

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- **RAPID FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED IN RESPONSE TO INCREASED REPORTS OF HUNGER; NON-EVIs IN ACHOLI AND EVIs IN TESO TO RECEIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE**
- **UPSURGE IN MALARIA INCIDENCE IN NORTHERN UGANDA AND KARAMOJA**
- **FORCED EVICTIONS OF IDPs RECORDED IN NORTHERN UGANDA; 200 FAMILIES IN AMURU AND 101 HOUSEHOLDS IN PADER AFFECTED**

II. SECURITY AND ACCESS

SECURITY

Northern Uganda continued to experience a generally stable security environment, but reports of the emergence of a new rebel movement and the arrest and detention of several of its alleged members in June ignited political tension between northern opposition politicians and the Government, and caused some anxiety amongst members of the community. Cross-border incursions, particularly into Kitgum and Pader districts, by illegally armed Karimojong posed an additional security concern. One such incident in June resulted in the deaths of two people following a shoot out in Kitgum, while a civilian was killed in another incident in Pader. Specifically for the eastern belt of Pader, security agencies continued to cite the lack of safe water sources as the major reason for their failure to deploy security personnel in the area.

Within Karamoja, aggressive activities by illegally armed Karimojong remained of concern. Overall, some 56 recorded cattle raids and 37 incidents resulting in 65 deaths were recorded during the reporting period.¹ Kaabong, Moroto and Nakapiripirit remained the most affected districts. The humanitarian community in the sub-region has generally not been targeted in the incidents of insecurity. In June, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) announced the downgrading of the security classification for Abim and Nakapiripirit districts from Phase 3 to Phase 2, while Kaabong, Kotido and Moroto remain at Phase 3.

Access

The absence or poor state of feeder roads in Karamoja continued to impede humanitarian access to some remote settlements. In Abim, for instance, a contractor failed to access Atim village in Alerek sub-county to drill a borehole. The village, which hosts some 4,000 people, depends on rock run-off water. Other areas in the district to which access is hampered, particularly during the rainy season, include Awach in Abim sub-county and Opopongo in Nyakwae sub-county. Similarly, an estimated 7,000 people in Nakaal manyatta in Panyangara sub-county of Kotido District were unreachable during the reporting period due to poor access road conditions.

III. POPULATION MOVEMENT

During June, sections of the population in the eastern part of Pader indicated that they would be forced to seek better security in IDP camps as a result of frequent cross-border incursions by illegally armed Karimojong. In response, the Office of the LCV Chairman in conjunction with security agencies initiated dialogue to reassure the affected communities and the situation has since stabilized.

In Karamoja, a land ownership dispute in the area where the Okudud (Morukajore) settlement is located in Nakapiripirit District continued to hinder attempts to allocate land to the settlers. The district has recently established a land committee to work with the land board to clarify the matter. In Abim District, five new settlement sites are being established, adding to the nine that were reported in April 2009. An assessment of the additional sites to verify population figures and humanitarian needs has yet to be undertaken.

IV. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

EDUCATION

While most schools in Pader and Kitgum have returned to original sites - only six in Kitgum and one in Pader remain displaced - they continue to face significant infrastructure challenges. In particular, lack of accommodation continues to constrain the return of teachers, many of whom are forced to commute from towns to their new school sites, often arriving late for classes and tending to leave earlier than scheduled. According to a recent assessment, 103 schools in Kitgum have no teachers' houses whatsoever, while an estimated 1,743 teachers in Pader are unable to be

¹ See UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) reports for June and July 2009

accommodated at school sites. In many instances, teachers do not even report for duty; the district service commission in Gulu recently revealed that 35 primary school teachers had been absent from their duty stations 40 working days in a row. Other challenges for the education sector in northern Uganda include gaps in the number of classrooms (348 for Kitgum and 567 for Pader) and latrines (345 stances for Kitgum and 2,206 stances for Pader).

In Karamoja, reports from the Moroto District Education officer in June 2009 indicated that rampant insecurity in some villages, particularly in Iriiri sub-county, had forced parents and children to spend nights in schools. As a consequence, normal operations in some of these schools including Cholichol, Kodike and Amedek primary schools had been negatively impacted. Cholichol Primary School, for instance, had reportedly failed to open for the term by the time of publishing this report.

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS (FSAL)

Reports of a growing food crisis in many parts of the country prompted the cluster, with support from districts and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), to conduct a rapid assessment in the reportedly most affected sub-regions of Teso and Acholi. According to the results of the assessment, the causes of the crisis were primarily the existence of low food and seed stocks, the recent increase in food prices,² and the discontinuation of food aid. In addition, the prolonged dry spell before the first 2009 agricultural season forced farmers to delay planting until late April, instead of March, while erratic rains during the season led to a failure of the crops or a poor harvest for the early planted crops, thereby exacerbating the lean period that traditionally prevails between May and June.

