

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- **50 PER CENT OF ACHOLI IDPS NOW IN TRANSIT SITES OR VILLAGES OF ORIGIN**
- **FOOD SECURITY WORSENING AS PROLONGED DRY SPELL CONTINUES IN KARAMOJA, TESO REGIONS**
- **FORCED EVICTIONS REPORTED IN ACHOLI, TESO SUB-REGIONS; GULU DDMC CONDEMNS BREACH OF NATIONAL IDP POLICY**
- **HEPATITIS E EPIDEMIC UNCONTAINED IN KITGUM, THREATENS TO SPREAD TO NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS**

II. SECURITY AND ACCESS

SECURITY

In northern Uganda, general calm prevailed, with no reports of activity by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). A significant improvement in the security situation in Amuria and Katakwi Districts (Teso sub-region) has prevailed over the past two months, although a few incidents involving illegally-armed Karimojong continue to be reported. Kitgum and Pader Districts have similarly reported a decline in incidents related to aggressive Karimojong activities.

In the Karamoja region, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) reported 21 raids occurred during the month, one of which was cross-border raid from the Turkana region of Kenya into Kaabong District. The Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) conducted 12 cordon-and-search operations, recovering 11 guns. UPDF sources report a total of 123 guns collected during the month. Additionally, one attempted ambush was reported in the region, on a vehicle travelling from Kotido to Kaabong districts. No injuries were reported. Notably, this is the only attempted ambush since February 2008.

In terms of regional security, tensions seemed to rise over perceived border disputes with both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda during the month. On 3 May, Congolese security forces reportedly assumed control over a disputed piece of land on the border in the West Nile region (Arua District). Military officials from countries worked to defuse the situation and President Museveni met with the Congolese President Joseph Kabila in Tanzania on 11 May. In the southwest, Rwandan troops were reported to have deployed three to five kilometres from the common border with Uganda in mid-May. Press reports also indicated that a Rwandan helicopter gunship had violated Ugandan airspace. By the end of the month, the Rwandan Army had reportedly begun to withdraw its troops from the border area, presumably following talks between the two countries.

Additionally, more than a dozen alleged armed Congolese rebels were reportedly arrested after entering the country illegally in mid-May, while two persons believed to be associated with the forces of Congolese dissident General Laurent Nkunda were killed in a confrontation with the UPDF in Kisoro District.

ACCESS

Road conditions are worsening across the Acholi sub-region with continued rainfall and inadequate maintenance.

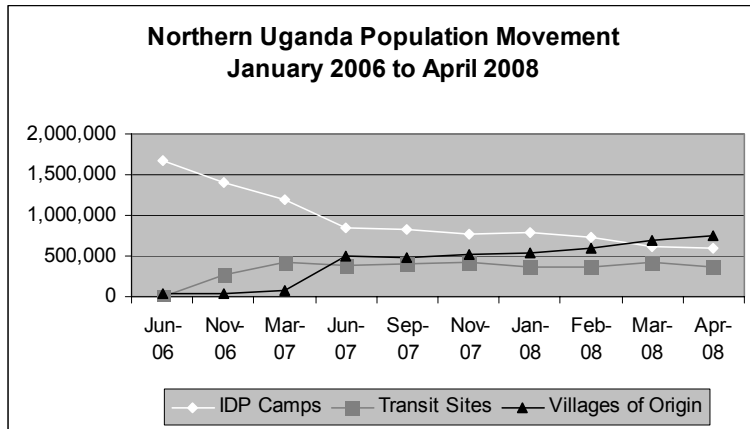
III. POPULATION MOVEMENT AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS

POPULATION MOVEMENT

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/Gulu	453,359	248,359	55%	111,000	24%	94,000	21%
	Kitgum	310,140	205,957	66%	62,947	20%	41,236	13%
	Pader	338,939	93,707	28%	186,042	55%	59,190	17%
	Acholi Total	1,102,438	548,023	50%	359,989	33%	194,426	18%
Teso	Amuria	72,417	22,000	30%	9,000	12%	62,476	86%
	Katakwi	70,534	21,000	30%	3,000	4%	36,000	51%
	Teso Total	142,951	43,000	30%	12,000	8%	98,476	69%
Grand Total		1,245,389	591,023	47%	371,989	30%	292,902	23%

Source: IASC Working Group, April 2008

Generally, the IDP return is continuing across all current IDP-hosting districts, although the rate of return varies across the regions.



