

## **UGANDA:**

# **Uncertain peace process impedes return in north while protection crisis looms in Karamoja region**

A profile of the internal displacement situation

28 March, 2007

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## **About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre**

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org).

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## OVERVIEW

### **Uncertain peace process impedes return in north while protection crisis looms in Karamoja region**

*An estimated 1.7 million people remain internally displaced in northern Uganda as a result of the conflict between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The conflict in the north has been exacerbated by incursions of Karamojong warriors and an ongoing government disarmament process which has resulted in new displacement in northeast Uganda. The overall security situation in northern Uganda remains fluid, as a landmark Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA), signed in August 2006 by the LRA and the Government of Uganda expired in late February 2007. A number of LRA groups are reported to have re-entered northern Uganda, causing fear amongst communities and hindering ongoing return and population movement. Despite improved security, illustrated by increased access to land and freedom of movement, the majority of IDPs in Uganda live in appalling conditions with limited access to basic services. In 2005, a Ministry of Health Survey revealed alarmingly high mortality rates in IDP camps.*

*Peace talks aimed at resolving the 21 year conflict between the LRA and the government, mediated by the Government of southern Sudan, are planned to soon resume again in the southern Sudanese town of Juba. A recently appointed UN Envoy on LRA-Affected areas made substantial efforts to revive the talks after they had stalled for three months.*

*Forceful disarmament operations in the north-eastern Karamoja region have sparked heavy clashes between Karamojong warriors and the Ugandan military, resulting in displacement both within the Karamoja region and in neighbouring areas. More than 100 persons have been reportedly killed during raids, battles or bombings. The disarmament process has been characterised by extreme brutality and serious rights abuses, including alleged extrajudicial executions and torture, committed with impunity by the Ugandan military – the same military which has just been deployed to Somalia as part of the African Union peacekeeping force.*

*Interest in the conflict and IDP situation in northern Uganda has grown considerably in 2006, not least due to resolutions passed on the conflict by the UN Security Council, the U.S. Senate, and the European Union. While improvements were made in the overall response to the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda, both the international and government response remains wholly inadequate compared to the magnitude of the crisis.*

### **Background**

The conflict in northern Uganda has lasted 21 years and caused the displacement of an estimated 1.7 million people, of whom approximately 1.5 million receive food assistance from the United Nations (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.5). Since 1986, after the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) led by current President Yoweri Museveni seized power, various groups in northern Uganda have fought the central government. As Museveni established his government in Kampala, soldiers of the previous deposed government fled to their homelands in northern Uganda and eventually formed the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) in an effort to win back power from the NRM government. Members of the UPDA also included former Idi Amin troops, Acholi politicians, and others angered by Museveni's ascendance to power through force after breaking a power-sharing agreement he had signed in Nairobi with General Tito Okello, Uganda's former president and Acholi leader. Moreover, a long history of antagonism exists between the Acholi people of northern Uganda and southern-based elites who dominated the country before independence in 1962, and again since President Museveni's accession to

power in 1986 (RLP, February 2004, p.5; LIU, 30 October 2003, p. 33; CSOPNU, December 2004, p.28, "Nowhere to hide").

As a result of a peace deal signed between the NRM government and the UPDA in 1988, an amnesty process allowed the majority of UPDA soldiers to join Uganda's national army or take positions within Uganda's ruling NRM party. Yet significant suspicion remained amongst the Acholi regarding the central government in Kampala, and this suspicion and lack of trust contributed to the eventual forming of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (RLP, February 2004, p.5). The LRA, initially a popular uprising known as the Holy Spirit Movement led by Alice Lakwena, has fought a low level guerrilla war in an ostensible effort to overthrow President Museveni, restore order and legitimacy to Uganda, rebuild the Acholi nation and culture and generally provide a spiritual cleansing of the nation by ensuring that Uganda is ruled in accordance with the biblical ten commandments (CSOPNU, December 2004, p.28, "Nowhere to hide"). As Uganda's post-independence history lacks the experience of a peaceful political transition, many Ugandans believe violence was and continues to be the only way to address social and economic grievances, according to one human rights group (RLP, February 2004, p.5). Over the course of the conflict, however, the LRA has carried out a multitude of atrocities against the civilian population, including abduction, rape, torture and forced conscription. LRA crimes have been classified as crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court and the court has issued arrest warrants for five top LRA leaders.

In August 2006, the government of Uganda and the LRA signed a landmark Cessation of Hostilities Agreement which has resulted in improved security conditions and humanitarian access. However, insecurity in many areas continues as does the search for a comprehensive political and social solution to address the sustained marginalisation and under-development endured by northern Uganda for over two decades (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1).

### **Causes of displacement**

While the actual conflict in northern Uganda started in 1986, the current displacement crisis in northern Uganda began in 1996 when the government forced civilians into "protected villages" (RLP, February 2004, p.25; CSOPNU, December 2004, p.1, "Land Matters"; CSOPNU, December 2004, p.6, "Nowhere to hide"; HRW, September 2005, p.10). As rebel activity increased, the Ugandan government sought to separate civilians from the rebels in order to reduce the LRA's ability to benefit from suspected collaborators and to clear the territory in northern Uganda for unimpeded military operations (CSOPNU, December 2004, p.6, "Nowhere to hide"). Yet in its efforts to isolate the LRA, the policy of forced encampment has dramatically increased the vulnerability of the population in northern Uganda and entrenched sentiments of political and social marginalisation felt by the Acholi community (CSOPNU, December 2004, p.2, "Nowhere to hide"; RLP, December 2004, p.25). On occasion, the government indiscriminately used mortars and helicopter gunships as a means to force civilians into protected villages (HURIFO, February 2002, p.2-3). A portion of those currently displaced, mainly in Kitgum and Pader, also fled their villages as a direct result of LRA attacks (Weeks, March 2002, p.2).

Over the course of the conflict, the LRA has succeeded in attacking IDP camps despite the deployment of the military to provide protection. The most glaring evidence of this came in 2004 when 200 displaced persons were massacred by LRA rebels in Barlonyo camp, located in Lira district (IRIN, 24 February 2004). In addition, major protection concerns are also evident as a result of the appalling humanitarian conditions in the camps and an almost total lack of government assistance to IDPs, constituting a failure of the state to protect those living in the north from physical harm and human rights abuses (ODI, December 2006, p.5). Due to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, as well as an increase in military and civilian personnel in and around camps, physical protection has recently improved and many IDPs are able to access their

land, or in eastern Uganda, return to their original homes (RLP/IDMC, March 2006, p.22; UNOCHA, January 2007, p. 9.).

In October 2002 the displacement crisis was exacerbated due to an order issued by the Ugandan military stating that all those civilians remaining in “abandoned villages” had 48 hours to move to government camps. During this time the IDP population nearly doubled from 500,000 in early 2002 to almost 800,000 by the end of the 2002 (HRW, September 2005, p.9). The order came as a result of the Ugandan military’s large-scale military offensive entitled “Operation Iron Fist”. With consent of the Sudanese government, the operation targeted the LRA’s rear bases in southern Sudan. The LRA responded by returning to northern Uganda where it carried out an increased amount of abductions, killings and lootings. The area of displacement also expanded during this period as the LRA moved eastwards into the Teso sub-region of eastern Uganda, areas where mainly the Langi and Iteso peoples reside. Due to the failure of the first large-scale military operation, in March 2004 with renewed support from the Sudanese government, the Ugandan military launched “Operation Iron Fist II”. This operation may have proved to weaken the LRA. Yet other factors such as the LRA’s lack of food and the impact of a radio programme which broadcast messages urging members of the LRA to apply for amnesty all may have contributed to decreasing the membership and strength of the LRA (CSOPNU, December 2004, p.31, “Nowhere to hide”).

### **IDP estimates**

Over 90 per cent of the population of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts’ are IDPs (UNICEF, June 2006, p.1). In these districts, as well as Amuru, Oyam and northern Apac, more than one million people are expected to remain in camps in 2007, awaiting a more definitive resolution of the conflict (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1). Due to improvements in security, however, in these same districts UNOCHA estimates that more than 150,000 persons have moved out of IDP camps and are returning to their parishes of origin. UNHCR, however, indicates that 175,000 people have moved out of camps in these same locations (UNHCR, December 2006, p.4). The difference in estimated figures is evidence of the continued lack of an effective IDP registration system and the challenges of consistent data collection mechanisms.

In the Teso and Lango sub-regions of eastern Uganda, significant movement of IDPs to their parishes of origin has taken place. In November 2006 UNOCHA estimated that 300,000 IDPs had returned in all of northern Uganda, including Lango and Teso (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1), whereas UNHCR the following month estimated 450,000 returns in Lango and Teso and 200,000 in central and northern Lira (UNHCR, December 2006, p.4).

In eastern Teso, displacement has continued due to violent cattle raids and human rights abuses perpetrated by Karamojong warriors. Forceful disarmament operations conducted by the Ugandan army have also resulted in abuses against civilians (see below, ‘Crisis in Karamoja’). Over 130,000 IDPs remain in camps in Katakwi and Amuria districts, with little prospect of return due to ongoing insecurity (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1). There are no reliable IDP estimates for the districts most heavily affected by insecurity in Karamoja, such as Kotido and Moroto, as the displacement that does take place is cyclical in relation to both raiding and disarmament and occurs within communities, from village to village. The population of a number of villages has grown considerably, reflecting the need for increased protection in these locations (Representative of humanitarian community, email correspondence, 30 January 2007).

### **Background and main causes of displacement in the Teso region**

The north-eastern Teso region, which comprises Amuria, Soroti, Katakwi, Kaberamaido and Kumi Districts, has also been affected by large-scale internal displacement, mainly caused by cattle-rustling Karamojong warriors originating from a minority of an estimated 100,000 semi-nomadic

pastoralists. This minority is made up of a multitude of clans that traditionally fought each other with spears, sticks, bows and arrows; in the post-colonial period these have been replaced with small automatic weapons. Inter-clan fighting is still rampant, but the violence has increasingly been deployed outwards against clans living across the border in neighbouring Kenya, as well as the national army, local defence units and civilians in the Teso region (GoU, 15 June 2005; UHC, September 2004). The conflict in Karamoja is closely entangled in a history of colonial and post-colonial neglect, shrinking access to pasture and grazing land for cattle, multiple years of drought, and the proliferation of small arms. Commercialisation of cattle-rustling has further fuelled incentives to raid and cause havoc. The result is a self-destructive circle of violence in which victims of the raids, particularly rival Karamojong clans, acquire weapons to protect themselves and/or retaliate against attacking clans. The IDMC has also received reports that elements in the Ugandan army are allegedly involved in stealing cattle and committing other abuses in the region while blaming such abuses on Karamojong warriors or LRA rebels (IDMC interviews, Soroti, Uganda, May 2005).

As noted above, the displacement situation within the Karamoja region remains unclear. Although currently not characterised as an emergency, Karamoja is aggravated by drought, poverty and neglect by consecutive governments. Karamoja displays dire development indicators, such as the lowest primary school enrolment (35 per cent), highest maternal and infant mortality and the lowest life expectancy in all of Uganda. Government services, such as social, medical and judicial institutions, remain inadequate, contributing to an overall break down in the rule of law. The lack of social support and economic opportunities has contributed to “negative coping mechanisms”, such as the outward movement of women and children in search of resources. Such movement has increased vulnerabilities and contributed to a protection crisis (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1; OHCHR, 24 November 2006).

### **Crisis in Karamoja**

As a result of continuing insecurity and the proliferation of small arms in Karamoja, the government renewed a disarmament campaign in May 2006 which has disrupted traditional movement patterns and caused limited displacement within Karamoja. While in the past the government had combined the use of voluntary and military campaigns to disarm the population, due to persistent violent raids, revenge killings and ambushes by Karamojong warriors, currently the government is employing a ‘cordon, search and disarm’ operation, whereby the army, using tanks and helicopter gunships, surrounds villages and searches for weapons (GoU, January 2007, p.12; OHCHR, 24 November 2006, p.3; IRIN, 13 November 2006). The operation has been characterised by human rights abuses and excessive use of force by the Ugandan military, including large numbers of civilian fatalities, alleged arbitrary executions, detentions, and reported incidents of torture (OHCHR, 24 November 2006; OCHA, 7 November 2006).

The overall situation in Karamoja continues to rapidly deteriorate. In recent weeks humanitarian vehicles have been attacked, and reports of Karamojong raids, clashes, and Ugandan military abuses continue to emerge. In two recent incidents, one vehicle was ambushed and looted and 11 women, two of whom were pregnant, were killed by unknown attackers in Nakapiririt district (OCHA, January 2007, p.1; OCHA, 21 February 2007). In numerous incidents, Karamojong have also been subject to forced evictions. In Katakwi, for example, a group of Karamojong women and children were evicted on the grounds that they were providing intelligence information to warriors (OCHA, January 2007, p.1). In the capital Kampala, the government removed up to 1,500 Karamojong women and children from the streets, returning them to Karamoja. The extent to which this movement included registration or was voluntary remains an area of concern and further investigation. Continued actions to ‘clean up’ Kampala are expected to continue in the run-up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting scheduled to take place in Kampala in November.

Due to increased levels of insecurity, humanitarian access in Karamoja is severely limited and humanitarian vehicles require military escort. The government has insisted that the disarmament operation continue, despite calls from the international community, including from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, that the operation immediately halt until measures are put into place to protect civilians (OHCHR, 23 November 2006). Considering the economic and political marginalisation of Karamoja and the few alternative livelihood activities available, the forced disarmament process is not expected to produce a sustainable solution to the ongoing insecurity. A comprehensive government response plan for Karamoja has not yet been launched and its future remains unclear (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.10). Ensuring protection of civilians in Karamoja requires a more robust presence of humanitarian agencies; an ongoing protection monitoring system is also urgently required as reports thus far are ad-hoc and incident-specific. In addition, while the UN and the diplomatic community in Uganda are closely following the situation in Karamoja, increased attention to this issue from the international community, including from the UN in New York and Geneva and donor country capitals, is also required.

### **An uncertain peace process for northern Uganda**

The landmark Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA) was signed in August 2006 and expired on 28 February 2007. Despite its expiration, the fact that an agreement was signed by the government and the LRA as a step towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict surprised most observers and was seen as indicative of how the viability of a peaceful resolution had gained acceptance by both parties and the international community. The CHA resulted from high-level peace talks, mediated by the government of southern Sudan, and took place in the southern Sudanese city of Juba. Currently, the talks are set to resume in Juba after being stalled for months due to LRA concerns regarding the neutrality of the chief mediator, southern Sudanese Vice-President Riek Machar. The LRA also raised concerns regarding their security, as both the Sudanese and Ugandan governments' publicly threatened to use force against the LRA. In addition, the Ugandan army maintains a presence in southern Sudan which has intimidated the LRA on a number of occasions. The UN Envoy for LRA-Affected Areas, former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, recently held direct talks with the LRA after which they expressed a willingness to return to Juba. In addition, Chiassano's visit to the region also resulted in an expansion of the mediation team, which now plans to include representatives from a number of African countries (Reuters, 16 March 2007).

Despite pledges from both the LRA and the government that they would not renew hostilities, small groups of LRA fighters have been sighted in Pader and northern parts of Gulu district, and two abductions have been reported in Pader, raising concerns of possible renewed conflict (OCHA, 7 January 2007). As a result, aid agencies have begun the process of contingency planning for renewed conflict (IRIN, 2 March 2007).

The peace talks in Juba are widely supported by the international community. The UN Security Council issued a presidential statement welcoming the CHA (UNSC, 16 November 2006), and the UN established the Juba Initiative Fund, aimed at facilitating the basic necessities of the peace talks and supporting the Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team (UN, 5 October 2006).

The Juba process has also experienced many challenges, such as how peace would be achieved while also complying with the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants issued against the LRA's five top commanders, including leader, Joseph Kony. In recognition of this challenge, recently retired Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland, urged the Security Council to back the peace process rather than seeking to secure arrest warrants for the LRA leaders (RLP/IDMC, October 2006, p.iv). Concerns have also been raised regarding the legitimacy of the LRA delegation as it is primarily drawn from outside Uganda and its direct connection with the LRA leadership remains uncertain. The framework for the peace talks includes agenda items relating to accountability and reconciliation, as well as comprehensive solutions to the conflict. Thus when

the talks resume, the need for broader civil society inclusion is needed as well as an enhanced role for IDP women. Moreover, should any peace process resume, it must be accompanied by a broader national process which addresses the marginalisation of the Acholi sub-region and establishes a framework for reconciliation (RLP, December 2006; ICG, 13 September 2006).

### **A regional crisis**

The LRA presence in southern Sudan and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to destabilise the region. In southern Sudan, the security situation continued to deteriorate due to reports of violence committed by both the LRA and other armed groups in the region (UNMIS, 6 March 2007; OCHA, 21 February 2007). In January 2006, the LRA killed eight UN peacekeepers in the eastern DRC as they were performing a reconnaissance mission in Garamba National Park, an area near the Sudanese border where the LRA have allegedly maintained positions (Reuters, 31 January 2006).

The UN Security Council in 2006 passed two resolutions which highlighted the regional nature of the conflict, through expressing deep concern about LRA atrocities committed in both the DRC and Sudan. The Security Council also stressed the primary responsibility of governments in the region to protect their civilians and ensure unhindered humanitarian access in accordance with international law (UNSC, 27 January 2006; UNSC, 24 March 2006).

Complicating the situation in the region, recent reports also indicate that members of the LRA may have crossed into Central African Republic (CAR) (Reuters, 23 February 2007). The LRA denies such reports, but should they be confirmed it could indicate that the LRA is seeking a new safe haven as the southern Sudanese government has thus far been unable to guarantee their security. A recent statement by the Congolese Interior Minister threatening the LRA presence in the eastern DRC may have also caused the group to look for a safer location to base its fighters (DPA, 26 February 2007).

### **Protection concerns**

The current security situation in northern Uganda has improved steadily, however the uncertain outcome of peace talks and the possible movement of LRA groups back into Uganda has caused widespread concern amongst communities. Thus the situation remains fluid and unpredictable. Abuses perpetrated by the Ugandan military also continue to be a source of insecurity, indicating that aside from the threat of LRA violence the most common occurrences of violence can be attributed to government security forces. Recently, in Pader district, a government vehicle was ambushed by an allegedly drunken member of a local defence unit (LDU). The vehicle drove through the ambush and no injuries were reported (UN, 2 March 2007). The lack of professional conduct of LDUs and their role in instigating abuses is well documented and is a cause for continued concern (RLP/IDMC, March 2006, p.23; HRW, September 2005, p.70). In a number of cases LDUs have been drawn directly from the displaced population itself, a practice which is contrary to the National IDP Policy and raises concerns regarding the militarisation of IDP camps (RLP/IDMC, March 2006, p.23; UNICEF, May 2005, p.5). Illustrating the overall lack of security, increased criminal activity and banditry also continue to be reported throughout northern Uganda.

On a positive note, 600 Special Police Constables (SPCs) were recently deployed to Gulu and Amuru district in an effort to improve enforcement of the rule of law. SPCs have also been deployed in Lira district. To support the deployment, UNHCR has provided bicycles and communication equipment (OCHA, 7 January 2007, p.9). These deployments require careful monitoring as most SPCs were drawn from LDU units and they were provided with inadequate training (OCHA, 30 November 2006, p.12). Moreover, there have been unconfirmed reports of SPCs engaging in extortion of the local population.



The overall impact of the conflict on children in northern Uganda has been especially acute. The LRA largely consists of abducted children who have been forced to become child soldiers or sex slaves to commanding officers. Since the beginning of the conflict in 1986, an estimated 25,000 children have been abducted; 7,500 are girls with 1,000 having conceived children during captivity (UNICEF, January 2007). Estimates of the current size and composition of the LRA vary between 800 and 3,000 members.

