakapiripirit Districts have generally increased over March**, with an increase of 15 per cent in the price of sorghum, 25 per cent for maize and 33 per cent for beans.

Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSA) have been planned for Gulu and Kitgum Districts to determine coverage gaps and assess the food security situation to inform district planning. Additionally, Kitgum District has distributed some 25,000 hoes at 21 locations under the Office of the Prime Minister’s (OPM) Resettlement Programme. Distribution of seeds to 18 sub-counties affected by last year’s floods is also ongoing.

In Pader, an increase in **tsetse flies** has been reported in Agago and Aswa river valleys. The district lacks tsetse traps and urgently needs to link up with neighbouring districts to devise a way forward for vector control. A rapid emergency food security assessment in 11 camps and transit sites where households received a three month ration in March and found that there is likely to be a food accessibility problem due to high food prices in the district, particularly in the short-term availability of food. Of households surveyed, 91 per cent were affected by last year’s floods. However, only 13 per cent of households are employing insurance strategies currently, while only 7 per cent are employing crisis strategies. This indicates that the majority of households still have food acquisition options.

Although the rainy season has begun in most parts of the country, the Teso districts of Amuria and Katakwi continue to experience a **prolonged dry spell** that is compounding the effects of the 2007 floods. More than 60 per cent of the cassava cuttings and seeds distributed by agencies have not been planted due to the lack of rain. The two districts were among the worst affected by last year’s floods, and there is concern that the food security situation will further deteriorate as a result of the dry season. Already there are reports of some households surviving on mangoes as they lack food stocks, while others report having only one meal per day.

GOVERNANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVELIHOODS (GIL)

Pre-implementation of the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) has begun in the Teso sub-region, with district officials from four districts – Amuria, Bukedea, Katakwi and Soroti – undergoing orientation. The local governments are expected to play major roles in the implementation of the QIPs, including through the formulation, approval and monitoring of projects to ensure that they address the development needs of the districts.

Mine Action: Six Mine Action teams, each comprised of 12 individuals and divided into two sub-groups for a total of 12 sub-teams, are now operating in Uganda to clear landmines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO), while two quality control / assessment teams are to be deployed. Two teams are currently deployed in Pader District and two in Gulu. The two teams in Gulu will soon be redeployed to Kitgum, while the other two teams, one of which is currently conducting an assessment in Bundibugyo District in western Uganda, will then be deployed in Gulu.

HEALTH, NUTRITION & HIV/AIDS

The **epidemic of Hepatitis E Virus (HEV) in Kitgum district** remains uncontained, with six sub-counties (Madi Opei, Agoro, Paloga, Padibe East, Padibe West, and Mucwini) now affected. A cumulative total of 1,384 cases have been reported, with 26 deaths. The vast majority of fatal cases – 81 per cent – have been pregnant women. Containment efforts have been hampered in part to the shortage of health workers in rural health facilities. According to the District Health Officer (DHO), a recent recruitment by the Ministry of Health failed to make any significant improvement in the district's health staffing level, currently at 43 per cent.

Meanwhile, the health staffing level in Pader is 33 per cent, with some 53 health units operational in some capacity. The intermittent supply of gas rendered more than half of the district's 32 immunisation centres non-functional for most of April. However, the Child Days started well in the district, with all school children de-wormed before they left for the holidays. Immunisation and de-worming of children under five years of age is ongoing.

In Karamoja, health actors have developed a proposal to enhance and expand nutrition interventions in the region, which has been forwarded to the national cluster. A joint follow-up assessment of Nabwal resettlement camp – the population of which grew tenfold, from 700 to 7,000 from October 2007 to March 2008 – indicated that health services, shelter and access to basic food and non-food items remains inadequate and malnutrition is prevalent.

PROTECTION

Child Protection: The Child Protection Task Force in Moroto district has expressed concern over the March/April operation to remove **children** from the streets of Kampala and their subsequent confinement at Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre. It is estimated that 80 per cent of the more than 100 children taken to Kampiringisa are of Karimojong origin. And while a joint visit to Kampiringisa ascertained that conditions at the Centre had been improved over the last removal, the humanitarian community continues to advocate with the Government to ensure respect for relevant national legislation and policies, including the 2006 Street Children Strategy, in the context of which the humanitarian and human rights community would provide technical support for the family tracing and reunification process and resettlement when carried out with respect for human rights principles including freedom of movement, voluntary and informed return and family unity.