The large majority of IDPs in Pader District are now reported to be living outside of the main camps, while the majority of IDPs in Kitgum remain in the camps. Half of the IDPs in Amuru and Gulu Districts have entered the return process, with the latest population movement figures show an increase of 6 per cent in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Acholi districts who returned to their village of origin between March and April 2008.

The significant increase in the pace of return in the Teso sub-region, where the number of IDPs in camps has dropped by more than 40 per cent since the beginning of the year, is primarily attributed to increased security in the region.

Due to the improving security situation, there continues to be population movement in Abim District in the Karamoja region, away from congested “secure” areas to ancestral lands un- or sparsely-inhabited since the late 1960s due to insecurity. One push factor in this phenomenon is the interpretation of the Land Bill to imply that inherited land remaining uninhabited can be claimed by the Government. However, another factor in recent population movements is the increasing food insecurity in parts of Karamoja. In Kotido, for example, groups are reportedly shifting within the district and to Kaabong and Moroto Districts. Nakapiripirit District has seen population movement to more fertile areas, particularly where productive land is newly available due to improved security.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Following the pilot project in Lalogi sub-county, three additional sub-counties in Gulu District – Bobi, Awach and Bungatira – have been identified for integrated assessment in support of the promotion of durable solutions.

IV. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

Discussions regarding camp phase-out continue in Gulu and Amuru Districts. Gulu District has formed a Camp Phase-out Committee (CPC), chaired by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and co-chaired by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). A “Keep Your Place Clean” campaign was launched in Lalogi sub-county, five-person teams provided tools to carry out hut demolition and levelling, filling up of garbage pits and latrines and general camp clean up. The campaign, which also includes community sensitization through the distribution of 500 posters, complements community efforts to demolish huts and relocate materials to return areas. In total, 3,751 huts have been demolished and 485 pit latrines filled in 13 camps in both Gulu and Amuru districts. Similar clean up activities have already been initiated in Kitgum and Pader districts.

In Amuru and Katakwi District, disaster preparedness is being promoted through the construction of flood-resistant huts, which are designed to be more capable of preventing damage due to damp and subsequent displacement.

EDUCATION

Absenteeism remains a major challenge to primary education in both northern and eastern Uganda. In Amuru, for instance, an assessment by the District Education Office (DEO) revealed that 10.6 per cent of enrolled children were not attending school. The onset of the cultivation season has been cited as one of the reasons for the absenteeism, as pupils remain at home to support their parents in the fields. A special campaign to encourage such children to return to school has been launched using radio programmes and within the community. Education partners are also planning catch-up programmes for children out of school, as well as vocational skills training. In the Teso sub-region, absenteeism is largely attributed to food shortages, compounded by the fact that school feeding programmes do not cover all schools in the districts.

Meanwhile, districts in northern Uganda continue to grapple with the lack of teaching staff and inadequate infrastructure, particularly classrooms, water and sanitation. In Pader, where classes in 63 schools continue to be held under trees due to classroom shortage, partners have committed to supply 38 classroom tents: 23 have been delivered, but are yet to be set up. In northern Karamoja, the latrine stance per pupil ratio is as high as 1:131 for boys and 1:79 for girls in some areas. Moreover, 17 per cent of schools visited in a recent assessment had no sanitation facilities for girls. Girl student absenteeism, meanwhile, ranges from one quarter to nearly half of enrolled girls. And in Amuru, where the district plans to recruit 297 teachers to fill staffing gaps, the Ministry of Education’s ceiling of 1,039 new recruits will still leave the teacher to pupil ration much above the 1:55 national standard.