### **A changing humanitarian environment**

While humanitarian conditions across northern Uganda vary, the majority of IDPs continue to live in deplorable conditions and lack safe and sustainable access to clean water, health care, food, education and shelter. A study conducted by the Ugandan Ministry of Health in 2005, the findings of which the government disputes, revealed that over 1,000 deaths occur each week in northern Uganda with the majority of deaths attributed to malaria/fever and HIV/AIDS (the findings are based on a crude mortality rate of 1.54 people per 10,000 per day, compared with 0.46 nationally). The study also found that the majority of deaths occur outside health facilities, highlighting a serious deficiency in accessing adequate healthcare. Overcrowding in camps has a direct effect on human health by increasing transmission of both endemic and epidemic diseases (Ugandan MoH, July 2005, p.ii; CSOSPU, March 2006, p. 15). As the government disputes the findings of this study, many health-related agencies have discontinued using these findings, and as no mortality survey was conducted in 2006, it remains unclear what data health-related humanitarian interventions are based on (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.6; IDMC Interview, 21 June 2006).

In a number of humanitarian sectors, such as access to land, nutrition and water and sanitation, slight improvements were reported by the UN. In early 2006 relief food rations were reduced from 74 per cent to 40-60 per cent, after which household food access for IDPs continued to improve. Improvements are largely due to greater access to land which has allowed for increased agricultural activity, all of which has resulted from improved security. Still, extremely vulnerable households will continue to need targeted food assistance. Safe access to water also improved, as did the availability of latrines (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p. 6, 22).

Except for the Karamoja region, access in northern Uganda improved. By October 2006, only 29 camps in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader still required escort. All of Lira can now be accessed without military escort. Improvements are again due to the historic signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement which has dramatically improved the security situation (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p. 10). Yet in some areas, such as Pader, restrictions on movement and curfews remain in place.

### **Return and movement outside camps**

In the Teso and Lango sub-regions of eastern Uganda, significant numbers of IDPs have returned to their home parishes and many to their farms, and many more are expected to return depending on security. In Soroti and Kaberamaido districts, more than 90 per cent of IDPs have returned to their villages of origin. In Lira district, emergency assistance has been phased out, though the challenge of enabling a sustainable return remains as there has been no corresponding support to transitional projects. However, UN agencies are stepping up efforts to begin early recovery programmes. Civilian police have also been deployed in return areas as well as anti-stock theft units to counter raids by Karamojong warriors. Such deployments have had limited success due to inadequate training of security units, limited resources, and the lack of a functioning judiciary system in a number of areas, such as Pader (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p. 8, 12)

In the Acholi districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, population movement has continued with a cautious overtone. The number of new sites developing where IDPs are locating continues to increase. Many of these new sites retain the appearances of camps and people access their own land on a commuting basis. Lack of schools and health facilities in new settlement sites is dividing families, as many choose to leave women and children in camps where basic services are available while men work in fields or return to their villages. Such division of families constitutes a new protection challenge (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.1). In Gulu, local authorities continue to inform IDPs via the radio that certain sub-counties are safe for return. UNHCR also reported in January 2007 that the number of people moving out of camps had increased (UNOCHA, 7 January 2007, p.5).

While the movement described above is indeed positive, its full realisation as return is still dependent on a number of key factors such as the uncertain peace talks, the security situation on the ground, the agricultural calendar, availability of building materials (bricks and thatch), as well as access to basic services. It should also be remembered that more than one million IDPs are expected to remain in camps awaiting a final confirmation of an end to insecurity (UNOCHA, 30 November, p.1).

### **National response**

On 4 May 2006, the government launched a new Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and an Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Interventions for the North. Chaired by the Prime Minister, and comprising various government ministries, donors and two civil society groups, the JMC will monitor and discuss issues related to implementation of the Emergency Plan. The Plan aims to improve and enhance government responses in a number of key areas, namely cessation of hostilities and regional security, peace building, protection and assistance of IDPs, and return and reintegration (GoU, May 2006). At the national level, the JMC has substituted the coordinating bodies outlined in Uganda's National IDP Policy. The JMC and its Emergency Action Plan are to be phased out and replaced by the government's National Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP). However, since its launch the JMC has been extended on numerous occasions and at the time of writing the status of the PRDP remains unclear.

While the UN and the EU welcomed the JMC and the corresponding Emergency Plan (UN, 4 May 2006; EU, 15 May 2006), civil society and local government representatives in northern Uganda greeted the plan with scepticism. Members of Parliament from the war-affected districts maintained they had not been adequately consulted, and it remains unclear to what extent local government officials in the north were included in the formulation of the Plan (IRIN, 21 April 2006).

In December 2006, the JMC issued a statement which attempts to harmonise approaches to population movement. The statement is welcome as it provides a framework in which district authorities should operationalise support to population movements, and includes provisions for District Security Committees to undertake consultations with IDPs in determining if areas are safe for return and that messaging on movement and return should be clear, consistent and coherent (UNOCHA, 7 January 2007, p.4). The national response, however, continues to be characterised by numerous challenges. For example, return and resettlement officers deployed by the central government to affected districts superseded actions in relation to population movement so far taken by district authorities and District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs). Moreover, the lack of local government structures and services, especially at the sub-county level, is a primary impediment to return and substantiates a claim that the government lacks the political will to provide northern Uganda with the resources and attention it deserves.

### **International humanitarian response**

The international response to the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda remains largely inadequate. High mortality rates and continued human rights abuses are evidence of the fact that the majority of the displaced are unable to meet their basic needs and remain exposed to abuse. The lack of response is most evident in Karamoja, where civilians have endured serious rights abuses in an environment of total impunity and human development indicators remain unacceptably low.

The humanitarian community continued to struggle with the collection of baseline data and determining if improvements have actually been made. Funding is also uneven, with the majority of funds going to the Acholi region, neglecting the appalling situation in Karamoja (UNOCHA, 30 November 2006, p.8). However, funds for the Acholi region may also be in jeopardy as the World Food Programme recently announced it may be forced to cut food rations by 50 per cent due to funding gaps (WFP, 16 March 2007).

The UN is currently implementing the new “cluster” approach in Uganda. As part of the broader humanitarian reform process, through assigning UN agencies responsibilities for certain sectors, or clusters, the UN hopes to increase the accountability and predictability of overall humanitarian response. In Uganda, the cluster approach is applied in four areas where significant gaps in humanitarian response exist; protection, early recovery, health, and water and sanitation. The overall protection cluster implementation falls under the leadership of the UN’s refugee agency, UNHCR. Early recovery is led by UNDP in coordination with UNHCR, and health and nutrition and water and sanitation by UNICEF (UNOCHA, 4 May 2006, 5-12).

The role of the clusters, and in particular of UNHCR as protection cluster lead, has contributed to ensuring a greater awareness of the assistance and protection needs of IDPs. With increased funding UNHCR’s presence in northern Uganda has slowly grown and so have their activities. NGOs and donors, however, have continued to raise concerns about the protection cluster’s focus on return and lack of attention to other protection needs where return is not taking place. To address these concerns, the protection cluster recently held a workshop in which the protection strategy was reviewed, where it was decided to establish a camp management cluster. However, clarity is still lacking in regards to the protection cluster and its role in the evolving situation in Karamoja. Considering the acute protection challenges currently existing in Karamoja, it remains unclear why the protection cluster is not actively engaged in responding to the situation.

# CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

## Background

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### History of the conflict (December 2004)

- Colonial rule followed the classic 'divide and rule' pattern
- Under the British, the North was considered a labour reserve for southern plantations, and as a source of army recruits
- Many Ugandans have come to identify themselves with their ethnic group rather than with citizenship of the Ugandan nation state
- Following Uganda's independence, power in government was progressively consolidated among politicians of northern origin
- Idi Amin, with the tacit support of the UK, US and Israeli governments toppled northern led government led by Milton Obote in 1971
- In recent times the Movement system led by Museveni has come increasingly under attack as monopolising political space, and centralising political power

### CSOPNU, 10 December 2004, pp. 26-28:

"British rule in Uganda followed the classic 'divide and rule' pattern, accentuating the pre-existing ethnic divisions in the Protectorate with several large, and many smaller ethnic groups. Uganda is often conveniently divided into the 'North', dominated by Luo and Nilotics; the 'Centre' dominated by a balance of power between the Bantu-speaking Baganda and Banyoro; and the 'Southwest' dominated by the Bantu-speaking Banyakole and related groups. Under the British, the North was considered a labour reserve for southern plantations, and as a source of army recruits, and was marginalised in economic development plans, with most investment and planning favouring the Baganda region around Kampala. These ethnic and regional divisions laid down by the British sowed the seeds for a series of national crises since independence, in that many Ugandans have come to identify themselves with their ethnic group rather than with citizenship of the Ugandan nation state. They also served to entrench a series of damaging ethnic stereotypes (particularly relating to the Acholi as dangerous, militaristic, aggressive barbarians), which have fuelled ethnic tension and produced fear among Ugandans over the past 50 years.

### Independence

Following Uganda's independence, power in government was progressively consolidated among politicians of northern origin led by Milton Obote, a Lango from Lira. Obote came to power via democratic means, leading the protestant based Uganda People's Congress (UPC). Unfortunately, during the following years, he progressively marginalised other political representation, including the Catholic Church linked Democratic Party (DP), and non-northern ethnic groups. He also built links with the USSR, and flirted with Marxism, a move which was to prove his downfall when in 1971 he was toppled by his army chief Idi Amin, with the tacit support of the UK, US and Israeli governments.

Initially, Amin was content to implement policies suggested by his foreign backers, and to represent the interests of the Sudanic speaking peoples from his region in the North-west of Uganda. Unfortunately Amin's rule degenerated into an anarchic misrule, and in 1979, he was finally toppled by an invading army of Tanzanian "liberators". Obote, a personal ally of Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, was then returned to power amid accusations of fraud and rigged

elections, and true to the tradition of Ugandan politics, set about swiftly reorganizing the army, returning Langi and Acholi officers to prominent positions, as well as reorienting the government to reflect his northern constituency. The army's name was changed to the Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA) and it quickly embarked upon an operation of trying to quell the rebel insurgencies that had sprung up over the previous years, including that of Yoweri Museveni, the National Resistance Army (NRA). In this process, the Obote regime waged a military campaign against both rebel groups and the civilian populations that they were affiliated with, thereby wielding state terror as an instrument of war. Of particular importance was the battle fought between the UNLA and the NRA in the area of Luwero in Central Uganda.

### **Museveni and the Movement**

The NRA was constituted mainly by soldiers from Museveni's home area of Ankole in south-western Uganda, but was supported by ethnic Tutsi soldiers from Rwanda. The Rwandan connection emerged from the close ethnic ties between the two groups along the Rwanda/Uganda border, and also from the fact that Museveni had developed a strong friendship with Paul Kagame, a Rwandan Tutsi, while the two had been resident in Dar es Salaam. Their rebellion began in the southwest, but quickly moved up into the central region and into Luwero specifically, where for the next five years a brutal war was waged between the NRA and the UNLA on territory which is home to the Buganda people.

Museveni's motivation for beginning this conflict with the government was ostensibly to challenge Obote's legitimacy following what he claimed to have been rigged elections in 1980. He also sought to redress the balance of power in Uganda, this time in favour of his own people in the southwest region of the country, and to revenge the wrongs that he felt had been visited upon Bantu Ugandans in the south and southwest during the 18 years of northern rule.

Other groups – many representing particular ethnic groups or regional interests, including a faction of Amin's army – subsequently joined this campaign, united mainly by their opposition to Obote, rather than by a common ideology. Many atrocities against civilians were committed by the armed forces at this time, particularly in the Luwero triangle, and rebels fighting to topple the government were also known to target civilians perceived to be UPC sympathisers.

In 1985, Milton Obote was toppled once again, this time by his Acholi generals, however they were unable to resist Museveni's continuing rebellion, and in January 1986, following a breach of the Nairobi peace accord, the National Resistance Army (NRA) entered Kampala and seized control.

In the years that followed, the NRA succeeded in pacifying much of the country, and large parts of Uganda have since enjoyed the fruits of stability, economic recovery and the rise of the home-grown Movement system. This system notes the sharp vertical divisions in Ugandan society through religious and ethnic difference, and assumes that political parties would inevitably become defined by allegiance to such groupings. As a result no active political parties have been allowed for most of the past 18 years, and all Ugandan citizens are said to belong to the *Movement*.

In recent times however, the Movement system has come increasingly under attack as monopolising political space, and centralising political power, while operating as a de facto political party. This has spurred agitation for the opening up of a political space in which other parties, including the UPC and DP, might operate freely. In the lead up to the elections due in 2006 the GoU has finally permitted the establishment of political parties.

A clear failure of the Movement has been to develop a mechanism for national reconciliation. In spite of the fact that the Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights published a comprehensive report on rights abuses to 1986 in report in 1994, and that the Uganda Human

Rights Commission was established in the following year, few legal cases have been brought against those who have committed human rights abuses under past regimes. Approaches to human rights abuses have so far been focused only on punishment rather than on healing, and there has been no proxy for a 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission' as part of the process. Instead, past wrongs have generally been blamed on current members of ethnic groups associated with particular institutions.

Thus many Ugandan citizens actively believe the Acholi people to be directly responsible for the wrongs perpetrated against civilians during the Obote II regime. They believe this because of the generally held stereotype that the national army at that time was an Acholi army, even though the Langi dominated the regime. This attitude goes some way to explaining the indifference toward, or even support for the suffering that Acholis in northern Uganda currently experience. Similarly, many Acholi see their experience in a highly polarised way, and are convinced that the government and people from the West are seeking revenge against them in a systematic manner. Some Acholi even speak of other Ugandans as foreigners, and talk of a plot among other Ugandans to persecute and destroy the Acholi.

### **Northern Resistance and the LRA**

In spite of the pacification that took place in much of the rest of Uganda, peace has not yet settled in Acholiland. Since 1986 five rebel movements have waged a low level war against the GoU in the region. In 1986, the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) began a rebellion in response to Museveni's rise to the Presidency. The UPDA was largely comprised of remnants of the defeated UNLA who were predominantly northerners, and they continued fighting against the new government until 1988 when a peace accord was brokered between them and the GoU (the Pece Accord).

While some UPDA leaders were successfully integrated into the army and into the ruling party, mutual suspicion remained between the Movement and the Acholi people, and this continued to inform relations between the GoU and the North. In late 1986, these suspicions were reflected in the appearance of a popular Acholi uprising known as the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), led by a spiritualist named Alice Lakwena. In 1986, Lakwena succeeded in building a substantial force, partly consisting of old UPDA, which had some success until it was routed in Jinja. Lakwena fled into exile, but the struggle was carried on first by her father Severino Lukoya, and since 1989 by a cousin named Joseph Kony. His Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continues to fight a low-level guerrilla war with the GoU to this day, ostensibly in a desire to overthrow President Museveni, to restore order and legitimacy to the state of Uganda, to cleanse the nation through the establishment of a government that will rule in accordance with the 'Ten Commandments'

The fiercest period of fighting in northern Uganda prior to 2002 was in the mid-1990s when many Acholi were gathered into IDP camps by the GoU and UPDF for their own 'protection'. Since that time the conflict has fluctuated on a more or less cyclical basis."

### **The war is spreading east (March 2004)**

- The year 2003 saw what appears to have been a deliberate and well coordinated spread of the war
- Movement of the LRA into Teso and Lango districts
- Teso is known as a fertile farming region that supplies beef, chicken and potatoes
- The LRA appears to have believed it could gain support from these areas
- The incursion could be an attempt to punish the Iteso for their continued support of the National Resistance Movement of president Museveni

- The conflict increasingly seen within a national historical context

**ISS, 31 March 2004 chapter 5:**

"Apart from attacks in West Nile and Lango since the early 1990s, the LRA conflict has been felt most intensely in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. The year 2003, however, saw what appears to have been a deliberate and well coordinated spread of the war, to the east in particular. In May 2003, the LRA ambushed a bus along Pakwach-Karuma road in Gulu District. This was followed on 15 June 2003 by simultaneous attacks in the districts of Lira, Apac and Katakwi, in what some in Teso have called their "September 11th". Three days later, the LRA attacked Adjumani town for the first time in fourteen years. These attacks were soon followed by others of greater frequency and intensity in the districts of Kaberamaido and Katakwi in Teso region. On 24 June, the LRA attacked Soroti town, resulting in at least 200 deaths and the abduction of hundreds more children, including 100 schoolgirls. A group of IDPs in Lira described this sequence of events: "The attacks were gradual. We knew the rebels were camped at a certain place, but they did not attack for a long time, so we waited. We told the UPDF but they did not respond. So we waited, and suddenly places were attacked and because they didn't protect us, we had to run." Thus, LRA attacks have not only continued with intensity across the Acholi sub-region, but have also spread to several other areas.

On 26 June, it was reported that more than 2 000 veterans of the defunct Teso-based rebel Uganda People's Army (UPA) led by Musa Ecweru, then Resident District Commissioner (RDC) of Kasese, and local MP John Eresu, had joined the UPDF to fight the rebels in Teso. This development was later opposed by a group of northern parliamentarians, who viewed the deployment of paramilitary groups as unconstitutional.

The movement of the LRA into Teso and Lango appears to have occurred for several reasons. First, many believe that the LRA were running short of food and other logistical supplies, having thoroughly looted Gulu, Kitgum and Pader for the past 17 years. With more than 80% of the population in these districts displaced in IDP camps, most of the land currently lies fallow. Given the fact that the LRA relies chiefly on plundering agricultural stocks to resupply its food needs, and that many planting seasons have been missed in these districts, there are few crops left to loot. Teso, on the other hand, is known as a fertile farming region that supplies beef, chicken and potatoes to other regions of Uganda. It was thus a key target area to attack when foodstuffs were in short supply in the usual operational area.

Second, the LRA appears to have believed it could gain support from these areas, particularly among former rebels from Teso and Tororo/Busia. As an official in Soroti commented, [Kony] thought that since we had a rebellion here, he could find potential allies. They thought they could then proceed to fight the government until Kampala. They wanted to spread their area of influence. The UPDF is taking over Gulu and Kitgum, so they came here. But the people of Teso have not joined them; we have the Arrows. 214

Our interviews reveal that the LRA first spent several days in both areas without attacking. According to local residents in Obalanga (Katakwi District, part of Teso region), the rebels were initially very friendly – playing football, watching videos, and generally interacting freely with the population. 215 Informants also reported that the LRA came with a list of names of former UPA rebels who had fought against the government from 1987 to 1992. They wanted to know the locations of these ex-fighters so as to activate them to fight the "dictatorial" Museveni government. A similar thing appears to have occurred in Tororo and Busia in September and October 2003, with the LRA allegedly sending six scouts in search of fighters from the former 9 October Movement. 216 Kony appears to be following in the footsteps of UPDA fighters from Gulu, who in 1988 attempted to join UPA rebels in Teso against the government. 217 The move to Lango (Lira and Apac districts) came later in September, and appears to have been in part a reaction to being pushed back from Teso. 218

The drive to activate former fighters in the east may have been an attempt by the LRA to reorganise itself in a time of uncertainty, given the potential implications of the Sudan peace process, which brought the LRA's key supply line increasingly under threat. In the past, Kony had shown his ability to adapt to changing circumstances. For instance, during the 1994 negotiations he evidently took advantage of a lull in the fighting to abduct more children and go to Sudan for arms and ammunition. 219 With reports that the LRA command structure had been reshuffled in recent weeks, 220 something similar may have been taking place.