Meanwhile, the Nakapiripirit Community Development Office (CDO) has reported the presence of child protection concerns, including family separation, child neglect and lack of access to health and education services in Lokales, Nabwal, Lorengelup and Karinga resettlement sites.

In Pader District, defilement² is a paramount concern, particularly as some cases are being reported in schools, sometimes involving teachers. A safe and protective school initiative will be developed at the national level and rolled out in the next quarter in each district. In the meantime, child protection actors are linking up with education actors to ensure that basic information on child protection is available in schools and to introduce monitoring and reporting mechanisms that are both confidential and child-friendly.

Gender Based Violence (GBV): Poor funding is generally limiting the GBV response to emergency interventions. In Gulu and Amuru Districts, despite the existence of a comprehensive case management service, the inadequate follow-up mechanisms for the referral of victims to timely and appropriate services remain a problem. Similarly, in Karamoja, the GBV response is impacted by the low presence of partners focusing on such activities in the region. According to the CDO, only six of 24 NGOs / Community Based Organizations (CBOs) meet the required qualifications for registration.

Human Rights/Rule of Law: In Gulu and Amuru, the High Court Session commenced work following a recess in March. It is scheduled to hear 40 cases, 12 of which have been pending for the last eight years. Additionally, a Grade Two Magistrate has been recruited in Gulu, raising the prospect of speedier handling of juvenile cases in the Family and Children's Court.

² The term defilement encompasses early / forced marriage, sexual violence and exploitation and consensual under-age sexual relations.

The chronic congestion and lack of basic facilities at Patongo Prison in Pader continues to be the major protection concern in the district. No significant improvements have taken place at the prison since the last reporting period. While a Grade One Magistrate has been deployed, he will be conducting only one session a month in Patongo due to resource constraints. Nor has the problem of transporting prisoners to attend court sessions been addressed.

An undetermined number of men have been detained during disarmament operations in Karamoja, with reports indicating that some detainees are being held for between a few hours and a couple of months. Ugandan law allows the UPDF to detain armed persons for up to 48 hours before handing them over to police for any formal prosecution.

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

Efforts to increase the availability of and access to safe water in return areas continue across the Acholi sub-region. In Gulu and Amuru, 27 boreholes were drilled during the reporting period: nine in Gulu and 18 in Amuru. An additional 32 boreholes and springs have also been rehabilitated; four rainwater harvesting tanks were constructed at returned primary schools in Gulu; and 20 water and sanitation committees in return areas were formed and trained and 30 water quality surveillances conducted.

In Pader, where 80 per cent of water sources are concentrated in IDP camps, overall water coverage has fallen from 57 per cent to 40 per cent as IDPs move to return areas. Moreover, the **maintenance of motorized boreholds is proving a significant challenge**: most agencies do not have sufficient funding to continue maintenance, nor does the district to which they are seeking to turn them over. Local communities have shown low interests in contributing towards the operation and maintenance of the water sources, expecting that the district or an NGO will repair even minor breakdowns.

As part of the HEV response in Kitgum, cluster members are undertaking bucket chlorination, cleaning campaigns, and distribution of sanitation tool kits and slabs. Although some latrine construction is taking place, coverage is still very low in most camps, and virtually non-existent in many return areas. In addition, a shortage of water storage containers has meant that populations in the affected sub-counties continue to use clay pots, thereby increasing the risk of HEV contamination.

V. SPECIAL FOCUS ISSUES

JUBA PEACE PROCESS

The much-anticipated signing of the Final Agreement to the Juba Peace Process did not occur in April; however, all sides reportedly remain committed to the eventual conclusion of the negotiations process. Originally scheduled for 5 April, the signing ceremony was pushed back to 10 April, and then again to 11 April when LRA Commander Joseph Kony requested additional clarification regarding issues related to accountability and reconciliation and the alternative justice mechanisms to be established in Uganda in lieu of the International Criminal Court, which has standing indictments on Kony and two of his senior leaders. Late on 10 April, the LRA chief negotiator, David Matsanga, announced his resignation; on 11 April the Government delegation returned to Kampala. As of the end of the month, the parties to the process were expected to return to Juba in early May, where Kony was expected to meet with traditional, religious and local government leaders and Members of Parliament on 10 May at Ri-Kwangba. As of the time of the current report, the Acholi delegation had returned from Ri-Kwangba without having met with Kony.

