

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- **FOUR AMBUSHES, INCLUDING TWO ON PASSENGER BUSES, RECORDED IN KARAMOJA IN AUGUST, PROMPTING SUSPENSION OF BUS SERVICES ON MOROTO-KOTIDO LINE**
- **HEPATITIS E VIRUS OUTBREAK REMAINS UNCONTROLLED; TOTAL 7,598 CASES AND 119 DEATHS REPORTED**
- **UGANDA RECEIVES US\$ 5.7 MILLION FROM UN CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND FOR GROWING CRISIS IN KARAMOJA, PROTECTION AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN NORTHERN UGANDA**

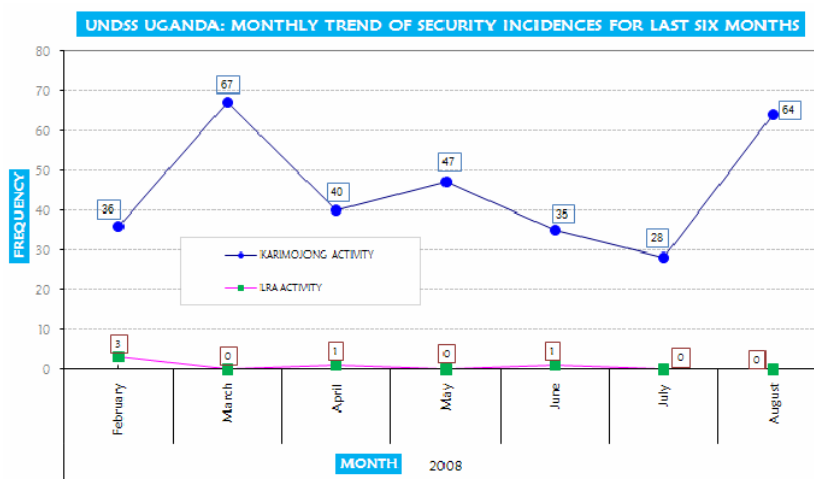
II. SECURITY AND ACCESS

SECURITY

General calm prevailed in northern Uganda during the reporting period, with no reports of LRA activity. Criminal activities continued to pose the main security challenge in the region, although a decline in the number of criminal activities was recorded during August over July. The decline is attributed to intensified deployments and joint Police – Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) operations, which have led to the arrest of some 200 suspects since July.

In the Teso sub-region, the main source of insecurity stemmed from the activities of illegally armed Karimojong in Amuria and Katakwi Districts. Consequently, the District Internal Security Officer (DISO) and the Local Council (LC) III chairman of Obalanga sub-county in Amuria have advised IDPs temporarily to cease movements to isolated villages, particularly in areas between Amootom IDP camp and Ocorikoit site, where a teenager was killed by suspected Karimojong. The insecurity in the sub-county has also impacted on the return process, with reports that people in the affected parishes are returning to Angedakiteng and Osukunya camps.

The Karamoja sub-region experienced a deteriorating security situation, with four ambushes recorded in August (three in Kotido and one in Abim). Two of the ambushes involved a public bus service and one a humanitarian convoy; all occurring along the main road from Kotido to Moroto. As a result of the ambushes, the Gateway Bus Service suspended operations along that route. There were three reported confrontations between the UPDF and illegally armed Karimojong in Kaabong District, while three cross-border raids by Karimojong into Kitgum, Pader and Sudan were reported. In all, 24 security-related incidents resulting in 52 deaths were reported. In response to the insecurity, the United Nations Karamoja Area Security Management Team (ASMT) has restricted time of travel to between 0900 and 1700Hrs, advised agencies to use two escort vehicles while travelling within the sub-region, and directed that travel between Moroto and Kotido be rerouted via the Katakwi–Abim road until further notice. A 24-hour operational radio room has also been established in Moroto to improve the Emergency communication System (ECS) in the sub-region.



Access

Opening of access roads in northern Uganda is ongoing in areas of return, facilitated by the Voucher for Work and Food for Work programmes in Gulu and Amuru. Meanwhile, heavy rains in the region have rendered some roads nearly impassable, with the worst conditions experienced in Amuru District. During the reporting period, several trucks were reported to have broken down in Anaka sub-county, particularly on the highway to Sudan. Road conditions were also reported to have deteriorated in Pader District, rendering some transit sites and villages inaccessible.

In Karamoja, torrential rains often leave access routes located near or across rivers inaccessible due to flooding or muddy conditions. During the month, three people reportedly drowned when their vehicle attempted to cross the

Dopeth River on the Kotido-Abim road. Additionally, several humanitarian trucks carrying pipeline supplies got stuck at Lopei on the Moroto to Kotido road for several hours on 16 August.