Another explanation for the war's spread was that it was an attempt to punish the Iteso for their continued support of the NRM. As one informant in Soroti said, "They say the Iteso are the strongest supporters of the Movement in the north, so they must be punished for it." 221 Others claimed that it was a deliberate attempt by Kony to prove that, after Operation Iron Fist, the LRA was still a force to be reckoned with, giving the lie to claims that the LRA was about to be finished off once and for all. For instance, Museveni wrote in a letter to the *New Vision* in August 2002, "You can be sure this conflict will be over, latest by February, when the grass will have been burnt, if it goes that far." 222 As a religious leader said, "Kony wants to prove that he is alive and well after Operation Iron Fist, which is supposed to have finished him. So to show that it was a failure, the best way is to spread." 223

Some interviewees believed that the LRA attacked Soroti because they were seeking revenge for Acholi UNLA soldiers who were killed in Teso in 1986: "During the withdrawal of UNLA, as they were running north, they were intercepted in Teso and killed. This was in 1986. The Iteso pretended to entertain them, but they killed them at night. Some people are coming to revenge these killings." 224 Others speculated that ex-UPA rebels who had joined the LRA in the 1980s, invited the LRA to enter their district: "We have heard of the invitation sent by the rebels to come here by many rebels, especially the ex-UPA ones who did not surrender. These ones are with the rebels and they are the ones directing them in this region." 225

Whatever the reasons for the LRA extending its geographical focus, it has radically changed perceptions of the conflict. The extent to which the conflict is being seen increasingly within a national historical context is symptomatic of this change of opinion. In addition, and in response to such wider interpretations of the war, there has been an increase in pressure for the war to end both by those directly affected by the war, and by those increasingly aware of its protracted nature."

## **A Chronology of events in the northern Uganda conflict (June 2005)**

### **IRIN, 9 June 2005:**

"1986

- Remnants of the Uganda National Liberation Front/Army – the national army of the government toppled in January by President Yoweri Museveni's guerrilla National Resistance Movement/Army (NRM/A) reorganise themselves to form the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA).
- UPDA launches a bush war against the NRA, with the first significant attack in Gulu on 20 August.
- By the end of 1986, many schools and dispensaries in rural areas of northern Uganda are closed, and some roads blocked.

1987

- A self-proclaimed Acholi priestess, Alice Lakwena, mobilises uneducated youths and links up with UPDA to form the Holy Spirit Movement.



1988

- Lakwena's movement advances across northern and eastern Uganda and finally is defeated near Jinja. She flees to neighbouring Kenya.
- Remnants of the Holy Spirit Movement regroup under the command of Joseph Kony, Lakwena's nephew, in Gulu, and her father, Severino Lokoya, in Kitgum.

1989 - 1990

- Lokoya is arrested by the NRA and imprisoned.
- Joseph Kony's group starts ambushing and looting civilians and burning schools.
- An Italian priest, Fr Egidio Biscaro, is killed in a rebel ambush.

1991

- NRA launches a military campaign led by Maj Gen David Tinnyefuza. From April to August it seals off the northern districts of Apac, Lira, Gulu and Kitgum from the rest of Uganda.
- The rebels begin the practice of maiming and mutilating civilians, including cutting off lips, ears, breasts and hands.
- Tension between Sudan and Uganda increases after the Ugandan town of Moyo is bombed a number of times, reportedly by Sudanese government aircrafts, and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) officials - including leader John Garang - are seen in Gulu and Kitgum.

1993

- Pope John Paul II visits Gulu on 6 February. A lull in rebel activities follows until August, when groups of heavily armed insurgents come from Sudan under the new name of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and launch attacks on Ugandan army units.
- Towards the end of the year, peace talks between the government and the LRA are initiated under the leadership of the minister for the pacification of the north, Betty Bigombe.

1994

- Peace talks continue until the beginning of February, when the rebels reject President Museveni's seven-day ultimatum to surrender.
- The LRA responds by launching armed attacks, especially on roads. Reportedly supported by the Sudanese government, which accuses Uganda of helping the SPLM/A, the LRA plants landmines on main roads and footpaths.

1995

- Violence escalates. In April, the LRA kills more than 200 people in Atyak.
- Uganda and Sudan cut diplomatic ties.
- In August, the LRA invades Kitgum district and carries out the first large-scale abduction of children to beef up their forces. During a retreat towards the Sudanese border they are bombed by an army helicopter, leaving dozens of rebels and abductees dead.
- The new constitution is introduced in October 1995, and the NRA is renamed the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF).
- From October, a joint offensive by the SPLM/A and UPDF dislodges the LRA from its base in Palotaka in southern Sudan. The fighting continues well inside Sudan.

1996

- Presidential and parliamentary elections are held. Over 90 percent of the Acholi people vote for opposition leader Paul Ssemogerere.
- In February the LRA makes a violent comeback, laying ambushes, planting landmines and abducting children.
- The year sees some of the worst atrocities committed by the rebels, who line up the bodies of their murdered victims along the Gulu-Kampala Road.

- Mass displacement begins and the government begins a policy of moving people into "protected villages" in Gulu – Pabbo camp for the internally displaced is opened in Gulu.
- In July, the LRA attack a refugee camp at Acholpii, in Kitgum district, killing 115 Sudanese refugees. Two elders who attempt to go on a peace mission to talk to the rebels are murdered on arrival at the venue.
- In August, the rebels kill 20 civilians in a market in Cwero.
- In October, 139 schoolgirls are abducted from St Mary's College at Aboke in Lira District. Most of them are released after the deputy headmistress, Sr Rachelle Fraser, follows the rebels and pleads for the girls, managing to get most of them released. More students are abducted from Sir Samuel Baker Secondary School in Gulu.

#### 1997

- The new year starts with a five-day killing spree in Lamwo county and Kitgum district, with the LRA killing 400 people killed and displacing thousands more.
- Later in January, a parliamentary commission of inquiry about the war in the north passes a recommendation to pursue a military solution and not engage in peace talks with the rebels.
- In April, another joint offensive by the SPLM/A and the UPDF inside Sudan forces the LRA to move its camp further north from Aruu to Jebelein.
- Catholic, Protestant and Muslim religious leaders begin local peace initiatives.

#### 1998

- Kitgum's assistant resident district commissioner, James Canogura, is shot dead in an ambush on the Kalongo-Kitgum Road. Thirty girls are abducted from a secondary school in Kalongo.
- The Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative is formed.

#### 1999

- Seventy LRA rebels are killed in a battle with Karimojong warriors near Morulem, Kotido.
- Rebels abduct more than 70 children and youths from Omiya Anyima, Kitgum.
- In February, rebels retreat to Sudan, and for about 10 months, there is almost complete peace. Many people attempt to leave the IDP camps to go back to their homes.
- Uganda and Sudan sign a peace accord on 8 December. The return of all abductees and the restoration of diplomatic relations are pledged.
- Uganda's parliament passes an amnesty bill that offers immunity from prosecution to rebels who denounce the rebellion and voluntarily surrender to the government.
- Hopes for peace collapse as LRA attacks Gulu at the end of December.

#### 2000

- Rebels attack Padibe IDP camp, Kitgum district, in March, leaving 12 people dead.
- Kitgum's resident district commissioner, John Baptist Ocaya, dies after being ambushed on the Kitgum-Gulu Road in June.
- A second peace deal between Uganda and Sudan, brokered by Former US President Jimmy Carter's peace programme, the Carter Centre, is signed in September.
- A Catholic priest, Fr Raffaele di Bari, is shot dead in an ambush near his mission in Pajule on 1 October.

#### 2001

- Presidential elections are held in March. Again, the majority of the Acholi people vote against Museveni. Twelve people, including 11 students from a catering college, are killed by the LRA near Paraa Lodge, in Masindi district in northwestern Uganda.

#### 2002

- In March, Museveni sets up camp in Gulu to personally oversee operations against the rebels. Army commander James Kazini vows to resign if Kony is not captured or killed by 31 December.
- The LRA sets up Richard Matsanga, a.k.a. David Nyekorach, as its spokesman in London.

- In June, LRA field commander Vincent Otti sends a letter to the government seeking peace talks.

2003

- In January, a newly created presidential peace team gives the LRA hotlines on which to conduct peace talks.

- In February, Uganda says it has ended its support of the SPLM/A, and Sudan allows the Ugandan army to pursue Kony inside Sudanese territory.

- In April, the LRA abduct 290 people in Lira. In June, it launches attacks in the eastern region, hitting Katakwi and then Soroti districts, causing the displacement of thousands.

2004

- In February, nearly 30,000 people are displaced and 4,000 huts burned in Pabbo IDP camp.

- Later in February, the LRA attack Barlonyo IDP camp in Lira, killing over 200 civilians. Street protests follow the killings, with mobs hunting suspects from Acholi and demanding that Museveni resign.

- In July, the army captures Kony's training commander, Brig Kenneth Banya. He is the first high-profile rebel captured by the army since the rebellion started.

- The Uganda army claims to have the upper hand in the conflict.

- Betty Bigombe begins a fresh peace initiative in November. A government ceasefire ends unsuccessfully when the LRA refuses to sign the government's draft peace agreement.

2005

- In January, north and south Sudan sign a comprehensive peace agreement - both sides pledge to help the Ugandan government defeat Kony.

- In February, the government declares an 18-day truce to enable LRA soldiers to come out of the bush and seek amnesty. Brig Sam Kolo, LRA spokesman, becomes the highest-ranking rebel so far to surrender to the UPDF.

- In March, the LRA intensifies its attacks on civilians, killing and maiming several IDPs in Kitgum, Gulu and Pader districts.

- In May, the UN puts pressure on the government to seek a peaceful solution to the war. Bigombe says she is in regular contact with Kony and negotiations are "on course".

- In May, the UPDF kill the LRA's chief of operations, Brig Sam Okullu, near Gulu.

- In June, the rebels kill eight people in Kitgum, lining their bodies up on the road 10 km out of Kitgum town.

- In June, Museveni says Kony will benefit from the amnesty if he surrenders, in contrast to his previous statement that the LRA leadership should not be eligible for the amnesty."

### **One outline of the causes of the conflict in Acholiland (Dec 2002)**

- Contemporary violent conflicts in the country are directly related to the profound crisis of legitimacy of the state, its institutions and their political incumbents
- This crisis reflects the way the state was constructed through European expansionist violence, manipulation of pre-existing differences, administrative policies of divide and rule and economic policies that further fractured the colonial entity
- Conflicts in the colonial state were exacerbated by the partition of the country into economic zones
- The post-colonial regime inherited a fractured state
- In April 1979, the exiled rebels, who were overwhelmingly from Acholi and Langi, assisted by the Tanzanian army and Yoweri Museveni's Front for National Salvation (FRONASA), overthrew the Amin regime

- The new administration organized general elections in December 1980, which were won by Milton Obote and his Uganda People's Congress
- The main challenger, the Democratic Party (DP), rejected Obote's victory. Museveni also rejected the results
- The war in Acholi has become an extension of regional and international power struggles

#### **Accord, 31 December 2002:**

"The roots of the current war between the government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Acholiland are entwined with the history of conflicts in Uganda and the rise to power of the National Resistance Movement/National Resistance Army (NRM/A). The conflict has persisted because of fragmented and divisive national politics, strategies and tactics adopted by the armed protagonists, and regional and international interests. The harrowing war has claimed many innocent civilian lives, forcefully displaced over 400,000 people and destroyed schools and health centres. In addition, the war has been characterized by widespread and systematic violations of human rights, including rapes, abductions of men, women and children, torture, increased economic decay, and national and regional insecurity.

#### Uganda: land and people

Uganda lies along the Equator, between the great East African Rift Valleys. It is a landlocked country, bordered by Sudan in the north, Kenya in the east, Tanzania in the south, Rwanda in the southwest and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west. With a landmass of 241,139 square kilometres, its population is about 20 million. Its territory includes Lake Victoria, Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kyoga. These lakes, together with several elaborate networks of river drainage, constitute the headwaters of the River Nile. The country's economy is primarily agrarian, comprised mostly of smallholdings though pastoralism is dominant in Karamoja and Ankole.

Lake Kyoga forms both a physical and linguistic marker. South of Kyoga is the so-called Bantu region, with the centralized pre-colonial states of Buganda, Toro, Ankole (Nkore) and Bunyoro the dominant territories. North and east of Kyoga are the non-Bantu territories of the Acholi, Alur, Langi, Iteso and Karamojong. The Acholi inhabit present-day northern Uganda and southern Sudan, where, in the pre-colonial era, they constructed decentralized states. In the 1970s, the Acholi district of northern Uganda was divided into Gulu and Kitgum districts. In 2001, Kitgum was subdivided to create a third district of Pader. The three districts constitute an area commonly referred to as Acholiland.

#### Conflicts and fragmentation in colonial Uganda

Contemporary violent conflicts in the country are directly related to the profound crisis of legitimacy of the state, its institutions and their political incumbents. This crisis, in part, reflects the way the state was constructed through European expansionist violence, manipulation of pre-existing differences, administrative policies of divide and rule and economic policies that further fractured the colonial entity. These policies did not only undermine the faltering legitimacy of the state, but also impeded the emergence of a Ugandan nationalism and generated ethnic, religious and regional divisions that were to contribute in later years to instability and political violence.

One significant divide was along the lines of religious affiliation, which can be traced back to the arrival of Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism in Buganda. These religious groups engaged in a ferocious conflict for dominance, and the Protestant faction emerged victorious after the Imperial British East Africa Company intervened in their favour. Anglicans were to later dominate the top

positions in the civil service, and this structural inequality was maintained after the colonial era. Consequently, religious beliefs and political party affiliations were to become entangled.

Conflicts in the colonial state were exacerbated by the partition of the country into economic zones. For example, while a large portion of the territory south of Lake Kyoga was designated as cash crop growing and industrial zones, the territory north of Lake Kyoga was designated as a labour reserve. This partition, which was not dictated by development potentials, led to economic disparities between the south and the north. The fragmentation of the society was compounded by the economic-cum-administrative policy that left the civil service largely in the hands of Baganda and the army largely in the hands of the Acholi and other northern ethnic groups. These policies also widened the gulf between the socio-political south and the socio-political north. This was further sustained by the administrative policy that relied on the Baganda as colonial agents in other parts of the country. The policy of divide and rule, which rested on so-called 'indirect rule', led to widespread anti-Buganda sentiment.

#### Conflicts and fragmentation in post-independent Uganda

The post-colonial regime inherited a fractured state. Milton Obote responded to this crisis of legitimacy by forming an alliance between his political party, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and the Buganda monarchy party (Kabaka Yekka). With this marriage of convenience, Obote became the Executive Prime Minister and Kabaka Mutesa II became the President and Head of State. However, the alliance collapsed over a conflict over land (the 'lost counties') between Bunyoro and Buganda. The 'divorce' led to widespread violence in Buganda. Obote responded by detaining five government ministers from the Bantu region, dismissing the President and Vice President and forcing President Mutesa into exile and suspending the 1962 constitution. The government also imposed a state of emergency in Buganda, occupied Buganda's palace, following the flight of the Kabaka to England, and introduced a republican constitution. Some Bantu-speaking groups perceived this struggle for legitimacy and power as a conflict between the Bantu south and the non-Bantu (Nilotic) north.

These difficulties overlapped with the instability generated in the region by the superpowers' quest for hegemony during the Cold War. These crises were compounded by a conflict between Obote and his army commander, General Idi Amin. In 1971, Amin seized power. Immediately after he came to power, Amin ordered Acholi and Langi soldiers, who constituted the backbone of the army, to surrender their arms. The overwhelming majority of them did so. However, many were subsequently killed. The government extended its conflict with the Acholi and Langi by arresting, detaining and killing highly educated and influential members of the ethnic groups. Over time, Amin began to target people he perceived as disloyal from other parts of the county. To protect the regime which lacked political legitimacy in the country, Amin recruited new soldiers into the national army from West Nile. In addition, he appointed prominent Bantu to important positions in his government. The regime however largely maintained the dominance of southerners in the civil service and commerce, while the northerners largely controlled the government and army.

In April 1979, the exiled rebels, who were overwhelmingly from Acholi and Langi, assisted by the Tanzanian army and Yoweri Museveni's Front for National Salvation (FRONASA), overthrew the Amin regime. Yusuf Lule assumed power. However, ideological and ethnic conflicts within the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) and the national army led to the collapse of the Lule administration within months. Godfrey Binaisa took over, but was himself deposed in May 1980 by Paulo Muwanga and his deputy Yoweri Museveni.

The new administration organized general elections in December 1980, which were won by Milton Obote and his Uganda People's Congress. But widespread irregularities and political violence undermined the legitimacy of the elections. The main challenger, the Democratic Party

(DP), rejected Obote's victory. Museveni also rejected the results. Thereafter, a number of armed groups, including Lule's Uganda Freedom Fighters, Museveni's Popular Resistance Army (later they were to merge to form the National Resistance Movement/Army (NRM/A), and Dr Andrew Kayira's Uganda Freedom Movement/Army (UFM/A), declared war against the Obote government. In West Nile, Brigadier Moses Ali's Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) and General Lumago's Former Uganda National Army (FUNA) also engaged the army and the UPC in bitter armed opposition.

Fighting was particularly intense in the Luwero triangle, where the mostly Baganda population was targeted for their perceived support of rebel groups. Many innocent civilians were tortured and murdered by the UNLA. Although the UNLA was a national and multi-ethnic army, the NRM/A held the Acholi exclusively responsible for the atrocities committed, and this disputed perception was to shape subsequent attitudes toward the conflict.

In July 1985, conflict between some Langi and Acholi soldiers led to the overthrow of the Obote regime. The coup, which brought General Tito Okello to power, shattered the military alliance between the Acholi and Langi and escalated ethnic violence. The Okello regime invited all fighting groups and political parties to join the military government. Every armed group and political party, with the exception of the NRA, joined the administration. The NRA, however, engaged the regime in protracted peace negotiations held in Nairobi. In December 1985, the Nairobi Agreement was signed under the chairmanship of President Moi of Kenya. However, the Agreement was never implemented and Museveni seized power on the 25th January 1986.

The NRA's seizure of power effectively meant that for the first time, socio-economic, political and military powers were all concentrated in the south. The new administration, which absorbed political and military groups from the south and Moses Ali's UNRF group, engaged in intensive anti-northern propaganda. The administration also discriminated against groups from eastern Uganda and West Nile. This severe alienation and marginalization led to armed conflicts in Teso and West Nile. After much destruction and displacement of the population in Teso, the government negotiated an end to the conflict in the east.

#### Emergence of the conflict in Acholiland

By April 1986, the Acholi had largely come to terms with the NRA victory. The majority of former UNLA soldiers also heeded the appeal made by the government to hand over their arms and demobilize. The response by the Acholi ended the armed engagement in the territory. However, after months of relative calm, anxieties escalated when the NRA began to commit human rights abuses in the name of crushing a nascent rebellion. Over time NRA soldiers plundered the area and committed atrocities, including rape, abductions, confiscation of livestock, killing of unarmed civilians, and the destruction of granaries, schools, hospitals and bore holes escalated. These atrocities in Acholiland were justified by some as revenge for the 'skulls of Luwero'.

Against this background of mistrust and violence, in May 1986 the government ordered all former UNLA soldiers to report to barracks. The order was met with deep suspicion, in part, because it was reminiscent of Amin's edict that led to the 1971 massacre of Acholi soldiers. Some ex-UNLA soldiers went into hiding; others fled to Sudan and some decided to take up arms. Soon, these ex-soldiers were joined by a stream of youths fleeing from NRA operations. During this period, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which was perceived by Acholi refugees as an ally of the Museveni government, attacked a refugee camp in southern Sudan. On August 20, 1986, some Acholi refugee combatants, led by Brigadier Odong Latek, attacked the NRA. This armed group, known as the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), was later joined by the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces / Movement (HSMF/HSM), Severino Lukoya's Lord's Army, ultimately to be followed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

## Why the war has persisted

The war has lasted for nearly sixteen years because of a number of interrelated factors. To begin with, the war in Acholi has become an extension of regional and international power struggles. On the regional front, Uganda provided military hardware and sanctuary to the SPLA. In retaliation, the Sudan government provided sanctuary and military hardware to the LRA. On the international front, both the Uganda government and the SPLA received military and political support from the US, in part to curtail the influence of the Islamic government in Khartoum. Another factor perpetuating the conflict has been that the war has become a lucrative source and cover for clandestine income for high-ranking military and government officials and other profiteers. In addition, the unwillingness of the government and the LRA to genuinely pursue a negotiated settlement has sustained the war. Lastly, atrocities committed by the LRA against unarmed civilians and the unwillingness of the rebel group to accept alternative political views on the conflict have prolonged the war."