The most affected areas were found to be the eastern parts of Katakwi and Pader, Amuria and Kitgum, northern parts of Gulu and southwestern parts of Amuru. It has also been estimated that between 60 and 160,000 households may have to be considered as severely or moderately affected by the poor harvest and will require adequate food security assistance. While the cluster does not consider the situation a famine (which is normally characterized by widespread malnutrition and death) it is, nevertheless, concerned about the food security situation in the coming months (August to December 2009) as it appears that this current and delayed harvest may not produce more than 50 per cent of the harvest expected in a normal season.

The immediate responses suggested by the affected communities include immediate provision of food aid, provision of seeds and planting material for early-maturing and tuber crops, and provision of farm tools to increase the opening and utilization of land during the following season.

The food crisis has prompted plans for a one-off distribution of relief food to non-extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs) in the Acholi sub-region, who will now receive 50 per cent rations. General food distribution (GFD) to a targeted 10,000 EVIs in the Teso districts of Amuria, Katakwi, and Soroti, is expected to be activated in August. In Karamoja, GFD has now been extended to Lotukei and Morulem sub-counties of Abim District, both of which had not been included in the initial programme, while a recent rapid food security assessment of urban/trading centres recommended that 2,310 EVIs in Moroto District be targeted with GFD from July through November 2009. Following a directive from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), all districts in Karamoja will in August 2009 undertake emergency food security assessments, to be combined with the planned Mid-Season Crop Production and Livestock assessments in the sub-region.

Other food security interventions in Karamoja included distributions of groundnut, maize, bean, sorghum, cowpea and millet seeds by FSAL partners, reaching 120,390 households, and distributions by other non-governmental organisations and local district governments supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and OPM. However, the potential impact of these interventions are likely to be counteracted by the prolonged dry spell. Moreover, if the situation does not improve, animal health and productivity will also continue to deteriorate as water sources dry up.

Interventions against animal diseases in the sub-region involved the vaccination of a total 989,047 shoats against *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR), representing 72 per cent coverage, and inoculation of 381,006 or 43 per cent of targeted cattle against Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia (CBPP). During the final evaluation of the vaccinations in July, partners cited several challenges to the exercise, including high initial estimates of the number of cattle, poor access to livestock due to the nomadic nature of the affected communities, and insecurity. Meanwhile, reports of an upsurge in tick-borne diseases, specifically Trypanosomiasis and East Coast Fever, in areas of Namalu and Moruita in Nakapiripirit are being investigated. Additionally, eight cases of *kala-azar* were reported in the district in June.

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND HIV/AIDS

The cumulative number of Hepatitis E cases in northern Uganda has reached 10,624 with 173 deaths (165 in Kitgum and 8 in Pader). While the weekly number of new infections appears to have stabilized, the epidemic is far from being contained 19 months after the initial outbreak, and response programmes remain weak and underfunded.

² According to FEWSNET's Food Security Update covering July to December 2009, sorghum prices have soared 140 per cent in Gulu and Amuru

In contrast, an aggressive response against polio has resulted in the successful roll out of three mass vaccination campaigns in the five months since the first case of the disease was reported in Amuru District. A final round of vaccinations is scheduled for mid-August in the 12 high-risk districts. To date, eight confirmed cumulative cases of wild polio virus have been notified, while a stool sample from a suspected case in Kitgum is undergoing testing at the Uganda Virus Research Institute.

Following the Rapid Epidemiological Mapping of Onchocerciasis (REMO) in Pader in November 2008, which found river blindness endemic in 10 out of 13 assessed villages, the district is now undertaking mass administration of ivermectin, albendazole and praziquantal, with three quarters of the targeted population of 364,406 people covered thus far. Support for the exercise, which also aims to control the spread and prevalence of filariasis, has been provided by the Neglected Tropical Diseases Programme.

The incidence of malaria continued to rise in northern during the reporting period, with morbidity and mortality rates exceeding the average registered in previous years. In Kitgum, malaria accounted for a total of 52 deaths – 29 in July and 23 in June. A sharp increase in the incidence of the disease has also been reported in Karamoja, despite programmes to distribute mosquito nets to each household in the sub-region over the past year. The highest number of malaria cases was recorded in Abim, followed by Moroto and Nakapiripirit. All the affected districts have indicated stockouts of anti-malaria drugs.

Another health concern in Karamoja is the emergence of brucellosis, following a recent assessment which indicated that 45 out of 169 people tested for the disease were positive. The disease is transmitted through consumption of raw milk, blood and half-cooked meat, practices that are prevalent in the region. A significant challenge to treatment is the absence of detecting equipment at most Health Centre III laboratories.