CROSS-BORDER MEETING HELD ON DISPUTED BORDERS BETWEEN TESO, KARAMOJA SUB-REGIONS

During the first week of April, a cross-border meeting was held on the Katakwi / Moroto border to examine possible solutions to the border dispute between the districts. The meeting was attended by two Government ministers, Members of Parliament, and representatives from both districts' local councils. Government surveyors, accompanied by three representatives from each district, are to interview local people, including elders, conduct an aerial survey and report to the President on a final decision for the boundary.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES IN NORTHERN UGANDA NEED TO BE RENEWED

The issue of local governance structures is increasingly becoming a subject of discussion across northern Uganda as the displaced population continues to move out of the IDP camps and/or progress towards other durable solutions. In particular, whereas local authority has been vested in the camp commandants in the IDP camps, with whom humanitarian agencies have interacted during day-to-day business, as the move to effect durable solutions persists, more voices are calling for a return / renewal of the local council (LC) system.

In Gulu, for example, the District Council passed a resolution dissolving the position of Camp Commandant. While a one-month transition period was proposed by the Vice LCV Chairman, and a number of activities were planned including community sensitization through radio programming, capacity building workshops with LCIIIs and sub-country chiefs and proposals to honour the camp commandants in appreciation of their service, it was unclear how the decision would be accomplished on the ground and/or how it would affect humanitarian agencies in their day-to-day operations. In general, however, the resumption of traditional, civilian governance structures is to be encouraged.

VI. FUNDING

As of the end of April, the US\$ 398 million Consolidated Appeal for Uganda in 2008 was 22.4 per cent funded, with US\$ 89.2 million in contributions and a further \$16.2 million in pledges. This represents a proportional decline in humanitarian funding in the same period the previous year.

Humanitarian action in some areas has been constrained by the lack of ready funding, with some NGOs reporting that they have had to curtail / close projects in northern Uganda. As of end-April, there was no committed funding in the areas of Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and Emergency Non-Food Items and less than 25 per cent committed funding in the following areas: Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods (GIL) – 7 per cent; Education – 18 per cent; Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS – 8 per cent, Multisector (Refugees) – 2 per cent; and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – 13 per cent. Food Security and Agricultural Livelihoods and Protection activities were funded at only 28 and 29 per cent respectively.

VII. THE MONTH AHEAD

MONTHLY CLUSTER MEETING SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
HNHA Cluster (14:30 at WHO)	GBV Sub-Cluster (10:00 at UNFPA) FSAL Cluster (14:30 at FAO)	CP Sub-Cluster (10:30 at UNICEF) GIL Cluster (14:30 at UNDP)	Education Cluster (09:00 at UNICEF) WASH Cluster (14:00 at UNICEF)	
Heads of Cluster (11:15 at OCHA)		IASC Country Team (10:00 at OCHA) Contact Group* (14:30 at OCHA)		
Protection Cluster (14:30 at UNHCR)				
		Contact Group* (14:30 at OCHA)		

* Contact Group meets every second Wednesday, which usually falls during the 2nd and 4th week of the month.

9 May – Karamoja sub-region Mid-Year Review of the 2008 CAP in Moroto

13 - 14 May – CAP 2008 Mid-Year Review workshop at Hotel Africana in Kampala

14 May – Meeting on Karimojong Migration to Kampala in Moroto

VIII. CONTACTS

For more information, please contact:

In Uganda

Kristen Knutson, Public Information and Donor Liaison Officer: +256 312 244 888, +256 772 759 996 (mobile), knutson@un.org

Denis Okello, National Information Officer: +256 312 244 840, +256 772 749 857 (mobile), okellod@un.org

In New York

Chris Hyslop, Desk Officer: +1 917 367 9457, +1 917 640 5592, hyslopc@un.org

Stephanie Bunker, Public Information Officer: +1 917 367 5126, +1 917 892 1679 (mobile), bunker@un.org

In Geneva

Elisabeth Byrs, Public Information Officer, OCHA-Geneva: +41 22 917 2653, byrs@un.org