### **Ethnic tension; Myth or reality? (Feb. 2004)**

- Anti-Acholi sentiments have been breeding quietly, mainly in Lira district
- Over 560 people have been killed by the LRA since November 2003
- Since most LRA fighters are Acholi, many Langi find it easy to vent their anger and frustration at the whole tribe
- One politician recently urged people living in Teso sub-region to "kill all Acholi above the age of 18"
- The LRA is extremely unpopular among the Acholi
- Sense of social alienation, political isolation and economic marginalisation on the part of many people in the Acholi sub-region
- The situation has only been made more precarious by the arming of ethnic-based militia

### **RLP, 27 February 2004:**

"Since last year's LRA raids in Lango anti-Acholi sentiments have been breeding quietly, mainly in Lira district. According to Church sources there over 560 people have been killed by the LRA since November 2003 to the end of February 2004. Most of these killings have taken place in unofficial displaced persons camps North and East of Lira where conditions are appalling. Also according to the same sources, 48 people have died of hunger in Barapwo camp and 38 in Erute camp since January. Since most LRA fighters are Acholi, many Langi find it easy to vent their anger and frustration at the whole tribe. A march of protest in Lira on the 25th February degenerated into rioting and five people were killed. It turned out that only one of them was an Acholi and the other four died when the Police fired shots as they were harrassed by angry crowds. Sadly, this provoked a revenge reaction by some gangs of youth in Gulu town. Thankfully, this was swiftly brought under control by the Police.

The ethnic tension is likely not as serious as some segments of the national and international media report, but the issue is not trivial either and these incidents serve as an early warning of what could develop if the situation is not handled wisely. Reports of Amuka Lango militia present at some displaced camps in Acholi are causing fear. The religious leaders from Acholi, Lango and Teso met in Kampala on the 2nd of March and in Lira on 23rd – 24th March. The MPs from the same sub-regions met too on the 11th. These initiatives are commendable and should play a

significant role in putting out potential fires of inter-ethnic hatred before is too late." (CSPNU, 13 April 2004)

" On the 25th February 2004, there were reports of violent attacks against members of the Acholi community living in Lira. The attacks followed a march that began as a peaceful demonstration against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the government's failure to protect the people, following Saturday's massacre of approximately 200 civilians in Barlonyo IDP camp. This development has further resulted in retaliatory attacks against members of the Langi community resident in Gulu district.

The Refugee Law Project (RLP) of the Faculty of Law, Makerere University, notes with the gravest concern that the above events represent a development in the conflict that, if not addressed immediately, could both increase and spread to other parts of the country. Indeed, there can be little doubt that the recent violence is the result of ongoing ethnic articulations of the LRA conflict by government, the media, and other voices. As the RLP notes in its recently published report, *Behind the Violence: Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, this ethnic representation of the conflict has had three results.

First, it has generated a perception that all Acholi are LRA supporters, thereby fuelling intense hatred for the former among many Ugandans, especially those living in the Lango and Teso sub-regions. For example, one politician recently urged people living in Teso sub-region to "kill all Acholi above the age of 18." Extensive RLP interviews across northern Uganda, however, revealed that the LRA is extremely unpopular among the Acholi.

Second, the articulation of the conflict along ethnic lines has resulted in a sense of social alienation, political isolation and economic marginalisation on the part of many people in the Acholi sub-region, a feeling reinforced by the government's seeming lack of commitment to peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Third, and most dangerously, the situation has only been made more precarious by the arming of ethnic-based militias (Arrow Group, Amuka and Frontier Guards). Rather than relying on a professionally trained national army, the use of regional militias has served to increase tensions between different ethnic groups.

Furthermore, the RLP firmly believes that the recent violence is generated not only by the ongoing attacks by the LRA but is also underpinned by factors that run deep within Uganda's socio-political history. As such, while the deployment of police and the army to quell the violence may offer a degree of short term stability, nothing short of a process that addresses the above ethnic animosities in a genuine and holistic way will forestall future ethnic clashes."

### **Acholi lack confidence in the government (July 2003)**

- Higher rates of military service by northern populations in the volunteer army after independence
- No ethnic group is in the majority in Uganda's 24.6 million population
- The Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), drew heavily from the impoverished northern Ugandan Acholi population
- The National Resistance Army (NRA) took up positions and bases in the area known as the Luwero triangle to the north of the capital, Kampala
- Yoweri Museveni created the National Resistance Army and Movement in 1980 that took up arms to overthrow the government



- In an effort to crush local support of the NRA, the UNLA (including its Acholi soldiers) committed gross human rights violations, in the Luwero triangle

**HRW, 15 July 2003:**

"The current conflict in northern Uganda has its immediate roots in the troubled times after Ugandan independence in 1962, when military groups of different ethnic and ideological composition aspired to and often succeeded in overthrowing a succession of Ugandan governments. Colonial preference to development of the southern regions and neglect of the north led to an economic imbalance and hence to higher rates of military service by northern populations in the volunteer army. No ethnic group is in the majority in Uganda's 24.6 million population; they inhabit an area of 242,554 square kilometers, a dense population for an African country with an agricultural economy. The first prime minister, Milton Obote, was ousted by his army commander, Colonel Idi Amin, in 1971. Within Amin's army, his kinsmen from the West Nile (northwest) region began killing Langi and Acholi soldiers. Amin was overthrown by rebel Ugandan soldiers and the invading army of Tanzania in 1979. Contested national elections were held and Milton Obote returned to power in 1980. As was the case under the first rule of Obote, the national army, then known as the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), drew heavily from the impoverished northern Ugandan Acholi population.

In part because of the election fraud that brought Obote back to power, Yoweri Museveni created the National Resistance Army (NRA) and Movement in 1980 that took up arms to overthrow the government. The NRA took up positions and bases in the area known as the Luwero triangle to the north of the capital, Kampala. In an effort to crush local support of the NRA, the UNLA (including its Acholi soldiers) committed gross human rights violations, in this area, including the mass killing of thousands of civilians, the looting of property and goods, and the destruction of government buildings and homes; the UNLA sustained heavy casualties itself. Many Acholi believe that, dating from these events, the incumbent (1986-present) government of Yoweri Museveni has written the Acholi and their northern region off, which the government denies."

**The National Resistance Army's armed insurgency (1981-1986)**

- The NRA was comprised primarily of Banyankole, Baganda and Banyarwanda combatants from southern and central Uganda
- UNLA forces in Luwero were often referred to as "the Acholis" and were blamed for the deaths of 100,000 civilians
- Fearing revenge, the ex-UNLA Acholi forces fled to Sudan where they organised themselves into an armed insurgency against the NRA

**UN November 2001, p.13:**

"In 1981, the National Resistance Army (NRA) under Yoweri Museveni began an armed insurgency. The NRA was comprised primarily of Banyankole, Baganda and Banyarwanda combatants from southern and central Uganda, including Luwero District where in 1984, Obote forces carried out extensive reprisals against unarmed Baganda civilians. UNLA forces in Luwero were often referred to as "the Acholis" and were and blamed for the deaths of 100,000 civilians.

In 1985, Acholi elements in the UNLA overthrew the Obote government, expelled other ethnic groups from the military, and put a predominately Acholi government in power under General Tito Okello Lutwa. This was followed by authoritative and well documented reports of looting throughout the country by primarily Acholi officers and enlisted men. Following a short-lived power-sharing treaty between the UNLA and NRA, the NRA overthrew the government and took power. Fearing revenge, the ex-UNLA Acholi forces fled to Sudan where they organised themselves into an armed insurgency against the NRA."

**Gersony, Section 1, 1997, "Advent of the NRA":**

"As the Acholi UNLA forces crossed Acholiland, they warned Acholi civilians that the NRA would exact revenge - and in fact kill many of them - when it arrived in Gulu and Kitgum. They urged civilians to follow them across the border to Sudan, and many did. The rest remained at home and held their breath, awaiting developments."

**Gersony 1997, Section 1, "Phase I UPDA":**

"Most of the former Acholi UNLA soldiers who retreated from Kampala (fighting the NRA as they withdrew) continued north during March 1986 and finally crossed the international border into Sudan. Sudan provided refuge and a base from which to re-reorganize but, according to most reports, did not provide military assistance. Several Acholi asserted that, in fact, Sudanese authorities confiscated their weapons when they entered Sudan and returned them when they crossed back into Uganda."

**Four main characteristics of the conflict (April 2004)**

- Four main characteristics of the conflict;
- 1) It is a struggle between the government and the LRA
- 2) It is a struggle between the predominantly Acholi LRA and the wider Acholi population
- 3) It is a struggle fuelled by animosity between Uganda and Sudan
- 4) The struggle continues the North-South conflict that has marked Ugandan politics and society since independence
- The LRA insurgency lacks any clear (and negotiable) political objective
- President Museveni pursues a military solution in part to justify the unreformed army that is a key pillar of his regime
- As long as the situation in the North is dominated by security matters, the monopolisation of power and wealth by Southerners is not put into question
- Without the active support of the Acholi, however, the government is unlikely ever to defeat the LRA
- A main vulnerability of the LRA is that Joseph Kony is central not only to its organisation and tactics but also to its very purpose
- Most discussion of how to end the conflict centres on the false dichotomy of a military versus a negotiated solution

**ICG, 14 April, p. ii:**

"The conflict has four main characteristics. First, it is a struggle between the government and the LRA. Secondly, it is between the predominantly Acholi LRA and the wider Acholi population, who bear the brunt of violence that includes indiscriminate killings and the abduction of children to become fighters, auxiliaries, and sex slaves. This violence is aimed at cowing the Acholi and discrediting the government. Thirdly, it is fuelled by animosity between Uganda and Sudan, who support rebellions on each other's territory. Finally, the LRA insurgency lacks any clear (and negotiable) political objective. Its claim to represent the grievances of the Acholi people is at odds with its methods. Because LRA actions are difficult to place within a coherent strategy aimed at achieving an identifiable political outcome, it is also difficult to develop an effective counter strategy. LRA targeting of the Acholi has created a self-perpetuating cycle of loss, resentment and hopelessness that feeds the conflict but also widens the gap between the government and local populations.

President Museveni pursues a military solution in part to justify the unreformed army that is a key pillar of his regime. Indeed, the war helps him justify and maintain the status quo in Ugandan

politics, denying his opposition a power base and offering numerous opportunities for curtailing freedom of expression and association in the name of “the war against terrorism”. As long as the situation in the North is dominated by security matters, the monopolisation of power and wealth by Southerners is not put into question.

Without the active support of the Acholi, however, the government is unlikely ever to defeat the LRA. While the political and security configurations of the conflict need to be changed, Museveni’s response to international pressure and proposals for negotiation such as Washington’s Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI) has been sceptical at best. Although the LRA’s desire for genuine dialogue appears minimal, the government has rarely acted in good faith when a variety of actors have sought to promote a settlement. The small likelihood that the LRA will respond to a concerted effort to negotiate does not remove the onus from the government to make the attempt. That would signal to both its opponents and supporters – and to the people of Northern Uganda – that it is genuinely pursuing all options. The Khartoum government, the LRA’s only known external supporter, should also be drawn into a negotiating strategy.

Most discussion of how to end the conflict centres on the false dichotomy of a military versus a negotiated solution. Elements of both approaches will be required, along with recognition of the limitations of each. A purely military solution could conceivably deal with the immediate manifestation of Uganda’s northern problem, the LRA, but would make solving the North-South divide and achieving national reconciliation even more unlikely. The army’s operational deficiencies in any event make such a solution unlikely. Similarly, there are limitations to negotiations, which can be manipulated by the belligerents for battlefield advantage, leading to more violence.

A main vulnerability of the LRA is that Joseph Kony is central not only to its organisation and tactics but also to its very purpose. Reported leadership tensions, particularly in a deteriorating military and political environment, may provide an opportunity to split the insurgency by isolating or removing him.

Another major element of any successful strategy will have to be a genuine effort to address Northerners’ grievances. The Acholi must be made to feel more a part of Ugandan society. The NRM simply has not unified the country after the turmoil created by colonial policies of ethnic division and decades of armed conflict. Rectifying this will require specific political, economic and social initiatives aimed at building the North’s stake in the central government and enhancing local decision-making. It is in the interest of Acholi leaders to develop mechanisms for articulating the views of their people, and it is in the interest of Museveni and the NRM to promote the emergence of effective and credible Acholi leaders.

There is not yet enough pressure on the LRA to make a political opening possible. While Museveni’s government should make an honest, unconditional attempt at negotiations, the nature of the LRA is such that creating an environment conducive to negotiations should not mean renunciation of military and political pressure on the insurgency, including by invoking the help of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Sudanese government.

The role of the international community has been central to the conflict and will be central to achieving a resolution. The government needs to be attentive to the advice of donors, from whom it receives approximately half its budget. It has a good record on a number of issues, such as AIDS prevention, which disposes the international community positively towards it, but the conflict in the North undoes much of this goodwill. Uganda’s friends have an interest and a right to pressure it on the humanitarian disaster produced by the continuation of the LRA insurgency. The U.S. initiative, however, would have greater promise if Washington also worked more closely with would-be European partners.”

### **The Holy Spirit Movement Front and Alice Auma 'Lakwena', 1986-1987**

- The Holy Spirit Movement Front closest to succeeding in overthrowing the NRM [National Resistance Movement] of any movement
- The movement's leader, Lakwena, rather than the UPDA, [Uganda People's Democratic Army] provided the greatest inspiration for Joseph Kony
- The HSMF promised redemption to a people who felt they were being punished for atrocities committed by Acholi soldiers fighting the NRA under Obote II and Lutwa

**Westbrook June 2000, sects. III, VI:**

"In late 1986, a temporary but significant figure emerged on this conflict scene in the form of Alice Auma 'Lakwena.' Lakwena is significant for several reasons: her movement, the Holy Spirit Movement Front (HSMF), came the closest to succeeding in overthrowing the NRM of any movement to date; Lakwena, through the HSMF, was the only early resistance to the NRA/M to claim moral and religious grounds to attempt to influence the conflict; and it seems that Lakwena, rather than the UPDA, provided the greatest inspiration for Joseph Kony, though he fought with the UPDA. Auma claimed to be possessed by the spirit of a dead Italian soldier named Lakwena. To a people who felt they were being punished for atrocities committed by Acholi soldiers fighting the NRA under Obote II and Lutwa, the HSMF promised redemption. In order to join HSMF, one had to undergo ritual purification to cleanse themselves of past sins. According to HSMF doctrine, only an impure soldier could die in battle. There can be little doubt that the success of the HSMF was due, in part, to the beliefs in magic and spirit powers that are a part of the Acholi culture and, in part, due to the early successes of the HSMF.

In October of 1987, a mere 80 km from Kampala, the NRA finally and resolutely defeated the HSMF. Lakwena is said to have escaped to Nairobi, but she has not made an overt gesture toward overthrowing the NRM since."

**The leader of Lord's Resistance Army broke away with allies in Obote II Army(1988)**

- Ugandan People's Democratic Army signed a peace accord with the NRM [National Resistance Army]
- Those who had little education, stood little chance of significant gain, and had already committed atrocities remained in the bush

**Westbrook June 2000, sects. III, VI:**

" In 1988, however, the UPDA[Ugandan People's Democratic Army] signed a peace accord with the NRM [National Resistance Army] Many of those in the UPDA leadership were given positions in the government. It is said by some that those with the most to gain by coming back into the country mainstream and, thus, the most to lose by staying in the bush were the people who accepted the peace accord. Those who had little education, stood little chance of significant gain, and had already committed atrocities remained in the bush. According to Charles Alai, a founding member of the UPDA, who was, in 1996, Uganda's Minister of State for Public Services, '...by 1988 when we negotiated with the NRM government, Kony had already broken away from UPDA. When we came out, we had already disagreed with Kony and he took the most deadly and primitive officers with him.' Thus, at the conclusion of the 1988 peace accords, a rather large contingent of the disenfranchised stayed in the bush.

Though Kony adopted many of the methods of his supposed cousin Lakwena he never gleaned the popular support she had. His movement, known in 1988 as the Uganda Peoples Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA) and later as the LRA, has had something more of a schizophrenic or disjointed nature about it. Kony has vacillated from near full adoption of Lakwena's beliefs,

including the Christian components denouncing witch doctors and diviners, to denying any links with Christian doctrine to incorporating many Muslim rituals and beliefs."

### **Lord's Resistance Army severely weakened, according to Army officials (May 2005)**

- In 2002, LRA was about 8000 strong with about 4000 rifles
- As of May 2005 they are about 300 strong with about 150 rifles, according to the national army

#### **UPDF, 17 May 2005:**

"Security Situation

The war in Northern Uganda against LRA rebels has been effectively neutralized.

The LRA command structure has been weakened with most top commanders, advisors or tacticians either killed, captured or have surrendered.

It is worthy noting that at the time of the start of Operation Iron Fist in 2002, LRA was about 8000 strong with about 4000 rifles, Today they are about 300 strong with about 150 rifles. Of these only about 10 commanders are operating in Uganda with a few criminals around them, who are highly concealed in bushy places and occasionally spring up to ambush vehicles and also try to attack villagers in isolated places, distant gardens and water points.

There are no more abducted children in the LRA ranks. All the formerly abducted children have been rescued and the numbers of rescued children has been declining since 2003, implying that no fresh abductions have been made therefore no children to be rescued.

All those remaining in LRA are now categorized as criminals, who are responsible for the little remaining terrorism in the region.

They can no longer be expected to present themselves for rescue but will be pursued to be put out of action, captured or forced to surrender."

#### **Weeks March 2002, p.8:**

"Ugandan and foreign military and diplomatic sources were broadly consistent in their assessment that the LRA main force, in the Sudan, consists a well-armed and trained body of perhaps 2,000–3,000 fighters, located in an encampment that is also crowded with those fighters' wives and consorts, and with their children as well as young children who have been recently abducted from Acholiland and are undergoing training as fighters – the total population of the main encampment is perhaps 5,000 people. According to international military observers, this encampment is over 100 km. from the border (others in the military place it closer in, at 65 km. from the border), in territory nominally under Sudanese government control, and it is shifted periodically for security reasons."

### **Background of the Alliance for Democratic Forces, 1996-1999**

- The ADF emerged in western Uganda late 1996
- ADF has few links with western Uganda - its leaders come from areas in central Uganda with strong Islamic ties
- Because of the war in DRC borders with Sudan and DRC have been secured thus depriving the ADF of its supplies (November 1999)

**USCR 1997, p. 102:**

"A new rebel insurgency emerged in western Uganda in late 1996. The Alliance for Democratic Forces (ADF), using bases in Zaire, attacked in November and abducted 300 civilians. Tens of thousands of persons - some suffering severe wounds - fled heavy fighting between the rebels and Ugandan troops. They sought refuge on church properties, in school buildings, and in private residences of friends.

**IRIN 8 December 1999:**

"A 'rebellion without a cause'. This is the description most often attributed to rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) who have been sowing terror and destruction in western Uganda for the last three years.

[...]

The ADF, which decided to adopt Islam as its ideology, was born from a core group of puritanical Moslems from the Tabliq sect whose members portray themselves as "Moslem evangelists". In Uganda, the Tabliqs claimed Moslems were being marginalised by the government.

Together with the obscure and largely defunct National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), the Tabliqs moved to western Uganda to start the rebellion under the ADF umbrella. They set up rear bases in neighbouring Congo where they began recruiting and training fighters with the promise of money and education. It was easier to recruit in Congo where the people were not hostile to the ADF.

The ADF has few links with western Uganda - its leaders come from areas in central Uganda with strong Islamic ties such as Iganga, Masaka and Kampala itself. A former Catholic, Jamil Mukulu, is said to be the driving force of the ADF. The group also includes some ex-commanders of former president Idi Amin's army.