An improving area of health programming in the sub-region is nutrition surveillance. During the month of June, the number of children screened through regional sentinel sites reached 2,840, an increment of 28 per cent over the previous month. The results suggested that the proportion of children with severe forms of malnutrition remained at approximately five per cent, as in the month prior. Meanwhile, results of a health and nutrition assessment conducted in April indicate an average global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate of nine per cent in the sub-region. However, GAM rates in Kaabong (12.1 per cent) and Nakapiripirit (11.6 per cent) were found to exceed the Government of Uganda-designated emergency threshold of 10 per cent, but still below the global emergency threshold of 15 per cent.

PROTECTION

Sixteen camps in Pader – Acholibur, Alim, Angagura, Atanga/Lacekocot, Atanga Mission, Arum, Awere, Kwonkic, Lagile, Lapul, Latanya, Omot, Pajule, Puranga, Rackoko and Wol – have been endorsed by the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) for decommissioning following phase out assessments. In Kitgum, assessments were concluded in the ten camps that were recommended for the exercise in May 2009 and a recommendation for their phase out was adopted in the June session of the DDMC. In total, 13 camps in Kitgum have now been endorsed to begin phase out activities.

Human Rights and Rule of Law: Despite efforts to promote durable solutions, forced evictions of IDPs continue to be reported in the Acholi sub-region. During the reporting period, 200 families in Amuru District were evicted from Pabbo IDP camp under the orders of the local sub-county authority, reportedly to make way for the rehabilitation of a health centre. In June, a total of 101 households, 23 of which were EVIs, were forcibly evicted from Rackoko IDP camp in Awere sub-county of Pader District to make way for the opening of a road. The 528 individuals and EVIs affected by the evictions in Pader, as with the affected families in Amuru, require assistance with shelter and food.

In Karamoja, allegations were recorded in June of human rights abuses against four inmates of the Amaler Government Prisons in Namalu sub-county of Nakapiripirit District. The inmates were reportedly physically assaulted, including with gun butts, by prison warders. Also recorded were the reported deaths of two other inmates following a delay by prison authorities to transfer them to a better health facility for treatment. Additionally, poor hygiene conditions are reported to prevail in the Prison, with inmates said to lack access to clean drinking water, bathing soap and basic toiletries. In the northern Karamoja districts of Abim, Kaabong and Kotido, generally poor access to justice is compounded by the current absence at station of the new Grade One Magistrate.

Mine Action: Some 95 unexploded ordnances (UXOs) and 32 small arms ammunition were cleared across Gulu and Amuru during the reporting period. In Kitgum, the Uganda Mine Action Team concentrated its demining activities in Agoro and Lokung sub-counties, reportedly helping to catalyse the return of IDPs hitherto afraid to leave the camps of Potika and Agoro.

Child Protection: Following a serious road traffic accident in Pader in which two students died and 55 sustained serious injuries, concern has been expressed by child protection actors over the practice of schools transporting students in inappropriate (usually open trucks) and overloaded vehicles. The accident, which occurred in June, was the second such incident in the district in three months.

In Karamoja, a multi-agency assessment led by the Moroto District Probation and Welfare Officer was conducted in Lodoi parish in Matany sub-county during the month of June, following a report by the District Inspector of Schools citing cases of insecurity and rape in the parish. According to the findings of the assessment, three pupils aged between 13 and 15 were reportedly raped during attacks on the area. A total of six attacks in ten months had been reported in one village alone, and the insecurity had reportedly forced ten children to leave school and migrate elsewhere.

Gender Based Violence (GBV): Referral pathways for GBV cases with regard to health and legal services remain inadequate across northern Uganda. Additionally, few of the health workers in the already understaffed health facilities offering GBV clinical services are appropriately trained, according to an assessment carried out in June at sites in Gulu, Pader, Oyam and Amolatar districts. Partially to respond to this challenge in Gulu, a multi-sectoral team composed of representatives from the district government, police and stakeholders from civil society have initiated a collaborative process to develop standard operating procedures in dealing with GBV cases. In Karamoja, a brief assessment of health centres to determine availability of services for survivors of sexual assault found that all of the 13 centres in Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Kotido lacked the human and medical resources to respond appropriately to GBV cases.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

A total of 48 deep wells and boreholes in 21 of the 31 existing camps in Gulu District are expected to be decommissioned, provided the DDMC and the District Executive Committee give their approval. Significant movement out of those camps has left many facilities redundant or vulnerable to contamination. In Karamoja, water coverage is currently estimated at 42 per cent, indicating a gradual improvement resulting from increased interventions by the central and local governments, NGOs and other agencies. Ongoing sanitation activities include the construction of latrines for five primary schools and five health centres in Kaabong, and for 16 schools and four health centres in Moroto.

VI. FUNDING

As of the end of July, the CAP 2009 has realised 45 per cent funding, with an additional US\$ 4.1 million in uncommitted pledges. Food (61 per cent) remains the highest funded sector, followed by Multi-sector (48 per cent) Agriculture (42 per cent), Coordination (40 per cent), Water and Sanitation (25 per cent), Protection (20 per cent), and Health (11 per cent). Education has realised no funding to date.

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 penultimate Wednesday of each month.

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