III. POPULATION MOVEMENT

In Gulu District, 23 of the total 31 official IDP camps have met the terms of the OPM guideline for camp phase-out, with population movement out of the camps (to transit and/or villages of origin) varying from 50 to 97 per cent across the camps. In Amuru District, by contrast, only four of the 36 camps have met the OPM guidelines for phase-out. While more in-depth research is needed, initial indications are that insufficient sensitization of the displaced population on the options for durable solutions (returning to village of origin, moving to a transit site or remaining in the former camp), as well as lack of basic services and infrastructure in return areas and lack of grass to thatch huts are contributing to the slower pace of population movement in Amuru. The district plans to conduct an intention survey to establish why the majority of the population remains in camps.

No new monitoring figures have yet been made available for the periods July or August 2008.

IV. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

CAMP MANAGEMENT AND CAMP COORDINATION (CCCM)

The handover of local leadership structures, from the camp commander to the Local Council system, was concluded in Gulu District in August. In two recognition ceremonies, former camp leaders and officials were awarded 280 goats and certificates in recognition of their service. To date, 23 of 31 camps in Gulu and 4 of 36 camps in Amuru have met the guidelines for camp phase-out established by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

In Pader, where camp hygiene activities involving abandoned hut demolition, filling of used pit latrines and covering of rubbish pits are ongoing in most camps, phase-out activities are to be rolled out in selected camps in Puranga, Omot and Pader Town Council.

In the Teso sub-region, 14 camps in Katakwi district and 4 in Amuria were officially closed at the end of August by the Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) of both districts. A total of 43 camps – 30 in Katakwi and 13 in Amuria – remain open.

EDUCATION

Faced with infrastructure constraints, including inadequate or nonexistent classrooms, teachers' houses, desks, latrines and boreholes, seven schools in Gulu and 13 in Amuru have not yet returned to their original sites. In Kitgum, about 16 per cent of the district's 184 primary schools are still displaced, while 29 returned schools lack structures of any kind, resulting in many parents leaving their children behind in camps where they can access better schools. In Pader, 47 schools continue to operate under trees for lack of classrooms, while 35 per cent of the district's 223 primary schools have no safe water source. Moreover, six schools in Paimol sub-county and one school in Atanga sub-county have been displaced due to Karimojong incursions and fear of UXO contamination respectively.

In order to engage communities, some 1,358 multi-band radios have been distributed to schools, Alternative Basic Education in Karamoja (ABEK) centres, adult literacy centres and selected communities. The local organization, Straight Talk Foundation, which distributed the radios, is airing programmes on out-migration, health, immunization, antenatal care, malaria control and school enrolment. The Foundation also supports eight in-school clubs and 32 out-of-school clubs whose members participate in community activities such as drama, income generating activities, games and sports.

Meanwhile, children recently displaced from Kotido District to Orom sub-county in Kitgum District are facing difficulties in accessing primary education. Efforts to provide a learning centre in the area pending the construction of a school have not taken root, leaving the children to walk at least five kilometres to the nearest school.

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

Some 214 households in Pader affected by a severe hailstorm on 23 July, which destroyed over 400 acres of sorghum, pea, maize, bean and cotton crops, received sesame seeds following a damage assessment. Meanwhile, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, has finalised preparations for an agricultural census in the district, which is expected to start in September 2008.

Under the Farmer Field School (FFS) project, 80 oxen and 80 ox-ploughs (40 sets of animal traction) were provided to groups in Amuru, while 80 ox-ploughs were distributed in Gulu, in addition to 800 goats distributed in both districts. The seed fair voucher approach, targeting 7,000 households, has engaged significant interest in the two districts. In Kitgum, over 1,000 HIV-affected households received ox-ploughs and benefited from training in agronomy, animal traction and livestock management.

General food distribution (GFD) continued across northern Uganda, but pipeline breaks meant cereals were not part of the food basket for most beneficiaries, save for extremely vulnerable individuals. In Gulu, delays by transporters and poor road conditions due to heavy rains prevented access to six IDP camps (Atiak, Bibia, Palukere, Pawel and Olam Nyungu).