Military sources told IRIN there were three main reasons why the rebels adopted western Uganda as their theatre of operations: the mountainous terrain, the proximity to Congo and the ability to exploit an existing ethnic conflict in the area. They coerced some local people to help them, especially the Bakonjo people with their extensive knowledge of the mountains.

Using leaflets and a mobile radio in Congo (now dismantled), they tried to turn the population against the government by propaganda attacks against its policies. One such statement in 1998, signed by the ADF "chairman" Frank Kithasamba, warned that the group would "crack down" on those responsible for the deaths of its members and urged local people "to be on the lookout for politicians who kill and intimidate opponents and voters for their own interests".

There is little evidence of the ADF's Islamic claims. 'They attack indiscriminately, just to kill,' said David Magado Katesigwa, the assistant Resident District Commissioner (RDC) for Bundibugyo district. 'They hit soft targets, such as the IDPs [internally displaced people]'.

Government workers and humanitarian officials alike are unable to explain the ADF's continued senseless killing, other than that the rebels are now on the run with nowhere to go. 'They carry out revenge attacks because the local people refuse to support them,' Katesigwa told IRIN.

The ADF problem exploded in 1997. Prior to that there had been sporadic attacks which did not appear to concern the government too much. President Yoweri Museveni, in his book 'Sowing the Mustard Seed' published in 1996, makes no mention of the insurgency in the west. But in 1997, the ADF launched a surprise attack on Ugandan soldiers at Mpondwe on the border with Congo in Kasese district. Attacks and atrocities escalated the following year with the army apparently unable to contain them, one of its problems being the lack of an adequate alpine force.

[...]

Sources say that due to the war in DRC and Uganda's collaboration with Congolese rebel groups in northwest and northeast DRC, the borders with Sudan and DRC have been secured, thus depriving the ADF of its supplies. Other measures, such as posting soldiers at intervals along the Fort Portal-Bundibugyo road, have also been taken and there is a noticeable military presence in the whole area."

***For information about displacement caused by ADF see:***

[Displacements related to the Allied Democratic Forces \(ADF\) in the west and southwest \(1998-2000\)](#)

## **Background of the conflict in the West Nile and the WNBF, 1971-2002**

- Conflict in the West Nile different from the war in Acholi region
- West Nilers in the Idi Amin Army are believed to have participated in massacres of Acholi and Langi officers
- West Nile pacified by Tanzanian army forces mid-1979
- The Museveni force NRA reached the West Nile in March 1986 and relative peace followed
- Disruption of nine years of peace by the emergence of the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) in 1995
- WNBF's military strength diminished during 1997 following demobilization of the rebels
- Most displaced people from the north-west returned to their homes during 1999

### **Gersony 1997, Section 2 "Amin overthrown - 1979":**

"The conflict in the West Nile has been strikingly distinct from the war in Gulu/Kitgum in most essential respects. These include its duration, the level of motivation of rebel combatants, its intensity and degree of brutality, the magnitude of casualties and civilian displacement, and its economic impact.

[...]

Unlike the ethnically homogeneous area of Gulu and Kitgum, the West Nile is home to a number of distinct groups, including the Kakwa and the Aringa (mainly Lugbara-speaking Muslim) people of northern Arua's Koboko and Aringa counties. The overwhelming majority of Moyo District residents - except in its western Obongi County - are of the predominantly Christian Madi group, which has participated in neither the West Nile conflict nor in the war in Acholi, with which it also shares a border.

[...]

Like the Acholi people but in reduced proportion, West Nilers were prominently represented in the Obote I army. Muslims in northern Arua were considered to be strong supporters of President Obote's Uganda People's Congress (UPC) party. When Army Commander Idi Amin - an ethnic Kakwa (who was also a Muslim) and who claimed Koboko County as his birthplace - overthrew the Obote Government in January 1971, the prominence of West Nilers in the Ugandan army increased. It is believed that West Nile soldiers participated in the large-scale massacres of Acholi and Langi officers [...]" (Gersony 1997, Section 2, "Background" & "The Amin regime")

"Tanzanian army forces were responsible for pacification of the West Nile, which they achieved in mid-1979. According to all accounts, their conduct towards West Nile civilians was restrained and correct. In this environment, West Nilers began to trickle back from southern Sudan. Once the invading coalition had consolidated its control of Uganda, the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) was reconstituted, with prominent participation of Acholi and Lango elements.

When during 1980 the UNLA replaced Tanzanian occupying forces in the West Nile, it engaged in brutal reprisals against the local civilian population. In late 1980, ex-Amin forces invaded from southern Sudan and forced some UNLA units out of the West Nile region. They were organized into two main groups:

the Uganda National Rescue Front (**UNRF**), based principally among the Aringa people of northeast Arua; and

the Former Uganda National Army (**FUNA**) forces, based mainly among the Kakwa people of northwest Arua.

After it regained control of the area from the ex-Amin forces, the UNLA engaged in further reprisals and large-scale destruction of property in both Arua and Moyo. One UNLA massacre on 19 June 1981 gained international prominence: hundreds of displaced civilians had taken refuge in the Comboni (Verona) Fathers Catholic Mission, over which the flag of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was flying. UNLA soldiers entered the mission, located at Ombachi just outside Arua town, searching for ex-Amin guerrillas and in the process killed more than fifty of the civilians, many of them children. As a result of such incidents, as many as 500,000 West Nile civilians fled to Sudan for refuge."

***Period of relative calm between 1986 and 1994 interrupted in 1995 by the emergence of the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF):***

**Gersony, Section 2, 1997, "Advent of NRA":**

"In late-March 1986, the NRA [Museveni's National Resistance Army] reached the West Nile, meeting no resistance within the region. The conduct of NRA forces was generally reported as positive. President Museveni visited Arua during the following month and consulted with the elders on his plans. The UNRF forces, led by Brigadier Moses Ali, joined the Museveni government. For almost a decade thereafter, the West Nile enjoyed relative peace. "

**Gersony, Section 2, 1997, " The Sudan factor":**

"A turning point in the West Nile occurred in 1994, when Sudanese Government forces recaptured from the SPLA the strategic town of Kajo Keji in southern Sudan, and consolidated their control of the Sudan/Uganda border west of the Nile. [This was the same year in which Sudan's assistance to Joseph Kony's LRA began.] With Sudan's assistance, former Amin Foreign Minister, Juma Oris, a Muslim and, at that time, resident of Juba, organized what became known as the West Nile Bank Front. Interviews in the West Nile suggest that WNBF officials offered the equivalent of a US\$300 recruitment bonus to former soldiers and young men to join the rebel organization. Recruiters reportedly predicted a rapid defeat of the Museveni government and attractive employment in a future government in which the WNBF would be a powerful force. It appears that some recruiters appealed to the Muslim religious background common to the WNBF's Sudanese sponsors and residents of northern Arua.

WNBF activities began to affect the West Nile in 1995 and intensified in 1996. In 1995, the WNBF (and Kony's LRA) began to use land mines apparently provided by Sudan. In September 1996, Moyo town was bombed by aircraft, which appeared to originate in Sudan. WNBF activities were based along the Uganda/Sudan border as well as in the towns of Aru and Mahagi in northeastern Zaire, from which it pursued its insurgency.

However, in comparison with the eleven years of Acholi insurgency, WNBF attacks were intermittent, uneven and less effective. Although their activities ranged from time to time throughout Arua and western Moyo - and even marginally in eastern Nebbi - to an outside observer, it appeared that the motivation of WNBF forces was lower than their LRA counterparts, even in some respects half-hearted.

During 1997, the WNBF's strategic capabilities were critically diminished. Banyamulenge operations in northeastern Zaire deprived the WNBF of its refuge along the Zaire/Uganda border.



Military operations led by the SPLA recaptured control of most of the Sudan/Uganda border. Both military offensives were reportedly supported directly by UPDF forces. Significant numbers of WNBF leaders and combatants were captured and returned to Uganda. WNBF activity diminished considerably."

**UN December 1998, p.8:**

"The defeat and demobilization of the West-Nile Bank Front (WNBF) rebels in 1997 have brought increased security to Nebbi and parts of Arua. However, there are now concerns that some of the demobilized WNBF soldiers are returning to their arms after their hopes for a better life remains unfulfilled – this, despite distributions of seeds and tools by UNHCR and FAO aimed specifically at ensuring their successful reintegration."

**US DOS March 1999, sect.1g:**

"WNBF attacks resumed during the year [1998] in northwestern region bordering Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and more than 100 abductions in Arua district. The majority of those taken in subsequent raids over a week-long period later escaped and returned to their homes. In November WNBF rebels killed and decapitated a Muslim religious leader in Arua, reportedly in retaliation for his son's defection from the WNBF ranks. The Uganda Salvation Front/Army carried out an attack on a police station and prison facility near Tororo in the east in August in which it abducted 110 prisoners. Members of the Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF--II) also carried out a number of abductions and killings in the northwest. The UNRF-- II attacked a WFP vehicle in Moyo and killed a WFP driver in September."

**ICRC 31 August 2000:**

"The plight of Ugandans living in the West Nile region improved in 1999 as a result of peace negotiations between the government and the UNRF II. Most displaced people from the north-west were able to return to their homes and take steps towards resuming a normal life."

***Ceasefire agreement reached between UNRF-II and GoU:***

**IRIN 19 June 2002:**

"The government of Uganda and the rebel Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF-II) signed a formal ceasefire agreement in Kuru sub-county, Yumbe District, northwestern Uganda on Saturday, with the aim of paving the way for political dialogue in the West Nile region.

[...]

The UNRF-II rebels had taken the chance to return when they realised that the UPDF was serious in its campaign against the LRA in southern Sudan (an operation it is undertaking with the blessing of the Sudanese government) and would hardly be likely to leave another rebel force operating in Sudan, according to Ugandan military sources.

[...]

The challenge now, according to humanitarian workers, will be to set up rehabilitation centres in the north and west to help resettle those rebels who return, and to ensure at least some measure of social and economic development for these marginalised areas."

## **Displacements in Acholiland**

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### **Causes of displacement in Pader District, 2001-2004**

- LRA has caused displacements in Pader for many years
- In the beginning, people often spent the night in the bush outside their homesteads

- The government army instructed the population to move into protected villages within forty-eight hours in September 2002

**MSF, 1 December 2004, p.7**

"Pader District was created in 2001. Kitgum District was split in two, and two of the counties in the lower part of the district became Pader. Created in the midst of the conflict, Pader has always been "a new district that never got what it needed", as described by one camp dweller.

Pader has been affected by LRA presence and attacks for many years. In the beginning, people often spent the night in the bush outside their homesteads in order to avoid violence and abduction during nightly attacks on their villages. Massive displacement occurred in September 2002 when, in a radio-transmitted message, the government army instructed the population to leave their homes and move into protected villages within forty-eight hours. People who later returned to their abandoned homes reported them looted, with granaries plundered and crops destroyed. By 2004, twenty-four camps had been established, hosting a total of 290,000 people, almost the entire population of the district."

**Massive displacement in Lira District, 2003-2004**

- The majority of the violence and subsequent displacement took place in 2003 and 2004
- The LRA entered Lira district with a vengeance in November 2003
- In less than a month, the numbers of IDPs grew from 65,000 to more than 200,000
- There was a second peak of terror, including the Barlonyo massacre, which took place in February 2004, after the creation of a local militia meant to provide protection

**MSF, 1 December 2004, pp, 11-12:**

"Although Lira had experienced hit and run raids by the LRA throughout 2002, the majority of the violence and subsequent displacement took place in 2003 and 2004. The LRA entered Lira district with a vengeance in November 2003 causing massive population movements from rural villages to Lira town and trading centres throughout the district. Overcrowded and unprotected, the camps have proven to be death traps. Populations have been cut off from their livelihoods, and are barely surviving with little water, deplorable sanitation, and no health services, in some cases, for more than a year. This has contributed to emergency high death rates, widespread disease, fear and trauma.

By early November 2003, as many as 65,000 people had already fled into Lira town. In less than a month, the numbers grew to more than 200,000. People were scattered throughout the city. Some were living in makeshift camps while others sought shelter in an abandoned factory, in the railway station, under verandas or in the street. "People were everywhere and anywhere they could find a place to lay their head. And still at night the population ballooned as, mostly children, funnelled into town in search of safety.

There was a second peak of terror in February 2004, just after the creation of a local militia, the Amuka boys. The LRA, having been attacked by the militia, sought revenge and brutally massacred hundreds of people in two horrific attacks. More than fifty people were killed in Abyia, on 4 February, when the LRA, disguised as Amuka boys, entered the camp in broad daylight and started shooting. The second attack, and one that caught the world's attention, took place in Barlonyo on 21 February 2004. More than 300 people, mostly women and children were killed. Many died as they were forced to stay in their huts as the rebels set fire to them and burned whole families alive. In addition to the heavy death toll, these attacks left many physically wounded, and the whole district mentally scarred. "

## **LRA attacks are often after food distribution by WFP (May 2004)**

- About 100-150 LRA rebels attacked Pagak camp on 16 May 2004 at about 6.00 pm.
- The IDPs are said to have noticed the presence of the rebels earlier before the attack and reported it to the UPDF, who did not take immediate action
- 39 IDPs were reported dead by the time the assessment team was in the camp, most of them being women and children
- About 544 huts were said to have been burned-
- Massive movement of the IDPs away from Pagak camp, towards Awer camp, Alokolum camp, Keyo camp and Gulu municipality

### **UN OCHA, 19 May 2004:**

"About 100-150 LRA rebels attacked Pagak camp last evening (16th/05/04) at about 6.00 pm. Current trend indicates that most LRA attacks have been at about this time, when darkness is closing in, and movements of the IDPs is still permitted, thus LRA movement/ presence would not easily become suspicious.

The IDPs are said to have noticed the presence of the rebels earlier before the attack and reported it to the UPDF, who did not take immediate action. Reinforcement (APCs/ mambas), are said to have reached the camp at about 8.00pm, when the LRA had already withdrawn.

By the time the assessment team reached the camps, dead bodies were still in the camp awaiting burial, while other were being buried, and a group of IDPs lead by the camp leader, had gone into the bush to search for more dead people.

The mood in the camp was low. The figures reported here are therefore bound to increase over the days, as the people settle down to recount the losses.

### Key Findings

- The following were the casualties reported;
  - 39 IDPs were reported dead by the time the assessment team was in the camp, most of them being women and children. The killings were mainly done using clubs other than guns. Most of the dead were hit on the heads. The killings were done mainly outside the camp boundary.
  - 17 people, who were severely injured, were transported to Lacor Hospital (organised by themselves) for medical care.
  - 5 UPDF were reportedly killed.
  - 3 LRA were found dead.
- Its still too early to draw conclusions on the number of people abducted, as many people have abandoned their homes for neighbouring camps of Awer, Keyo, Alokolum and Gulu municipality.
- About 544 huts were said to have been burned- but the exact figures is yet to be confirmed.

### Key issues raised during the assessment

- Security for the Camps:  
Military deployment continues to be inadequate for most IDP camps, making the camps extremely vulnerable to constant LRA attacks. The issue of protection of IDPs in camps remains paramount in the agenda of the District.
- The assessment team witnessed massive movement of the IDPs away from Pagak camp, towards Awer camp, Alokolum camp, Keyo camp and Gulu municipality. This is evidence of fear of further LRA attacks. Guruguru and Kaladima camps have only relocated to Pagak camp hardly two years ago, as a result of LRA attacks-this memory is still fresh, and many of them would not wish to remain in an insecure camp. A family of 5 people, which was recently relocated from Lacor hospital, were all killed in this attack.

\_\_ The team also anticipates that many IDPs in other camps may relocate to camps they feel safer in, following these persistent LRA attacks on camps.

· The following trends are observed in the camps:

-Most LRA attacks are often after food distribution by WFP. WFP cannot stop distribution because the IDPs are dependant on this food aid. The military, basing on this knowledge and experience, should be on higher security alert after every food aid distribution. The Pagak camp attack occurred 3 days after WFP food distribution, while the Odek attack was only days after food was distributed in Awere camp where the IDPs collect their food rations.

-LRA attacks of late occur between 6.00pm- 6.30pm. The military could become more proactive during this period. The attacks on Odek, Barlonyo, and now Pagak camps are cases in point. The LRA prefers to attack at this time because the UPDF restricts movements of IDPs by around 7.30pm, therefore any movement (by LRA) after that time would raise suspicion.

· There is a likelihood of more attacks on IDP camps, as the grass grows taller, and scarcity for food increases.

· The 'Dwog Paco' programme on Radio Mega FM is said to be antagonising the IDPs/camps with the LRA since the returnees are made to mention sensitive information like names of people and locations on the radio. This programme is said to be a Government (ISO/CMI) supported programme aimed at sensitising LRA on the need to surrender and peace."

### **Sudanese refugees in Uganda targeted by the LRA ( May 2004)**

- 32,000 Sudanese refugees displaced from the southern Zoka Forest Belt in Adjumani district between February and May 2004
- A Self Reliance Strategy program aiming at making refugees self reliant in food, education and other life necessities, is under threat
- More than 24,000 Sudanese refugees there dispersed into the bush in 2002
- The LRA has subjected the refugees to many of the same abuses to which Ugandans are subjected
- 16,000 Sudanese refugees were relocated from Achol-pii to the Kiryandongo refugee camp

### **UNOCHA, 31 May 2004:**

"The LRA launched 31 raids on UNHCR refugee settlements between February 21 and May 21 2004, displacing some 32,000 Sudanese refugees from the southern Zoka Forest Belt in Adjumani district (north-western Uganda). The refugees have since resettled some 30-40km northwards, in the Nile River Belt. Leaving their homes and fields unattended, these displaced refugees doubled the population of the Nile River Belt and put a strain on food, water, schools, sanitation and medical services. The UNHCR Self Reliance Strategy, a joint program between UNHCR and the Government of Uganda (GoU), which aims at making refugees self reliant in food, education and other life necessities, is under threat due to this migration. Nonetheless, with assistance from WFP and other agencies in the field, the emergency has not come to any critical proportion. UNHCR and the UPDF are currently formulating a campaign to send refugees back to their homes in the Zoka Forest Belt."

### **HRW, 15 July 2003, p 39:**

"Sudanese refugees in Uganda continue to be targeted by the LRA, with three major attacks in 2002. Many of these United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) camps for Sudanese are in the Adjumani district, west of Acholiland and near the Sudanese border. The worst LRA attack of 2002 on refugee camps was the brutal onslaught on Achol-pii refugee camp in Pader district on August 5, 2002, where the LRA killed more than sixty people, and the more than 24,000 Sudanese refugees there dispersed into the bush and elsewhere, in fear. The

LRA took hostage four aid workers from the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a humanitarian NGO, during the attack, although they were later released.

In other attacks upon returning to northern Uganda, the LRA killed five Sudanese refugees and burned 126 houses in Maaji refugee camp in Adjumani on July 8, 2002, then returned for a second attack on the same camp three months later, on October 3, 2002, when LRA fighters killed several UPDF soldiers and burned another sixty-five homes.

According to the March 2003 report on Sudan prepared by the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, the situation for Sudanese refugees in Uganda is problematic: the majority of Sudanese refugees in Uganda live in twenty-five designated settlements. The LRA has subjected them to many of the same abuses to which Ugandans are subjected:

The LRA and other rebels regularly attack [Sudanese] refugee sites. During raids the LRA injures, abducts and kills children and adolescents. . . . Attacks have increased dramatically in 2002, since the LRA scattered in northern Uganda as a result of Uganda's Operation Iron Fist.

A large number of Sudanese refugees who fled the attack on Achol-pii refugee camp were relocated to Kiryandongo refugee camp in Masindi district in central Uganda, far from the Sudan border. The Kiryandongo refugee camp was established in 1996 for 13,000 Sudanese refugees fleeing Achol-pii camp after a 1996 raid by the LRA, in which one hundred refugees were killed, according to a Sudanese refugee leader interviewed by the press.