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS (FSAL)

With poor to no rainfall across much of Karamoja, the food security situation is worsening. The prolonged dry spell has meant that most crops planted have either failed to germinate or have withered in the fields. Compounding the situation are the dramatic food price rises that have been recorded in the region since the end of 2007. In Moroto district, the price of sorghum increased between 20 and 63 per cent in various sub-counties between December 2007 and April 2008, while bean prices soared by 60 per cent. Sorghum price increases in Nakapiripirit district over the same period have been as high as 114 per cent with equally sharp rises in the price of maize. The results of a 21 May inter-agency assessment in Abim District indicate similar food price increases since 2007 with sorghum up 150 per cent, ground nuts and green grams up 25 per cent and the price of beef/goat meat up 50 per cent. Results from another inter-agency assessment in eastern Kaabong District on 24 May revealed a 40 to 100 per cent increase since last year for maize grain, beans and sorghum/cereal. Ghee, a form of butter used for cooking and as a body moisturiser, increased in cost by 400 per cent. Some good news may be found in relative stabilization of staple food prices in Moroto and Nakapiripirit Districts from April to May 2008. Bean prices in Nakapiripirit have dropped by between 11 and 30 per cent in some areas, while maize prices dropped between 20 and 30 per cent. In one instance, however, the price of posho (maize flour) increase by 14 per cent during the month. The price stabilization may be attributable to the Global Food Distribution (GFD) in Karamoja region under which almost all targeted beneficiaries have been reached. A Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) assessment has been completed in Karamoja, with the exception of Nakapiripirit, where the assessment is expected to run through June.

According to information received from local populations, there has been upsurge in livestock diseases, which has resulted in the death of more than 100,000 goats in Kotido sub-county since March 2008, while 6,000 to 8,000 cattle have been lost since December. Access to the affected areas and inadequate vaccine stocks are exacerbating the toll. The dry spell is placing pressure on access to pasture and water for cattle.

The Teso sub-region has also been affected by the prolonged dry spell, with minimal rainfall leading to delayed or no planting. Food distributions are ongoing in Katakwi and Amuria Districts. While this is the normal period of hunger gap, the lasting impact of the 2007 floods – two missed harvests – has increased vulnerability.

Northern Uganda, by contrast, has been benefiting from plentiful rainfall. Assistance in the region is increasingly turning to agricultural assistance, such as the voucher for work programme rolled out in Ongako and Paicho sub-counties of Gulu District in which 3,500 households and aims to rehabilitate community infrastructure to facilitate agricultural activities, promote community improved seed stocking and enhance extension services. A similar programme in the first planting season benefited 7,000 households in Lakwana, Odek, Bobi and Lalogi sub-counties.

In Pader, a final two-month food distribution has been carried out to 58,851 people in 11 camps and transit sites following the recommendations of the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) conducted in March 2008. Some 5,636 extremely vulnerable individuals in these locations will continue to receive food assistance. The need for continued food assistance in another 44 camps and transit sites will be assessed according to the results of a May EFSA.

GOVERNANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVELIHOODS (GIL)

A multisectoral Quick Impact Project (QIP) has begun in Gulu to operationalize the district's early recovery plans. Under the QIP, community projects of between US\$ 1,000 and US\$ 5,000 will be implemented through community-based structures. QIPs are also planned for all nineteen sub-counties of Kitgum district, with a total of US\$ 150,000 available for the projects. An additional US\$ 402,000 is available for QIPs in support of the flood-affected population in Amuria, Katakwi, Bukedea and Soroti Districts in the Teso sub-region.

With the support of development partners, Katakwi district local government is working to open community access roads from Palama to Akisim; the road repair is crucial in an area in which most roads were destroyed in the 2007 floods. Community access roads are also being rehabilitated in Ongongoja and Ngariam sub-counties. However, limited resources are inhibiting the opening of important alternative routes that could be used for general access in the case of another major flood event. In Acholi sub-region, construction and/or rehabilitation of community access roads and roads leading to IDP camps is also ongoing.

HEALTH, NUTRITION & HIV/AIDS

Given previous, frequent outbreaks of cholera, Gulu District is on alert for any possible eruption of the disease during the current rainy season. No cholera cases have been reported as yet, but agencies are already conducting hygiene promotion and social mobilization in preparation.