In Karamoja, food distributions were impacted by several factors during the month, including pipeline breaks, heavy rains in some areas (Iriru sub-county of Moroto District) and insecurity. In northern Karamoja, for example, 431 metric tonnes (MT) of food was to some 33,181 beneficiaries (out of 275,437 targeted), representing a reduction of 88 per cent from the average amount usually distributed under the GFD programme. Regular food operations are expected to resume in September. Generally, Karamoja continues to experience a worsening food security situation caused by several factors, including progressively poor harvests resulting from unfavourable weather conditions. In Abim District, for example, there has reportedly been a 50 per cent drop in cultivated acreage from the 12,000 to 13,000 acres in 2007. In Kotido, the District Agricultural Office estimates that only 452.2 acres of crops have been ploughed this year, compared to 14,226 acres in 2007. Market food price data compiled for August in Moroto District indicated that prices have generally held stable since July, except for the price of beans.

Meanwhile, vaccinations of sheep and goats against the *peste de petits ruminants* (PPR) continued, with Katakwi District reporting 65,000 goats vaccinated by the end of August. Complicating the effort to vaccinate the region's livestock is the lack of information on the actual animal population in the region. Although the MAAIF conducted a livestock census in February 2008, the results have not yet been publicly distributed.

In Teso, food security partners have recommended that a detailed Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) be conducted in September, given the signs of food insecurity in the sub-region. While general food distribution was discontinued at the end of July, there are indications that more food aid will be required in Katakwi and Amuria Districts due to poor crop performance resulting from changing and unpredictable weather patterns. Meanwhile, health partners are concerned at the likelihood of disease outbreaks among animals in sub-counties bordering Karamoja. In Magoro sub-county in Katakwi District, for instance, tick borne disease and East Coast Fever have been reported, with reports of 25 goats and sheep affected. Vaccines have been despatched to the area by the MAAIF. The Katakwi District veterinary department is currently also vaccinating poultry in all sub-counties.

Food security partners are planning to conduct a Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) throughout the country in September. The annual Crop and Food Supply Assessment (CFSA) is also scheduled to take place in September.

GOVERNANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVELIHOODS (GIL)

Following recommendations made at the July meeting in Gulu of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), a mission from the United Nations Operational Satellite Application (UNOSAT) visited the district to explore possibilities for acquiring satellite data to produce and analyse information for the benefit of humanitarian and development partners.

Rehabilitation of roads is ongoing in the Teso sub-region, with a view to easing IDP access to return sites. Katakwi District received an estimated US\$ 150,000 (US\$ 246 million) from the central government for work on the 45 km Katakwi-Usuk road, while funding has also been secured for the rehabilitation of the road from Palam to Akisim. In Amuria, work continues on feeder roads, including Olanga-Alito, Acowa-Abarilela-Wera, and Wilwill-Alere.

Mine Action: De-mining activities are ongoing in Odek, Lalogi, Acet and Paicho sub-counties in Gulu district, with a total of 13,626 unexploded ordnances (UXOs) removed to date. Of concern, however, are reports that communities are asking for money in exchange for information on UXO locations. The Uganda Mine Action Centre (UMAC) has opened a regional office in Gulu to cover the Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions, following lobbying by the sub-cluster.

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND HIV/AIDS

While the Hepatitis E (HEV) outbreak in northern Uganda remained uncontained, the epidemic trend appeared to have stabilised to an average 228 new cases each week in August. The outbreak has been reported in 17 out of 19 sub-counties in Kitgum, and seven sub-counties in Pader district, with about 70 per cent of the new cases emanating from return areas. As of the end of the reporting period, a cumulative 7,598 cases had been notified, with 119 deaths recorded. While no HEV-related deaths have been reported in Gulu and there have been only seven confirmed cases so far, the district has decided to reactivate the Epidemic Task Force, which will oversee case detection, monitoring and management, sensitisation of the community, water chlorination and general camp cleaning campaigns, among others. In Kitgum, the District Task Force has requested all agencies to provide information on all funds secured for HEV response with attached planned activities against the funds. The Task Force intends to align the agencies' planned activities with the district's response plan to ensure efficient, effective and comprehensive coverage of interventions.

The rising number of malaria cases is a source of growing concern in northern and eastern Uganda. In Pader, 5,240 cases were registered in the week ending 23 August, representing a 30 per cent increase from the previous week. In Katakwi District, the malaria incidence rose to 8.4 per cent during the month against 6 per cent in July. The increase in malaria cases has been attributed to the bushy environment in most return areas, as well as the lack of mosquito nets in homes. The Ministry of Health and District Health Office in Katakwi have agreed to start indoor residual spraying using DDT in September.

In Gulu and Amuru, a June 2008 assessment has shown an increase in malnutrition, with the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate rising nearly three-fold to 8.7 per cent from 3.1 per cent in 2007, while the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rate increased to 1.4 per cent from last year's 0.4 per cent. Those findings, coupled with the results of the food security assessment indicate the need for scaling up nutrition interventions in the district.