Following the next large LRA raid on Achol-pii, in 2002, some 16,000 Sudanese refugees from that camp were relocated to the Kiryandongo refugee camp. This produced extreme overcrowding and deterioration of sanitary conditions. The Ugandan government, through its minister for disaster preparedness Moses Ali of the West Nile region, identified two locations in West Nile region to which it wanted the Achol-pii refugees moved."

### **Government allegedly moved refugees by force (August 2003)**

#### **UN OCHA, 31 August 2003:**

"Former Acholi Pii refugees relocated to West Nile

On 1st September, the Government of Uganda began the relocation of 16,000 Sudanese refugees from Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement in Masindi district, southwestern Uganda to refugee settlements in Yumbe and Arua districts in northwestern Uganda. The exercise, which ended on 8th September, went on amid controversial reports of use of force by Government. Consequently there were allegations of refugees being wounded, arrested and killed (deaths have not been confirmed and Government has categorically refuted them).

UNHCR was initially denied access to Kiryandongo settlement, but were later given access to monitor the ongoing relocation exercise. UNHCR was fully involved in receiving the refugees in the West Nile settlements. However, there are still varied views on the adequacy of existing infrastructure in Madi Okollo and Ikafe settlements. Currently, DED and LWF are managing the settlements and DED has started allocating plots for both agricultural and residential purposes. Distribution of food and NFIs is also ongoing."

### **Army displaced 300,000 people (July 2003)**

- Displacement or capture of civilians solely to deny a social base to the enemy does not equate to providing protection
- It would be prohibited to move a population in order to exercise more effective control over a dissident ethnic group
- Forty-eight hours after the order was issued, the UPDF began shelling, bombing, and using helicopter gun ships to attack the areas around the camps

- It is unclear why the government is unable to provide for the security of the civilians in any way other than such forced displacement

**HRW, 15 July 2003, pp 61-62:**

"The oral army order of October 2, 2002, displacing some 300,000 people, together with those 500,000 previously displaced, resulted in approximately 800,000 displaced and needy persons originating in the three northern districts, according to the WFP—a total of 70 percent of their population—an astoundingly high percentage. Most of adults in this population are capable of economic self-sufficiency through small farming for themselves and their families—but now they are dependent on international relief to survive.

Article 17 (1) of Protocol II states in part: '1. The displacement of the civilian population shall not be ordered for reasons related to the conflict unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand.'

The term 'imperative military reasons' usually refers to evacuation because of imminent military operations. The provisional measure of evacuation is appropriate for example if an area is in danger as a result of military operations or is liable to be subjected to intense bombing or other military action. It may also be permitted when the presence of protected persons in an area hampers military operations. The prompt return of the evacuees to their homes as soon as hostilities in the area have ceased is implied in the article.

Displacement or capture of civilians solely to deny a social base to the enemy has nothing to do with the security of the civilians. Nor is it justified by 'imperative military reasons,' which require 'the most meticulous assessment of the circumstances' because such reasons are so capable of abuse. One authority has stated:

Clearly, imperative military reasons cannot be justified by political motives. For example, it would be prohibited to move a population in order to exercise more effective control over a dissident ethnic group.

The U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement state that, 'prior to any decision requiring the displacement of persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that all feasible alternatives are explored in order to avoid displacement altogether.' The principles state that states are under 'a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of . . . peasants, pastoralists, and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands.'

The commander of the Fourth Division, Brig. Aronda Nyakairima, handing down the oral army evacuation order to the people of northern Uganda of October 2, 2002, stated:

'This announcement goes to all law-abiding citizens in the abandoned villages of Gulu, Pader and Kitgum districts to vacate with immediate effect. . . . This is because we have discovered that the LRA terrorists when pursued by the UPDF hide in huts located in these villages. . . . Get out of these villages in order not to get caught in cross fire.'

This order suggests both 'imperative military reasons' and the security of the population.

Forty-eight hours after this order was issued, the UPDF began shelling, bombing, and using helicopter gun ships to attack the areas around the camps. The government, interpreting the order broadly, reasoned that after the forty-eight hour ultimatum, everyone found outside the 'protected villages' or IDP camps would be a rebel or a rebel collaborator—therefore converting almost the entire northern Uganda into a military operational zone in which civilian movement is sharply limited. This order, together with the LRA military campaign, has further crippled the rural economy of northern Uganda.

Whether the security of the civilians or 'imperative military reasons' justify such massive disruption of life and the economy is a hotly contested issue. It remains to be established what the imperative military reasons are that would warrant forced displacement of 70 percent of the population for such a long period—some have been displaced since 1996. Nor is it clear why the government is unable to provide for the security of the civilians in any way other than such forced displacement, which is so drastic for the affected population that it should be the last resort. Because these facts are exclusively within government knowledge, the burden is upon the

government to establish that its actions comply with international legal standards and its own policy on displacement.”

### **Internally displaced people regard camps as traps (July 2003)**

- Some of the displaced, including people from Cwa county, have refused to live in displaced camps
- Rebels have routinely attacked settlements at Palabek and Padibe
- When the LRA comes to a village they ask immediately for the youth
- All abductees who are between ten and eighteen years of age are almost sure to remain with the LRA
- The UPDF soldiers usually arrive at the scene of rebel atrocities long after they are gone
- Whenever the Karamajong have a skirmish either with the LRA or with the Army, people know that they will come to take revenge on them.

### **ARLPI, 1 July 2003:**

"All over rural areas of Kitgum district, people are being terrorised. Almost every day not less than thirty children are abducted and forced into the rebel ranks. People in Cwa county have refused to live in displaced camps -which they regard as traps- and they try to cope with a combination of sleeping in the bush, staying at times at the nearby trading centres (Pajimo, Mucwini, Kitgum Matidi, Namokora...) with some relatives or sending the children to Kitgum town (many of whom are swelling the ranks of the street kids). For those in Lamwo county where "protected villages" have been in existence since 1997 there isn't much protection either: in recent months rebels have routinely attacked settlements at Palabek and Padibe, abducting thirty or forty children at a time and burning scores of huts.

When the LRA comes to a village they ask immediately for the youth. "The Government is doing recruitment and so are we", they are quoted as saying. Most of the children are gone, either to town or to the nearest trading centre, so when rebels do not find them they search the huts until they find textbooks, then parents are beaten cruelly. On the 30th March a man whose son escaped from the LRA and is at the World Vision trauma centre in Gulu was beaten to death in front of his wife. Before they left they warned her: "We shall come back and if you don't bring your son we shall do the same to you". On the 18th March, in the same village, a boy who had a shaved head was accused by the rebels of being a recent Army recruit and was also beaten to death.

Victims of rebel terror tell endless tales of suffering: an old man compelled to carry a motorcycle on his shoulders for miles, an eighteen-year old girl who had her legs burnt because she tried to escape, men compelled to gather honey for the rebels without being allowed to use fire, children burnt with battery acid while in captivity "so that they would not escape". Adults found sleeping in the bush are beaten and told that "they have to pay the lodge", which means that they will be abducted unless they pay ten thousand shillings. All abductees who are between ten and eighteen years of age are almost sure to remain with the LRA. Adults are usually released after some few days, often after going through more humiliating experiences: "They forced us to box while they watched and told us that the one who wins will be released".

People clearly feel that they are being targeted, and not only by the LRA. They point at the UPDF soldiers usually arriving at the scene of rebel atrocities long after they are gone. "They also beat us because they say that we are the ones feeding the rebels". To add to the suffering, armed Karimojong have been causing havoc in the eastern areas of Kitgum and Pader districts for most of the dry season. Whenever they have a skirmish either with the LRA or with the Army, people know that they will come to take revenge on them.

The 2nd of April was a particularly tragic day in Kitgum: armed Karimojong shot three men dead in Lagot (a place that has suffered greatly at the hands of the rebels), a boy and a girl who were

travelling by motorcycle were killed in the morning at Pederyam, on the Kitgum-Namokora road. A Caritas vehicle was ambushed near Kalongo and the two staff travelling in it were wounded. In the evening, the LRA ambushed a pick-up truck near Acholibur, killing seven people and injuring at least fifteen. One of the dead was Captain Oyet Waliki, a former prominent rebel who in 1994 joined the Government forces. He was very popular since he was known for having been involved in peace negotiations together with some local leaders as well as for his friendly approach to the population. When the vehicle, with plenty of people bleeding and crying, arrived in Kitgum hospital that evening the whole town was thrown into confusion.

In the meantime, massive recruitment for the Local Defence Units (LDUs) or "home guards" has been going on in the district. Recently the local Lwo newspaper "Rupiny" quoted the RDC Okot Lapolo expressing his satisfaction at the fact that so far 7,000 had joined in. For many youth, having no perspectives in life and plenty of grudges, there is little choice. For the rest, neither the on-going "Iron Fist Operation" nor the recent local recruitment seems to have improved security for ordinary people. Also, despite announcements by the LRA leadership that they were declaring a ceasefire and the on-going efforts by religious and cultural leaders to initiate peace talks, there is little sign that the brutality is decreasing. [...]

Following a well-known pattern in the Northern Uganda conflict, in recent months the Government has promised that by the end of the dry season the rebels would be crushed. The end of the dry season has come, but so far, everything seems to indicate that the ones who are indeed showing signs of having been crushed, broken and thrown into desperation are just the ordinary civilians."

### **LRA rebels attack government created "protected" IDP villages (2002-2003)**

- Displacement in the North caused mainly by the Lord's Resistance Army, who abduct, kill, mutilate, rape and destroy property of civilians in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts.
- Violence escalates from June 2002 to 2004.
- LRA's extends its attacks to the districts of Kitodo, Moyo, Lira and Apac causing new displacements (October 2002)
- In 1996, governmental forces embarked on a strategy of displacing the local population into 'protected villages'.
- First round of major LRA attacks came during 1996 which forced approximately 110,000 Acholi people to seek refuge in trading centres in Gulu district
- Escalated LRA violence against civilians started in 1995

### ***Terrorising the community***

#### **Weeks March 2002, p.9:**

"From the beginning, the LRA's principal tactic has been to target the civilian population of Acholiland, terrorizing the community and creating paralyzing despondency. In its attacks, it characteristically kills, maims, rapes, loots, burns homes, destroys crops, and – most traumatically – abducts civilians, especially children. Kony is said to believe (or to have been told by his spirits) that the Acholi are to be punished for their lack of support to his cause."

#### ***From Mid-June 2002 and onwards***

#### **OCHA, July/August 2002:**

"Kony's Lords Resistance Army (LRA) attacks in northern Uganda have been unrelenting since they resumed in mid-June 2002. The continued resurgence has worsened security, looting, abductions, killings and destruction of houses and other property and increased displacement in Acholi region of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts. Since the entry of between 2000-3000 LRA forces into Uganda from Southern Sudan, there is no doubt the Northern Uganda has degenerated into an emergency humanitarian situation. Unfortunately though, due to the



insecurity, humanitarian agencies have been forced to scale down their activities to the towns and are thus unable to access most of the affected population, even as their needs increase. This has worsened an already fragile situation in IDP camps and villages."

**OCHA 2 October 2002:**

"LRA attacks in northern Uganda continue in Gulu and surrounding areas. Significantly, the LRA have attacked Kotido and Moyo, areas they have not been to previously."

**NRC 9 October 2002:**

"Since the official peace talks with rebels seem not to materialize and the government is still trying to pursue the military option, the security situation remains uncertain as the LRA continue to terrorise the sub-region and extending to neighbouring districts including Apac, Lira, Kotido and Adjumani."

***Displacement as military strategy***

**WFP September 1999, pp.6-7:**

"[I]t was from 1995 onwards that the scale of violence, displacement and child abductions by the LRA increased dramatically.

[...]

A common theme throughout this devastating period of Acholi history has been the strategic use of civilians by both sides, including the calculated enforcement of displacement. In February 1996 the LRA issued an edict banning settlement within four kilometres of roads and prohibiting the use of bicycles. Their intention was the tight control of a population inaccessible to government troops which would provide cover and supplies for the rebels. To enforce the edict, hundreds of people were killed, villages and food stocks were burned and thousands drifted towards the relative safety of Gulu town. By September 1996 the Gulu District Council announced that 100,000 people in the district were now displaced.

Meanwhile, the government's Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) shelled villages they suspected of containing LRA units, discouraged the return of IDPs from the towns and conducted a number of 'clearances', particularly from Aswa and Kilak counties in northern Gulu District. By November 1996, the Gulu District Council estimated that IDP figures had doubled to 200,000. Three months later, the figure was again upwardly revised to 270,000 as the policy of creating camps (introduced in October 1996) intensified. Tens of thousands of people had swelled the towns (particularly Gulu), trading centres and areas around army barracks. By mid-1998 the majority of IDPs were in 20 official camps."

***Voluntary displacement according to OCHA***

**OCHA 23 May 2001, "Lessons learned":**

"Under the Geneva Convention, the GoU has the right to move or contain people if, for reasons of insecurity, such relocation is in the people's best interest. In the majority of cases, it would appear as if displaced Ugandans have been able to exercise their right to residence and movement and that their choice of location/abode has generally been voluntary."

**US DOS February 2001, sect.1f:**

"Although fighting between government forces and the LRA continued, there were no reports during the year that government forces used threats to compel citizens to leave their homes because of the conflict."

***Government induced displacement***

"As a counter measure to the insurgency, IDPs have been moved into military protected camps and it was estimated [by WFP] that 75 % of both Kitgum and Gulu was resident in camps in January considerably with people being able to get back to normal activities with access to gardens and less fear of insecurity" (RNIS April 2001, p.41).

### ***Government created camps and removed people (1996)***

"In response to the evolution in LRA tactics, UPDF tactics in Gulu included, by September 1996, the creation of camps and the removal of people from strategically important areas or places where the army was unable to prevent LRA activity. The decision to create camps was taken at the highest level. On 27 September 1996 President Yoweri Museveni informed members of the Parliamentary Committee on the Offices of the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs that the authorities were going to establish "protected villages". However, from interviews with villagers and others, it appears to Amnesty International that some UPDF units were already moving people out of their homes a number of weeks before the top-level decision to create camps was communicated to the Parliamentary Committee." (AI 17 March 1999, para.2.1)

### ***Both spontaneous and military supervised displacements***

"Initially, in 1997, there were about 50 settlements where IDPs were grouped either spontaneously or under army supervision. The district authorities could not manage such a widely dispersed group of people. Following a needs assessment undertaken by WFP, the camps in Gulu District were merged into 23 officially designated sites where 270,000 people would be provided with continuing assistance. In October 1998, three of these camps were found to have sufficient access to land for cultivation (though they were still served through food-for-work (FFW) projects by WFP). This effectively brought the camp total in Gulu to 20 where humanitarian assistance was (and still is) given. In Kitgum the IDP population was about 80,000 in five official camps." (WFP September 1999, p.8)

"Many people have moved to camps "spontaneously", fleeing from the LRA. Others feel that the authorities gave them no choice about leaving their farms and livelihoods. Yet others were physically forced by government soldiers. Few people are happy to be in camps, which appear to have become semi-permanent, regarding them as punitive. However, the extreme violence of the LRA poses a real dilemma. Returning to the countryside may provide more opportunities (for example, for education) but may increase the risk of being killed, either by the LRA or by patrolling government soldiers." (AI 17 March 1999, "Introduction")

### ***Open resistance to government's intent to displace the local population in Kitgum***

"If we compare Gulu and Kitgum (which includes Pader), the circumstances which explain the origin of displaced camps in Acholi are slightly different. This is why we shall deal with both parts separately.

[...]

Camps in Kitgum came into existence at three different points in time: in January 1997 (Lukung, Padibe, Palabek Gem and Palabek Kal), in October-November 1997 (Pajule, Lacekocot, Acholibur) and in March 1999 (Potika and Agoro). The circumstances which gave origin to these camps were different from the ones in Gulu, and the percentages of the population which is displaced is also different: 80 % in Gulu and 20 % in Kitgum (which also includes Pader district). On at least two different occasions the Government has attempted to create more displacement in Kitgum: in September 1997 and in September 2000 (in Pajule), although in both cases the population and some of their leaders openly resisted the move.

Between the nights of 7th January and 12th January 1997, LRA rebels systematically swept through villages of the Lamwo sub-counties of Lukung and Palabek, in northwest Kitgum. These units methodically hacked and clubbed to death a total of 412 men, women and children. Thousands of homes were looted and burned. The remaining population fled in sheer terror. This was the largest single massacre of the war in Acholi.

[...]

Potika and Agoro camps are the most recently created ones, having started in March 1999. At that time rebels had come down over the mountain of Lamwaka, heading for Madi-Opei. The

UPDF pushed them back and forced people to leave those areas." (Acholi Religious/Justice & Peace July 2001, pp. 5, 8)

***People in Gulu forced to move into "protected villages" while displacement in Kitgum was more spontaneous:***

"In Gulu district, the establishment of the villages followed a decision by the military authorities in 1996; most of the villages appear to have been established between August and October of that year. The population was ordered into the villages on short notice; those who remained outside them were subject to army attack. In Kitgum/Pader, the villages were more often established as a result of the flight by rural residents following LRA attacks in 1995-97; these villages evolved more spontaneously, with people moving near trading centres and military cantonments in search of security; there has been more movement back and forth from people's original homes than is the case in Gulu." (Weeks March 2002, p.2)

## **Displacements in the Teso region**

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### **Return takes place in Teso while displacement continues due to Karamojong (May 2006)**

- Return gets underway in the Teso region, estimated that by end of 2006 approximately 200,000 people will have returned in southern and central Lira districts.
- New displacement caused in Katakwi districts.
- Karamoja region presents some of the worst social indicators of any region in Uganda, due to lack of development, continued insecurity, cattle rustling and long term neglect by successive governments.

#### **UNOCHA, May 2006, pg. 4:**

"In the Teso and southern Lango districts, efforts are being stepped up to begin district-based early recovery programmes. It is estimated that by the end of 2006, approximately 200,000 people will have returned to their areas of origin in central and southern Lira district if improved security trends continue. The District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in Lira estimates that since the beginning of the year, 31,000 IDPs have returned to their areas of origin. The inter-agency assessments led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in late 2005 and by the DDMC in March-April 2006 confirmed that in the central part of the district, including southern Apala, Barr, Amugu and Abako sub-counties, the rate of partial or permanent return is over 55% of the displaced population.

Also, since the beginning of the year, large numbers of Karimojong herdsmen crossed from Karamoja region into eastern areas of Kitgum, Pader, Lira, Amuria and Katakwi districts in search of pasture and water for their cattle. Their presence raised tensions with local populations and a series of incidents, including cattle rustling, killings of civilians, and clashes with local militias took place. Fear of attacks prompted fresh displacements in Katakwi districts and forced displaced families to use escorts of local militias to venture out of the camps. Elsewhere in Teso region and southern Lango, security has remained stable and the return process has been ongoing since 2004, with spontaneous movements.

The Karamoja region presents some of the worst social indicators of any region in Uganda. Its three districts occupy the three worst spots in the ranking by district of the Human Development Index and the Human Poverty Index[...]Lack of development and poverty are partly the result of widespread insecurity in the area, the root causes of which are linked to long-standing traditions

of cattle rustling and long-term neglect by successive governments. Although not characterised as an emergency, the overall situation in Karamoja region has been exacerbated by cyclical drought, which has made the region chronically food-insecure.”

### **Causes of displacement in Teso region, 1985-2005 (June 2005)**

- Karamajong warriors have caused small-scale displacement for decades
- Confrontations between the LRA and the government army in 2003 caused the displacement of more than 200,000 people
- By late 2003 the majority of the LRA left Teso region and moved into Lira district

"Katakwi District was carved out from Soroti District in 1997. It lies in the North Eastern region of Uganda. Katakwi constitutes part of the Teso Region, which comprises three other districts of Kumi, Kaberamaido and Soroti. In June 2003, the LRA penetrated into Teso Region through Katakwi District. The LRA attacks [in 2003] caused massive displacement of over 200,000 people, which constitutes to about 75 % of the people in Katakwi District thus disrupting peace and delivery of social services. The district was thrown into a state of emergency. There was increased demand for humanitarian response especially for IDPs in camps. In 2004, LRA attacks started to decline in Teso Region. However, the borders of Katakwi with Kaberamaido and Lira continued to experience intermittent security incidences. Meanwhile the Karamojong malpractice of stealing cattle, killing people and destroying food crops in gardens was still going on along the borders of Katakwi and Karamoja region.