In Pader, efforts to fight onchocerciasis (river blindness) have been boosted by the delivery of drugs from the Ministry of Health to treat the disease. The drugs have been pre-positioned at health centres in the affected areas, including Pajule, Atanga and Awere. Health actors will use radio messaging and other community sensitization to communicate the availability of the drugs.

Health actors in Gulu and Amuru continue to be concerned by the delay in the delivery of drugs from the National Medical Stores (NMS). Meanwhile, in Amuria, the District Health Office has confirmed that Health Centre IIIs in Kapyelebyong, Acowa and Obalanga have been without drugs for more than four months. Amuria District also notes that Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) is less than 10 per cent in the district due to lack of test kits, insufficient testing sites and inadequate community sensitization. In Obalanga sub-county, on 12 per cent of pregnant women receiving antenatal care were offered VCT. There is also an inadequate stock of antiretroviral (ARV) medications for HIV/AIDS patients.

In Karamoja, a mobile Nomadic Health Unit pilot programme was established in Kotido and Moroto in May: the units, which are modelled on a Health Centre II, are assigned to a kraal community (approximately 5,000 to 10,000 people) and will travel with them, providing general healthcare for one year. Staffing has been provided by the District Health Office on a monthly rotation basis. At the end of the 2008/9 fiscal year, the impact of the project will be reviewed for possible expansion to other kraals.

PROTECTION

Land disputes are increasingly being reported across IDP-hosting districts, although many stem from long-standing disputes from before the displacement. In Gulu District, a DDMC assessment confirmed that 92 families had been forcibly evicted by a private landowner through hut demolition without prior warning in Koro Abili camp. The DDMC is consulting with the landowner to redress the situation. Reports of a similar incident allege that 60 families were affected by the burning of huts in Pece Division of Gulu municipality. The DDMC has strongly condemned such forceful evictions as a breach of the IDP policy. There were also reports of forced eviction of IDPs in Magoro Trading Centre from land belonging to a Health Centre. In Kitgum, a wrangle over the parish boundary resulted in the vandalism of a school in Mucwini sub-county, while a dispute with Pader district over the common boundary has reportedly led some returnees in Omiya Anyima back to the IDP camp. Structures for dealing with land disputes exist, such as local council III courts (mandated by law to deal with land matters), district land committees and clan leadership structures. However, these structures have been weakened by non-functionality during the displacement period. They require urgent strengthening if they are to be effective in handling a growing number of cases.

Human Rights / Rule of Law: Police presence in northern Karamoja remains limited and mostly concentrated at the sub-county level, with few patrols at the parish or village level.

Gender Based Violence (GBV): Among concerns raised concerning GBV, is a provision for GBV survivors seeking assistance at Health Centres to produce letters of reference from the Local Council before accessing services. This violates the principle of confidentiality and ultimately discourages GBV victims from seeking treatment and other services. In one district, the reporting of GBV incidents has decreased and is attributed in part to lack of trust in the judicial system, exemplified by police demands for money to transport and assist survivors and health staff absenteeism. High levels of female genital mutilation (FGM) were reported in parts of Nakapiripirit District during an inter-agency assessment conducted in May.

Child Protection: With partner support, the Gulu District Education Office has trained 390 teachers from 36 schools as part of efforts to create a protective environment for children in schools. The training covered the teacher's code of conduct, sexual abuse and exploitation, positive disciplining, and child friendly schools, among other topics. In Pader, high rates of defilement and child neglect, as with domestic violence, are attributed to high alcohol consumption, among other causes. Yet, substance abuse programmes remain inadequate in the district, where one agency is working in only two sub-counties.

In May, a Moroto District Council delegation headed by the LCV Chairman met with officials from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) to discuss the welfare of the Karimojong children forcibly removed from the streets of Kampala and taken to the Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Centre. The District Council delegation informed the MGLSD that Moroto District would not accept the children unless significant improvements were made to water, health and education provision in the sub-counties where from which the children come. Two meetings on the Kampiringisa children were also held between the Moroto CAO, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to discuss short and medium-term plans to improve services in the poorest sub-counties.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

The onset of the rainy season in the Acholi sub-region has raised the possibility of water source contamination. In Gulu, hygiene promotional activities have intensified, with 13 water, environment and sanitation (WES) assessments conducted and 20 community awareness meetings held in May. Water quality analysis is ongoing across the district. In Amuru, partners are piloting a new latrine technology involving the digging of shallow pits in which decomposing garbage is deposited and trees planted on top.