Ongoing rehabilitation of 14 health centres in Gulu and 17 in Amuru is likely to improve access to health service delivery, but 19 facilities in both districts (13 in Gulu and six in Amuru) remain non-operational due to lack of resources to rehabilitate them. Also due to limited resources, maternity wards can only be constructed in three of the six health centres that lack them in Gulu. Moreover, 10 health centres in Amuru and 11 in Gulu lack staff houses, although the latter district has secured a pledge for the construction of six.

In Karamoja, agencies are supporting the fencing of Tokora and Nabilatuk Health Centre IVs in Nakapiripirit District, while installation of a water system and renovation of the internal ward of Kotido Health Centre IV has been completed. Meanwhile, Kalapata Health Centre II in Kaabong District has reopened a month after it was shut down amidst hygiene concerns arising from its proximity to a protected kraal. The protected kraal, which was situated within 100 metres upslope of the centre has now been relocated.

In Teso, five Health Centre IIs in Katakwi District (Olilim, Okocho, Koritok, Damasiko and Okorio) are now functional, but 15 others remain non-operational due to lack of drugs and personnel. Progress is being made in HIV/AIDS programming in the sub-region, with all eight of Katakwi's Health Centre IIIs now able to provide Prevention of Mother to Child HIV Transmission (PMTCT) services. Agencies also promoted antenatal care through training of 271 Village Health Teams (VHTs) in five sub-counties in Soroti and 126 VHTs in two sub-counties of Katakwi. The VHTs are expected to mobilise expectant mothers to attend antenatal clinics at least four times during their pregnancy, as well as promote access to PMTCT services. However, Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) services remain critically inadequate. In Katakwi, for example, the district Health department's target is to improve VCT access to a modest 10 per cent by the end of September 2008 from the 6.5 per cent coverage in 2007.

PROTECTION

In Kitgum, several families in Paloga IDP camp have been rendered homeless as a result of a road project initiated by the sub-county. The sub-county's authorities insist that the affected IDPs were served a notice last year, but the latter claim they received notification only on the day of eviction. Also in Kitgum, a serious land dispute affecting at least 1,200 families in three parishes of Omiya-Anyima sub-county has been referred to the local authorities for arbitration. A family claiming ownership of several acres of the land had threatened to evict some of the occupants.

As return movements gather pace, increasing focus is being directed at the plight of EVIs who remain in camps in both northern and eastern Uganda. In Katakwi and Amuria, EVIs make up an estimated 71 per cent of IDPs still living in the camps, particularly female-headed households, the elderly and the chronically ill. In Gulu, the cluster is to begin identification and registration of such EVIs to help agencies better target assistance to them.

In Karamoja, there have been reports of sporadic shooting and shelling by the UPDF into open range, bushes and along river belts in Kaabong and Kotido Districts. Communities have expressed fear that women and children might be hit by stray shells and bullets while they are out in the bushes collecting firewood or fetching water from the rivers.

Human Rights and Rule of Law: Following the completion of its new building, the Magistrate's Court in Pader has witnessed improvements in its management of cases and information. The new structure boasts a proper registry and library, in addition to a court hall for the trial of juvenile offenders. A few major challenges remain, including lack of legal representation and a remand home for juveniles.

In Karamoja, the lack of a police doctor is hampering access to justice, as ordinary medical doctors charge fees for their services. In Kaabong, for instance, the doctors demand USH 50,000 to perform post-mortems and USH 20,000 for a copy of the medical report. Survivors of sexual assault or defilement are also required to pay the fee to obtain a copy of their medical reports if they intend to pursue legal action. In some instances, capital offence cases have been discharged due to lack of evidence reports.

Child Protection: Agencies continue to monitor the 80 households comprising mostly women and children who were returned to Moroto in July from Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre in Wakiso District, after they were forcibly removed from the streets of Kampala. The returnees, including 152 children, 86 women, and two men, are currently residing in Matany, Lokopo, Lopei and Iriiri sub-counties. Monitoring agencies have identified several challenges faced by the returnees, including an outbreak of chicken pox and skin infections in Lokopo, Lopei, and Matany; lack of safe drinking water; and difficulties in accessing education owing to fees charged by schools. As a result, four households have reportedly left Lokopo and returned to Kampala.