In November 2004, Inter Agency assessment was carried out for Teso Region. The assessment findings, among others, revealed that the LRA induced camps were receiving more attention while the Karamojong affected camps were not. For the past three decades, Katakwi has borne the greatest brunt of the Karamojong raids.

Cattle rustling in Teso Region have existed since the 1940s. In the beginning, the cattle rustlers used spears and later locally made guns called “Amatida”. This low capacity limited cattle rustling activities to the borderline areas of Karamoja and the then Soroti District. Cattle rustling reached its peak between 1986 and 1990 when the Karamojong warriors overran the whole of Teso region. This was at the time when there was rebellion in Teso against the government and delivery of social services including security broke down. The affected people moved into government facilities like sub county H/Q, dispensaries, schools which later became camps where government provided security through the local militia and soldiers. Today there are over 74 Karamojong induced camps hosting about 176,911 people in Katakwi district.”(GoU, 1 July 2005)

"Small scale displacement caused by neighbouring Karamajong cattle rustlers in the Teso region has occurred for more than two decades ago, and has resulted in several camps in Katakwi district. The Teso rebellion in 1985 also resulted in large scale displacement when people were forced into a “protected” camp by the government in 1990. When the LRA entered the Teso region in June 2003, its confrontation with the government and locally formed militias caused an escalation in violence that displaced approximately 250,000 people, mostly in Katakwi, Kaberamaido and Soroti districts. Mass killings, looting and burning of houses and land, and abductions of children became common.

Tens of thousands of people from villages in Soroti and Katakwi district poured into Soroti town in search of safety. Kaberamaido residents mostly fled to nearby village camps or trading centres, surviving without any assistance and facing severe shortages of food and water. [...]

By late 2003 the majority of the LRA left Teso region and moved into Lira district. A few months later, some of those who had sought refuge in Soroti town started to return home to rebuild their homes. The return process has been slow, and will take many more months. Many people still fear that the LRA or the Karamajong will return and destroy everything once again."(MSF, 1 December 2004, p.10)

### **Cattle raids, drought and food insecurity in the Karamajong dominated North-East (2000-2003)**

- Karamajong raids perpetuate displacement in Katakwi ( January-March 2003)
- During 2002 Karimojong attacks were reduced to thefts resulting in slight decrease of displacement and improved access to gardens.
- Food distribution, availability of some pasture, limited disarmament, and increased dialogue on peace and reconciliation between the various groups hold chance for peace (2001)
- Reports of over 55 recorded violent attacks by Karamojong cattle raiders/rustlers on neighbouring Katakwi District – causing new displacement (2001)
- Cattle raids and violence specially frequent during the dry season

#### ***Intensified attacks in 2003***

"At least 65 people have been killed in sub-counties of Agago county (Pader district) by Karimojong armed herdsmen during the months of February and March. The tragic figure is part of an incidence report written by the peace committee of Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) of Kalongo. Two cultural leaders and some elders signed the report, which due to continuous insecurity on the roads reached Gulu with delay.

The report also indicates that 68,000 people are displaced in Kalongo township due to continuous acts of violence perpetrated by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, Karimojong warriors and indisciplined soldiers of the Ugandan Army (UPDF). It also lists a total of 150 huts and hundreds of granaries burnt down by the UPDF, who have often forced people to live in displaced camps by staging arson attacks on houses and food stores.

Kalongo is part of Pader district, which has a population of 287,000. Most of them live in squalid camps lacking basic amenities. Up to know only Caritas has delivered food aid. Two of their staff were wounded in a rebel ambush last Wednesday, April 2nd ." ( ARLPI, 1 July 2003)

"After a year of relative peace in Katakwi district of the Teso sub-region, armed Karimojong warriors began raiding and stealing cattle in the district in late 2002. These attacks intensified in January and February 2003, leading to new displacement and, in some cases, re-displacement of people." (OCHA March 2003)

"The Joint Communication Centre must be strengthened to allow more efficient information exchange between UPDF and district authorities on security issues

A report by the Kalongo peace committee of Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI), released early April, indicates that at least 65 people have been killed in sub-counties of Agago county (Pader district) by Karimojong armed herdsmen during the months of February and March.

The report also indicated that 68,000 people have been displaced in Kalongo Township due to continuous acts of violence perpetrated by LRA rebels, Karimojong warriors and undisciplined UPDF soldiers. It also listed a total of 150 huts and hundreds of granaries allegedly burnt down in UPDF arson attacks aimed at forcing people into IDP camps." (OCHA April 2003)

"According to a UPDF spokesman, an estimated 30 people died in northeastern Karamoja Region in mid-January following clashes between two rival clans of the Karamojong tribe, the Pian and the Bokora. The dry season has led to clans moving with their livestock in search of pasture and water, prompting conflicts over limited resources. In an unrelated event, a group of suspected Kenyan cattle rustlers attacked two villages in Karamoja at the beginning of January, resulting in ten deaths and more than 700 cattle taken." (USAID 4 Feb 2003)

"However, The New Vision Ugandan government-owned newspaper reported on Wednesday that suspected Karamojong warriors had attacked a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Okoboi, Katakwi District, killing two people and leaving four critically wounded. In the incident, on Monday afternoon, about 80 warriors attacked the camp, which was being guarded by 13 members of the Local Defence Unit, and stole 140 head of cattle, according to the paper. People in the camp had expressed fears of the possibility of another attack, it added." (IRIN 15 August 2002)

#### ***Period of relative calm (2002)***

"Though Karimojong attacks in Katakwi in 2002 have greatly reduced and are more of thefts than raids, Katakwi still has 77,000 IDPs still in camps. This is 10 percent less than the 88,500 displaced by the 2000 violent raids. The most affected areas remain the two counties of Usuk and Kapelebyong and specifically, sub-counties immediately bordering Moroto District, namely Magoro, Ngariam, Usuk, Kapelebyong, Obalanga and Acowa. Due to improved security, the displaced have more access to their gardens." (OCHA June 2002)

"The security situation in Katakwi remains calm, despite the influx of Karamojong into the district to find pasture and water for their cattle. According to the RDC of Katakwi, the last raid was on 6th January 2002, and there have been a couple of cattle thefts in some areas. He reports that the Karamojong who have entered Katakwi, with an estimated 30,000-40,000 heads of cattle, are peaceful and not provocative. However, it has not yet been established whether they are carrying arms or not. Fear is high among the Katakwi residents, for past experience has shown them that peace as the Karamojong graze their animals does not guarantee security when they head back home with the onset of the rains. Hence those still in camps are staying in camps and those who had returned home are reported to have returned to the camps." (OCHA February 2002)

#### ***Period of attacks and displacement (2001)***

"[S]ecurity continues to elude Karamoja as inter-group clashes and ambushes continue. Even more worrying is the export of this violence into neighbouring districts, particularly Katakwi, where there were over 55 recorded violent attacks by Karamojong in 2001, resulting in the displacement of a third of the population (88,500 people). Government responded with renewed commitment towards disarming the Karamojong, alongside various proposed development projects in Karamoja, resettlement of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and security enhancements to prevent migrations into Katakwi, east Kitgum, Kumi, Soroti and Lira.

[...]

Improved security will be the key to recovery. In 2001, traditional Karamojong raids became more violent than in the past and included death, rape and malicious destruction of property such as uprooting of crops. Katakwi's 320 km border with Moroto makes it difficult to maintain a 24-hour security net and the Karamojong warriors continue their relentless attacks through numerous entry points. The result has been a displacement of 88,500 people (30% of the Katakwi population)." (UN November 2001, pp.5, 17)

#### ***Worst hit area was Katakwi District bordering Moroto, Ngariam, Magoro and Usuk***

"[Reported in April 2001 that] Karamojong cattle raiders/rustlers have launched a series of attacks on neighbouring Katakwi District, just as the rainy season gets underway - a time when the Karamojong are going back home if they migrated to neighbouring districts. The attacks, which

began in early April [2001], are reported to have displaced yet unknown numbers of people. Katakwi residents have also lost cattle, goats, chicken and crops like cassava from gardens to the rustlers. The worst hit areas are those sub-counties bordering with Moroto, including Ngariam, Magoro and Usuk in Usuk County and sub-counties in Kapelebyong County. The numbers in the remnant IDP camps from last year's violent raids in March-April are now swelling as more families return. The attacks are reportedly not by large groups but most likely by small groups of cattle thieves from Karamoja. The LDUs recruited last year to guard Katakwi residents from Karamojong raiders have allegedly been absorbed into the barracks, hence leaving gaps for the cattle rustlers.

[...]

The security situation in Karamoja is still very fluid, with a significant increase in the number of ambushes and armed robberies on the road especially between Kotido-Moroto and Moroto-Namalu, over the last four weeks or so. On the other hand, inter-tribal clashes have somewhat subdued and some attribute this to the increased presence of UPDF officers deployed to facilitate the disarmament programme." (OCHA April 2001)

"The annual migration of Karamojong in search of pasture took place in mid-January, with approximately 200 herders, mainly Jie from Kotido district, crossing into East Kitgum and Pader districts. However, significant migration into neighbouring Teso districts, the site of serious clashes over resources in 2000, was not apparent. A number of factors appear to have contributed to the maintenance of relative calm during 2001, albeit with some clashes during return migrations from mid-April. Such factors include food distribution within Karamoja itself by international aid agencies, the availability of some pasture within Moroto and Kotido districts, some limited disarmament of herders crossing district borders and increased dialogue on peace and reconciliation between the various groups. While emergency interventions appear to have eased immediate tensions, only long-term development to improve not only the access to water but also to basic social amenities can address their underlying causes. The considerable reduction in the total number of IDPs for Uganda is due primarily to the return of the Karamajong to Karamoja, which has allowed the majority of displaced in Katakwi, Soroti, Lira and Eastern Kitgum to return home." (OCHA 30 April 2001, pp.30-31)

"The northeastern Karamoja area bordering the Sudan and Kenya has been a traditional theatre of raids by cattle rustling tribes (Karamajong, Turkana, Pokot). It is not unusual that Karamajong carry their raids westwards into the centre of the country, particularly during dry times when pasture in Karamoja becomes scarce and cross border movements from Kenya are frequent. With the arrival of the rainy season, the situation usually improves. The year 2000 saw particularly violent raids leading to the temporary displacement of some 140'000 persons. The raiding has taken on the character of military confrontations, with destabilising effects beyond the border districts and the displacement of increasing numbers of persons." (OCHA 7 October 2000)

### **Inter and extra communal violence among the Karamajong (July 2005)**

- Two days of clashes between local warriors and soldiers killing at least 19 people (July 2005)
- At least 65 people have been killed in sub-counties of Agago county (Pader district) by Karimojong armed herdsman (February 2003)
- Karamojong raids perpetuate displacement in Kalongo township (April 2003)
- The Karamojong tribes Pian and Bokora clashed (February 2003)
- Kenyan cattle rustlers attacked two villages in Karamoja killing ten stealing 700 cattle (February 2003)

"At least 19 people, including seven government soldiers, were killed during two days of clashes between local warriors and soldiers over control of livestock in the Karamoja region of northeastern Uganda, a military spokesman said on Monday.

Lt Gabriel Lomongin said trouble began when Pian warriors raided cattle from the rival Bokora ethnic group early last week. After soldiers recovered the cattle on Thursday, the Pian ambushed the army and a battle ensued. The attack was unprecedented because these people have always run to us whenever their herds are raided and we recover the animals, but this time the Pian clan from Amulek Kraal in Nakapiripirit district decided to attack our forces," the spokesman told IRIN.

Politicians from the area said several civilians were killed in crossfire and others were injured.

Paul Lokeris, MP, said more than 50 civilians were killed. Lomongin denied this, saying the fighting was not in the more highly populated areas of the district.

A humanitarian source in the region told IRIN no relief had so far reached those injured in the clashes, most of whom were too poor to afford medical treatment for their injuries. Many of them had lost their homes and all their property in the battle.

Lokeris blamed the army for the clashes: "Very many people were killed and so many were injured. About 200 huts and 400 granaries were torched by the army and property looted; about 800 people are homeless now," he said.

Following the fight the army launched an operation in Nabilatuk, the area where the clashes took place, to forcibly recover illegal guns.

"We have decided that whenever they fire at us, we will confiscate their animals and ask them to surrender their weapons," Lomongin said. "We want to pinch them where it hurts, and that is when you touch a goat, a sheep and a cow of the Karamojong."

Asked about the upsurge in these incidents, he said the rainy season had resulted in overgrown grass and shrubs that the warriors were using as cover to stage attacks.

The Ugandan army carried out a disarmament exercise in Karamoja in 2001, but it was effectively abandoned in 2002 when soldiers were redeployed to deal with the long-running conflict in northern Uganda against the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.

The Karamojong, for whom rustling is a cultural habit, formerly employed rudimentary tools such as spears, bows and arrows in their raids. Now they use guns. There have also been cross-border raids between communities living on the Uganda-Kenya border."(IRIN, 18 July 2005)

"The Joint Communication Centre must be strengthened to allow more efficient information exchange between UPDF and district authorities on security issues

A report by the Kalongo peace committee of Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI), released early April, indicates that at least 65 people have been killed in sub-counties of Agago county (Pader district) by Karimojong armed herdsman during the months of February and March.2003

The report also indicated that 68,000 people have been displaced in Kalongo Township due to continuous acts of violence perpetrated by LRA rebels, Karimojong warriors and undisciplined UPDF soldiers. It also listed a total of 150 huts and hundreds of granaries allegedly burnt down in UPDF arson attacks aimed at forcing people into IDP camps.(OCHA April 2003)



“According to a UPDF spokesman, an estimated 30 people died in northeastern Karamoja Region in mid-January following clashes between two rival clans of the Karamojong tribe, the Pian and the Bokora. The dry season has led to clans moving with their livestock in search of pasture and water, prompting conflicts over limited resources. In an unrelated event, a group of suspected Kenyan cattle rustlers attacked two villages in Karamoja at the beginning of January, resulting in ten deaths and more than 700 cattle taken.” (USAID 4 Feb 2003)

### **Displacements caused by Karimojong pastoralists in eastern Uganda (1999-2002)**

- Widespread availability of small arms amongst the Karamojong pastoralists and cattle raiding a tradition in the area
- Museveni allowed the Karamojong to retain their arms in order to protect themselves from external raids by the Turkana and Pokot in neighbouring Kenya.
- Drought ignited raiding by the Karimojong and displacement in the districts of Katakwi, Lira, Kitgum, Soroti and Kumi during first half of 2000
- Normalised security situation facilitated return by mid-2000
- During 2001 there were reports of over 55 recorded violent attacks by Karamojong cattle raiders/rustlers on neighbouring Katakwi District – causing new displacement
- During 2002 Karimojong attacks were reduced to thefts resulting in slight decrease of displacements and improved access to gardens

"The north-east of the country is inhabited by the Karamojong pastoralists, a marginalised minority of about 100,000 people. Since the Karamojong acquired automatic weapons the region has become a virtual no-go area. The area is suffering from environmental degradation and is periodically struck by famine. The military has been involved in regular punishment expeditions in the fight against cattle-raiding. Vigilantes have taken the law into their own hands, resulting in a breakdown of law and order. Guns are plentiful and gangs have terrorised the local population. An estimated 30,000 illegal weapons are in circulation which are used to rustle cattle and ambush and raid vehicles. These raids extend across the borders into Kenya and Sudan and on numerous occasions have provoked serious incidents with neighbouring countries." (EPCPT December 2000)



"The issue of the Karamojong warriors has been a thorn in the side of all Ugandan governments since independence. The current government of President Yoweri Museveni allowed the Karamojong to retain their arms in order to protect themselves from external raids by the Turkana and Pokot in neighbouring Kenya.

[...]

The Karamojong have maintained their armouries by buying guns cheaply from the SPLA [Sudan People's Liberation Army], and other sources in Somalia and northwestern Kenya," Wairagala Wakabi, a journalist with 'The EastAfrican' who specialises in the movement of small arms in the region told IRIN. "They have the option of barter trade where they exchange animals for guns."(IRIN 22 March 2000)

"Currently [April 2000], as the drought in Karamoja begins to bite, the Karimojong are violently raiding neighbouring districts of Katakwi, Lira, Kitgum, Soroti and Kumi and causing a lot of displacement.

From a rapid assessment carried out by a WFP-led joint agency team and discussions with district leaders of the area (March 28-30), Karimojong rustlers and tribesmen have for the past month been terrorising the neighbouring districts of Katakwi, Soroti, Kumi, Kitgum and Lira, causing displacement as they loot food and other items and destroy property. This is partly because Karamoja experienced an unusual level of drought in 1999 (Karamoja experiences persistent drought and with at least six-seven months of dry spell each year. In 1999 the rains came late and were not consistent or adequate. As in the past, the Karimojong moved into neighbouring districts for water and pasture. As they were retreating back, the old pattern of looting with violence surfaced. This year, however, the looting was reportedly combined with raping, killings and violent beatings of a previously unknown dimension. Pick-ups and lorries are also reported to have ferried food and household items of ransacked villages. Frequent mention of disarmament of the Karimojong may have triggered this year's extreme violence in the raids according to some district leaders and displaced people during the fact finding mission.

The affected districts were Katakwi with an estimated number of 35,000 displaced. Kumi (2500), Soroti (2500), Kitgum (80,000) and Lira (15,000). The attacks are still ongoing and there is urgent need for security in the region or the situation of IDPs will deteriorate." (UNHCU 12 April 2000)

"[Reported in June 2000 that] The security situation in the districts of Lira, Soroti and Kumi and to an extent Katakwi, seem to have normalised. The exception are the border areas of Katakwi where attacks still occur and people seem to have moved their households inward, away from the border areas. The temporary measure of arming the Local Defence Units (LDUs) seems to have worked, as the attacks have almost stopped. " (UNHCU 6 June 2000)

"[Reported in April 2001 that] Karamojong cattle raiders/rustlers have launched a series of attacks on neighbouring Katakwi District, just as the rainy season gets underway - a time when the Karamojong are going back home if they migrated to neighbouring districts. The attacks, which began in early April [2001], are reported to have displaced yet unknown numbers of people. Katakwi residents have also lost cattle, goats, chicken and crops like cassava from gardens to the rustlers. The worst hit areas are those sub-counties bordering with Moroto, including Ngariam, Magoro and Usuk in Usuk County and sub-counties in Kapelebyong County. The numbers in the remnant IDP camps from last year's violent raids in March-April are now swelling as more families return. The attacks are reportedly not by large groups but most likely by small groups of cattle thieves from Karamoja. The LDUs recruited last year to guard Katakwi residents from Karamojong raiders have allegedly been absorbed into the barracks, hence leaving gaps for the cattle rustlers.

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"[S]ecurity continues to elude Karamoja as inter-group clashes and ambushes continue. Even more worrying is the export of this violence into neighbouring districts, particularly Katakwi, where there were over 55 recorded violent attacks by Karamojong in 2001, resulting in the displacement of a third of the population (88,500 people). Government responded with renewed commitment towards disarming the Karamojong, alongside various proposed development projects in Karamoja, resettlement of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and security enhancements to prevent migrations into Katakwi, east Kitgum, Kumi, Soroti and Lira.