In Pader, WASH partners are concerned about deteriorating sanitation in camps and transit sites, where WASH committees are weak and/or not respected by the community. There is an urgent need to build their capacity and integrate them with the village health teams (VHTs). A gap has also been identified in the coordination of water

quality testing and management, requiring the development of a matrix to facilitate the coordination of water quality testing in the district.

V. SPECIAL FOCUS ISSUES

HEPATITIS E

The outbreak of the Hepatitis E Virus (HEV) remained uncontained in Kitgum District and is feared to have spread to Pader District, where five suspected cases have been reported. There are also suspected cases in Gulu District. The epidemic has now affected 11 sub-counties in Kitgum District, with a cumulative 2,228 cases and 42 deaths reported by the end of May. The health cluster has cited slow community response to prevention measures, as well as the lack of sufficient emergency funding as reasons for the inability to contain the epidemic. A team from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States is in the district to provide technical assistance to containment efforts.

In neighbouring Pader District, preparedness and prevention measures are being undertaken. Four working groups are being formed to cover surveillance, water and sanitation, social mobilization and case management. Partners have emphasized the importance of health inspections in all eating places and are planning hand-washing campaigns emphasizing HEV prevention.

To strengthen the joint response to the epidemic, health and WASH partners have developed an inter-agency, inter-sectoral project for inclusion in Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for Uganda at the mid-year review. Under this project, they are calling for urgent funding of US\$ 6.9 million for:

- Comprehensive, hyper-chlorination of existing water sources
- Rehabilitation and chlorination of old water sources
- Drilling of new water points and assurance of the safe water chain
- Water quality testing
- Construction of new latrines
- Intensive hygiene promotion using developed IEC materials with special emphasis on hand washing
- Provision of water and sanitation NFIs
- Monitoring and evaluation of projects at sub-county level
- Coordination of response

The WASH and Health, Nutrition & HIV/AIDS clusters have also formed a National Taskforce on HEV, under the leadership of the Ministry of Health. This taskforce aims to develop and oversee a containment plan for HEV, support field activities on HEV, and also to advocate for the funding at all levels.

RETURN TO ELECTED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

As reported in April, the Gulu District Local Council (DLC) passed a resolution calling for the dissolution of camp commandant structures and resumption of Local Council I, II and III structures in the district. To facilitate the smooth transition from one local governance structure to the next, the DDMC has held consultative meetings with the LCs. Sensitization campaigns are being planned, targeting both local communities and the LCs themselves. Recognizing that it may require some time for the LCs to take over from the camp commandants, a one-month handover period has been recommended, extending until 30 June 2008. The handover will be accomplished at the camp / village level and will be witnessed by sub-county officials. Plans to recognize the contribution of camp commandants are ongoing.

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, as the move to effect durable solutions persists, more voices are calling for a return / renewal of the local council (LC) system.

JUBA PEACE PROCESS

The planned meeting between LRA Commander Joseph Kony and a delegation of traditional, religious and local government leaders and Members of Parliament from the Acholi sub-region at Ri-Kwangba did not occur as planned during the month of May.

VI. FUNDING

As at the end of May, the total requests for the Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for Uganda in 2008 stand at US\$ 423 million, with US\$ 140 million in contributions (33 per cent of requests) and an additional US\$ 9 million in pledges, according to the Financial Tracking System (FTS).

Uganda, as with other CAP countries, is currently undergoing its mid-year review (MYR). The final MYR should be available at the beginning of July 2008 and will include a number of revisions, including the downsizing of all unfunded projects within the CAP to reflect the remaining timeframe for implementation in the second half of the year.

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.

16 June – Day of the African Child

20 June – World Refugee Day

VIII. CONTACTS

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