Gender Based Violence (GBV): Training of Local Council One (LC1) courts on gender based violence was conducted in Gulu and Amuru, following the findings of recent assessments in which GBV victims in both districts indicated that they often report to the LC1 courts because they are more accessible. Nevertheless, questions remain about the jurisdiction of such courts over GBV cases. Meanwhile, all sub-counties in Gulu, Amuru and Pader have received bicycles to facilitate efforts to mobilise and sensitise communities on GBV and peace-building.

In Kitgum District, domestic violence remains the most commonly reported protection incident, while large gaps in the medical response for GBV survivors have been identified, including negative response by health staff and shortage of PEP kits in health centres.

In Pader, access to justice for GBV survivors remains a challenge, although the District Protection Committee is helping survivors to access the police report form. Some 150 "peace bicycles" were distributed to women's groups across the district to be used for community mobilization, referral and peace-building activities.

The Karamoja region too faces challenges in identifying GBV trends due weak response and prevention capacity and lack of PEP kits in health centres. Training and capacity building of district staff continues, with the district gender and probation officers to attend a training on Information Management Systems (IMS) in October to improve their ability to identify trends, streamline data management, inform decisions and effective areas for intervention and improve GBV programming.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

A water quality surveillance assessment done by the Gulu District Water Office indicated that about 40 per cent of water sources tested were contaminated by faecal matter, calling for intensified interventions in latrine construction and hygiene promotion. Meanwhile, Gulu and Amuru districts intend to establish a model village in every sub-county in an effort to enhance and replicate good practices for water, sanitation and hygiene promotion.

In Kitgum, key focus areas to improve the WASH response to the HEV outbreak include ensuring that patients in health centres take home a minimum package of WASH non-food items and water purification tablets and that families store drinking water safely, as well as intensifying hygiene promotion.

Water coverage in Karamoja also remains a significant challenge. Attempts to improve coverage by drilling boreholes in Kotido District have been temporarily hampered by the onset of the rains. Meanwhile, as part of the response to the 2007 floods in Teso, the Directorate of Water Development through the District Water Departments will drill four new boreholes in Katakwi and five in Amuria starting in October. Under the programme, 15 boreholes will also be rehabilitated to enable communities access safe water in return areas.

V. SPECIAL FOCUS ISSUES

CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (CERF) SUPPORT

The humanitarian community in Uganda has received two grants from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in August, totalling nearly US\$ 5.7 million. The grants, released through the Fund's Rapid Response window, were requested to facilitate urgent interventions in Karamoja and northern Uganda. Four United Nations agencies (FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO), received a cumulative US\$ 5 million to address the worsening nutritional, food security and human and animal health situation in the hardest hit areas of Karamoja. The money will be used to scale up therapeutic feeding for at least 5,000 children under five years and supplementary feeding for some 35,000 children under five; extend the General Food Distributions that currently target 707,000 people in the sub-region until November 2008; ensure vaccination against common childhood illnesses for some 90,000 children, as well as strengthen epidemic preparedness and response; and vaccinate 700,000 sheep and goats, and 500,000 cattle against the animal diseases PPR (goat plague) and CBPP (contagious bovine pleuro pneumonia).

For northern Uganda, UNHCR will utilise a US\$ 700,000 grant to strengthen support and assistance for IDPs. In particular, the grant will be used to monitor the situation of the displaced and to advocate for the right of IDPs to resolve their future status voluntarily and to expand the information, counselling and legal assistance available to displaced northern Ugandans and provide shelter to the most vulnerable.

VI. FUNDING

As at the end of August, the total requests for the revised 2008 Uganda CAP stood at US\$ 374 million, with US\$ 197 million in contributions (about 53 per cent of requests) and an additional US\$ 3.5 million in pledges, according to the Financial Tracking System (FTS).

Coordination (71 per cent), Protection (61 per cent), Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS (56 per cent), and Education (53 per cent) are the highest funded clusters / sectors, followed by: Food Security and Agricultural Livelihoods (51 per cent); Camp Coordination and Camp Management (51 per cent); Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (33 per cent); Multi-sector (Refugees) at 52 per cent; and Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods at 13 per cent.

VII. THE MONTH AHEAD

MONTHLY CLUSTER MEETING SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
First Week	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)	
Second Week	Heads of Cluster (11:15 at OCHA)		IASC Country Team (10:00 at OCHA) Contact Group* (14:30 at OCHA)		
Third Week	Protection Cluster (14:30 at UNHCR)				
Fourth Week			Contact Group* (14:30 at OCHA)		

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

24 September – UNHCR Lessons Learnt Workshop in Pader

25 – 27 September – Mercy Corps peace summit, “Northern Uganda in the shadow of Juba,” to be held in Pader

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