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Improved security will be the key to recovery. In 2001, traditional Karamojong raids became more violent than in the past and included death, rape and malicious destruction of property such as uprooting of crops. Katakwi's 320 km border with Moroto makes it difficult to maintain a 24-hour security net and the Karamojong warriors continue their relentless attacks through numerous entry points. The result has been a displacement of 88,500 people (30% of the Katakwi population)." (UN November 2001, pp.5, 17)

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**See also:** [Operation to disarm the Karamojong initiated by end-2001](#)

## **Displacements in the west**

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### **The threat from Allied Democratic Forces reduced (2003)**

- Relative calm in southwestern and west Nile region (2002-03)
- A team of defence attaches declared Rwenzori Districts of Kabarole, Kasese and Bundibugyo safe from rebel infiltrators(April 2002)
- Numbers of IDP decreasing steadily(2002-03)
- Improved security further to “decisive action” (2001)

“Developments in the situation in southwestern Uganda are more positive. The threat from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) appears to have reduced significantly and the Amnesty Commission and Mission d’Observation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) are currently approaching donors in Uganda for the repatriation and rehabilitation of the ADF as stipulated by the Amnesty Act (2000). As a result, the situation in the Rwenzori region, particularly Bundibugyo District, is much calmer. As a direct result, an increasing number of IDPs are in the process of returning to their original homes or to smaller settlements near their places of origin. While there has been no recent verification of the numbers in IDP camps in Bundibugyo (last established in February 2002 at 87,000), there are indications that up to 40,000 people have since left the camps. Similar returns has taken place in Kasese and Kabarole, where all IDPs have either returned home or integrated in the community.

[...]

Other areas previously affected by conflict (southwestern Uganda and most of West Nile region) continue to experience relative calm. In these areas, transition and rehabilitation efforts, the second focus of the 2003 CAP, can be pursued.”(UN November 2002, p.6) )

“Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacks beginning in 1996 up to mid-2001 caused displacement of local populations, limited access to land, insecurity, collapse in purchasing power, family income/assets and morals. Bundibugyo District bore the brunt of the ADF attacks and had the largest number of IDPs in the region, which peaked at 120,000 in the year 2000. To date Bundibugyo is reported as the only district with IDPs in Southwestern or Rwenzori region. Though no comprehensive assessment has been undertaken, most IDPs in Kasese and Kabarole districts either returned home or integrated into the community.” (OCHA July/August 2002)

“A team of defence attaches from America, UK, France, Kenya and South Africa have declared the Rwenzori Districts of Kabarole, Kasese and Bundibugyo safe from rebel infiltrators. The team, led by Richard Orth, the American defence attaché and dean to all defence attaches in Uganda, was on a fact-finding mission in the region during the week beginning 6th May 2002. This comes in the wake of over twelve months of calm in the Rwenzori region, which has seen several IDPs voluntarily return nearer to their homes. Further, UPDF second division commander, Col. Poteli Kivuna, reportedly said the displaced were free to go back to their homes.” (OCHA April/May 2002)

#### ***But signs of a safer situation by end-2001***

“ADF attacks have decreased in number and magnitude since the year began. Save for the March 17th attack on Kasese, where unknown terrorists were involved, calm has reigned in the region, with very few Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacks reported. With hope that this quiet is more than a lull in the storm, IDPs in Bundibugyo now have access to more garden areas during the day while still seeking the safety of camps at night. Approximately 20% have boldly resettled in four new camps nearer to their homes with the aim of increasing their food production. Consequently, the district is providing security to the new camps and humanitarian agencies are exploring ways of aiding IDPs resettlement in both Bundibugyo and Kabarole.” (UN November 2001, p.6)

### ***Rebel activities continues unabated (first half of 2001)***

"In the Southwest, Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) activity continues unabated. Although the Kasese attack on 17 March was not linked to the ADF, on March 28 heavily armed ADF rebels attacked Hamukungu fishing village – about 30km southwest of Kasese town – reportedly killing three and abducting four. In early April, the UPDF claimed, however, to have reduced the force to 'less than 100' and to have overrun a local commander's headquarters. President Museveni has also declared a departure from the 'softer approach' implied in the initial amnesty offer and decreed decisive action to bring the terrorist threat to an end through strengthened UPDF measures against them. IDPs in the Southwest remain hesitant about returning to the homes, due to continuing fear of attack by remnant rebels, although Kasese district is advocating for their resettlement." (OCHA 30 April 2001, p.31)

### ***Further escalation of ADF activities occurred during the second half of 1999:***

"The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) substantially increased attacks in mid-December 1999 and these attacks have continued without abatement for the past two months in Bundibugyo and Kabarole Districts. President Museveni is currently in the Rwenzori Region leading operations against the rebels. Even with the President in the area, the ADF continues to attack IDP camps. There have been daily attacks, gun battles and/or ambushes occurring in parts of the District during the day and at night. Since the start of the year, there have been 28 separate ADF attacks and ambushes reported in the Monitor and New Vision newspapers. These attacks have left several dozen civilians dead. During his visit, the President is reported to have encouraged people to return to their homes and leave the IDP camps." (UNHCU 18 February 2000)

### ***One report gives the following outline of the ADF atrocities in 1998:***

"In the west and southwest, the rebel Allied Democratic Forces significantly heightened their activities [in 1998], which included repeated attacks on civilian targets, trading centers, and private homes, resulting in hundreds of deaths and abductions. The ADF continued to plant land mines extensively and increased its attacks on both rural and urban civilian targets, police outposts, and UPDF encampments. In February 30 students were abducted by ADF rebels from Mitandi Seventh Day Adventist College in Kasese. In April rebels attacked a woman in Bundibugyo district and cut off her ears and nose. The ADF forces hacked two civilian women to death in Kasese district in May. The ADF's deadliest attack of the year occurred on June 8, when rebels killed 80 students of Kichwamba Technical College in Kabarole district by setting locked dormitories on fire. An additional 80 students were abducted in the raid. Also in June, ADF rebels abducted over 100 school children from a school in Hoima district. ADF conducted dozens of small-scale raids that resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths. An ADF-affiliated group, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda claimed responsibility for three bus bomb attacks in August that killed 30 persons." (US DOS March 1999, sect. 1c)

### **Landowners in the Rwenzori region charge IDPs for land (2002)**

- Commercialisation of land causes displacement

"Associated with economic problems is the difficulty to access their original land. Land emerged among the perceived main problems faced by IDPs (43%). Both displaced persons and landowners on whose land camps were established face this problem. Landowners where camps were established have had their crops destroyed by people putting up temporary shelter.

### **Land in camps**

The demand for land has increased in areas where camps were established, making it more marketable. Many landowners, where camps were established have sold parts of their land either to the displaced people or other interested persons. This has led to constant displacement of

some IDPs from one place or camp to another. Some landowners chased displaced persons from their land, while others are charging IDPs a fee for establishing a shelter or constructing a latrine. This was mainly observed in camps near trading centers e.g., Nyahuka, Union IDP camps in Bundibugyo district.

In Kasese district, Ibanda Primary IDP camp, displaced people were reportedly chased from the land and only 6 households remained after pleading to the owner. In Nyahuka IDP camp, Bundibugyo district, respondents reported being charged between 10,000 Ush and 50,000 Ush. per year for constructing a shelter and 5,000 Ush - 10,000 Ush. per year for a latrine." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, p.8)

### **Displacements related to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in the west and southwest (1998-2003)**

- Relative calm in southwestern and west Nile region (2002-03)
- Numbers of IDP decreasing steadily(2002-03)
- Improved security further to "decisive military action" (2001)

"Developments in the situation in southwestern Uganda are more positive. The threat from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) appears to have reduced significantly and the Amnesty Commission and Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) are currently approaching donors in Uganda for the repatriation and rehabilitation of the ADF as stipulated by the Amnesty Act (2000). As a result, the situation in the Rwenzori region, particularly Bundibugyo District, is much calmer. As a direct result, an increasing number of IDPs are in the process of returning to their original homes or to smaller settlements near their places of origin. While there has been no recent verification of the numbers in IDP camps in Bundibugyo (last established in February 2002 at 87,000), there are indications that up to 40,000 people have since left the camps. Similar returns has taken place in Kasese and Kabarole, where all IDPs have either returned home or integrated in the community.

..other areas previously affected by conflict (southwestern Uganda and most of West Nile region) continue to experience relative calm. In these areas, transition and rehabilitation efforts, the second focus of the 2003 CAP, can be pursued.(UN November 2002 p.6 )

"Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacks beginning in 1996 up to mid-2001 caused displacement of local populations, limited access to land, insecurity, collapse in purchasing power, family income/assets and morals. Bundibugyo District bore the brunt of the ADF attacks and had the largest number of IDPs in the region, which peaked at 120,000 in the year 2000. To date Bundibugyo is reported as the only district with IDPs in Southwestern or Rwenzori region. Though no comprehensive assessment has been undertaken, most IDPs in Kasese and Kabarole districts either returned home or integrated into the community." (OCHA July/August 2002)

"A team of defence attaches from America, UK, France, Kenya and South Africa have declared the Rwenzori Districts of Kabarole, Kasese and Bundibugyo safe from rebel infiltrators. The team, led by Richard Orth, the American defence attaché and dean to all defence attaches in Uganda, was on a fact-finding mission in the region during the week beginning 6th May 2002. This comes in the wake of over twelve months of calm in the Rwenzori region, which has seen several IDPs voluntarily return nearer to their homes. Further, UPDF second division commander, Col. Poteli Kivuna, reportedly said the displaced were free to go back to their homes." (OCHA April/May 2002)

### ***But signs of a safer situation by end-2001***

"ADF attacks have decreased in number and magnitude since the year began. Save for the March 17th attack on Kasese, where unknown terrorists were involved, calm has reigned in the region, with very few Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacks reported. With hope that this quiet is more than a lull in the storm, IDPs in Bundibugyo now have access to more garden areas during the day while still seeking the safety of camps at night. Approximately 20% have boldly resettled in four new camps nearer to their homes with the aim of increasing their food production. Consequently, the district is providing security to the new camps and humanitarian agencies are exploring ways of aiding IDPs resettlement in both Bundibugyo and Kabarole." (UN November 2001, p.6)

### ***Rebel activities continues unabated (first half of 2001)***

"In the Southwest, Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) activity continues unabated. Although the Kasese attack on 17 March was not linked to the ADF, on March 28 heavily armed ADF rebels attacked Hamukungu fishing village – about 30km southwest of Kasese town – reportedly killing three and abducting four. In early April, the UPDF claimed, however, to have reduced the force to 'less than 100' and to have overrun a local commander's headquarters. President Museveni has also declared a departure from the 'softer approach' implied in the initial amnesty offer and decreed decisive action to bring the terrorist threat to an end through strengthened UPDF measures against them. IDPs in the Southwest remain hesitant about returning to the homes, due to continuing fear of attack by remnant rebels, although Kasese district is advocating for their resettlement." (OCHA 30 April 2001, p.31)

### ***One report gives the following outline of the ADF atrocities in 1998:***

"In the west and southwest, the rebel Allied Democratic Forces significantly heightened their activities [in 1998], which included repeated attacks on civilian targets, trading centers, and private homes, resulting in hundreds of deaths and abductions. The ADF continued to plant land mines extensively and increased its attacks on both rural and urban civilian targets, police outposts, and UPDF encampments. In February 30 students were abducted by ADF rebels from Mitandi Seventh Day Adventist College in Kasese. In April rebels attacked a woman in Bundibugyo district and cut off her ears and nose. The ADF forces hacked two civilian women to death in Kasese district in May. The ADF's deadliest attack of the year occurred on June 8, when rebels killed 80 students of Kichwamba Technical College in Kabarole district by setting locked dormitories on fire. An additional 80 students were abducted in the raid. Also in June, ADF rebels abducted over 100 school children from a school in Hoima district. ADF conducted dozens of small-scale raids that resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths. An ADF-affiliated group, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda claimed responsibility for three bus bomb attacks in August that killed 30 persons. (US DOS March 1999, sect. 1c)

## **Peace-efforts**

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### **Juba Peace Process (October 2006)**

- . Peace process tackles complex issues of accountability – NGOs propose different accountability mechanisms as equivalent to the ICC
- . Rights of young mothers and their children need to be taken into account at Juba talks
- . LRA and GoU sign landmark cessation of hostilities agreement in Juba, which results in improved security and increased freedom of movement.
- . Peace remains fragile, uncertain. Talks stall, then begin again, outcome is uncertain.
- For further information on the peace proces see the documents listed below

**Liu Institute for Global Issues / Gulu NGO Forum, October 2006, Pg 1-3:**

“As peace talks between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda proceed in Juba, many anticipate the forthcoming discussion of the third agenda item on Reconciliation and Accountability. The LRA leadership has repeatedly stated that no fighter will return home unless the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court withdraws indictments against four of the remaining five commanders still alive [...] The Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo, has ruled out any possibility of lifting the arrest warrants, arguing if war crimes go unpunished, they could happen again [...]. This paper suggests ways to move beyond the current impasse. It identifies a series of current justice and reconciliation alternatives available. By placing an emphasis on what can be discussed in the peace talks, it hopes to illustrate means of realizing both peace and justice.

[...]

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The articulation of any justice system, complementary or as an alternative to the ICC, requires technical support, time and consensus building. Realistically, the objective of the Juba Talks agenda on accountability and reconciliation should focus on the creation of a blueprint for moving forward. This requires reaching a consensus on the types of justice systems that could be implemented in a post-conflict period. This *Field Note* recognizes that national prosecutions are an unlikely scenario. The LRA will not likely agree to be tried in a national court. Amnesty has already been extended by the Government of Uganda, and the LRA high command has agreed to accept it, if ICC indictments are repealed.

As already discussed, the ICC will not repeal without reaching adequate standards of justice. This *Field Note* explores two mechanisms that deserve closer attention at the Juba Peace Talks. First, a mechanism of traditional justice for community reconciliation could facilitate rebuilding the social fabric, particularly in Acholi-land, the region most grossly affected by the conflict. This process should address questions of cultural differences, since LRA raids reached beyond the Acholi sub-region to include Langi, Teso and West Nile region. Resolution of these issues is central to realizing sustainable peace and reconciliation in the region. Secondly, a commission or panel composed of non-governmental experts could be appointed. Its primary task would be to investigate and report who did what, when, where and why. Unlike the ICC, which is bound by the Rome Statue to investigate crimes committed from 2002 onwards, such a commission would not be time bound [...].

This *Field Note* explores the relative strengths and weaknesses of each alternative and raises a number of questions to be explored by technical experts. At the same time, the talks cannot get mired in the technicalities of creating a new justice system, something that often takes countries emerging from conflict years, even decades, to decide [...]. To avoid delaying the talks, the parties could create a temporary Technical Commission on Accountability and Reconciliation that would establish a ‘plan of action’ for the post-conflict period. It might also satisfy the Court that steps are being taken to satisfy justice.”

**Liu Institute for Global Issues / Gulu NGO Forum, September 2006, Pg. 1-2:**

“This issue of *Field Notes* focuses on young mothers who have returned from the captivity of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). Mothers are a social group that has not figured widely in the justice, reintegration or reconciliation debate in northern Uganda [...]. Yet a number of justice related concerns were raised by young mothers during the course of JRP research,<sup>2</sup> suggesting



the urgent need for a more forward-thinking approach at the Juba Peace Talks. First, marriage is the most important socioeconomic institution of support for mothers and children. However, cultural taboos regarding a young mother's time in the 'bush' has made marriage on return difficult, leaving some vulnerable to exploitation. For example, some resorted to working as laborers in controversial government-sponsored agricultural programs headed by former LRA high commanders; thus exposing the young mothers to coercion and hardship, and reproducing old 'bush' ideologies [...].

Second, there is also a question of reunion with former LRA combatants, whom young mothers were forced to marry. In 2005, a number of high level commanders returned to Uganda in large groups and began searching for the women they had forced to be their 'wives' in the 'bush' with the expectation of rejoining them. Others were instantly reunited in army barracks where the commanders were being 'debriefed.' When pushed on the unethical nature of these reunions, some army officials harshly told critics they were spoiling the amnesty process and stood in the way of 'peacemaking'. The need to uphold the ideals of the Amnesty Act and to cull home commanders considering defection placed in jeopardy the right of victims. Indeed, an overwhelming desire to end the conflict has persuaded many to 'look the other way' and fall into silence.

For instance, it is well known in Gulu Town that a former high ranking commander is living with an underage girl who was abducted at the age of 12 and served as his 'wife' while in captivity. By law, this is statutory rape, violating the terms of the Amnesty Act. However, the status of former commanders in Gulu Town has meant this and similar types of situations have gone without remark in public forums. Third, there is also the question of children born in captivity and their identities. Young mother's often felt the identity of their children, and where they belonged, was one of the most pressing issues they face in reintegrating.

The current Juba peace talks and negotiations between the Government of Uganda (GoU) and LRA present an opportunity to begin to debate these ongoing challenges to reintegration for young mothers and to establish protocols and laws on how to protect the rights of mothers [...].

To stimulate this discussion, the *Field Note* focuses on the following questions: a) What are the cultural norms, beliefs and practices around marriage in Acholi-land, and how have these been affected by the conflict?; b) What implications have abduction, forced soldiering and forced marriage had on the practice of marriage for young mothers who are no longer in captivity?; c) What are the possible justice and reconciliation issues policy makers need to be aware of and address in the current peace process?

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

o The institution of marriage was once highly respected in Acholi, maintaining strict codes of social and sexual behavior. While cultural beliefs on marriage continue to be held, most can no longer be practiced in the context of conflict, displacement, and poverty. The number of forced marriages, 'elopements' [...], and divorce appear to be much higher than in the past.

o Over 90 percent of girls and young women abducted by the LRA in our sample were forced into marriage. Of these, at least 73 percent continued to fight as soldiers even if 'married'. Findings showed that 'marriage' in the 'bush' provided some protection within the LRA by extending to women certain privileges based upon the rank of one's 'bush husband'. However, it was also the site of violence for girls and women, who were raped, beaten and tortured for breaking sexual and domestic codes of conduct in the LRA.

o Just over half of young mothers returning from captivity choose to remain single, and struggle to make economic ends meet. Another 37 percent choose to remarry,

although marriages to non-abducted persons tend not to last due to stigma related to time spent in captivity and social pressure on new husbands to force their wives out.

- o Approximately 59 percent of young mothers have knowledge that their 'bush husbands' are still alive and at large. Ninety seven percent stated that they are uninterested in reuniting with former LRA 'husbands'.

- o Although the majority of young mothers interviewed were aware of Amnesty, traditional rituals for reconciliation and prayer ceremonies (and have benefited from at least one of them), 94 percent felt no justice has been realized in relation to their experiences.

- o A central recommendation is to ensure that cultural and religious leaders and legal practitioners address the rights of young mothers and their children within the context of agenda item 3 (Reconciliation and Accountability) of the Juba Peace Talks [...]

- o Other recommendations include: the need to create protection mechanisms to ensure forced reunion does not occur in peace time; create an initiative/system to identify the lineage of children; and to devise a compensation fund for all young mothers to help them cope with raising children on their own."

#### **IRIN, August 2006:**

"KAMPALA, 28 Aug 2006 (IRIN) - Both the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) were upbeat on Monday about a peaceful end to their 20-year-old war that has killed thousands and displaced almost two million people in the north of the country.

The signing on Saturday of an agreement to cease hostilities gave both sides new hope that a comprehensive agreement was in sight, although they acknowledged the need for continued vigilance.

"In spite of a rocky start to the talks, there is currently an unprecedented will from both sides to reach an agreement. We are confident of reaching an agreement, though there are still a few things we do not agree on, but we see a better rapport, we see more commitment and all of us agree on the need to have peace in northern Uganda," the head of the Ugandan delegation to the talks, Ruhakana Rugunda, the Interior Minister, said on Sunday.

His LRA counterpart, Martin Ojul, agreed, telling IRIN by phone from Juba, southern Sudan, where the talks are being held: "Hopefully, the government will [consolidate] the cessation of hostilities agreement, but the LRA is more committed to this process than ever before. We are committed to the process, however long it may take."

In the next round of talks, according to analysts in Kampala, the mediators will have to find a compromise, especially to LRA demands that include huge cuts in the military, LRA representation in all political appointments and total autonomy of northern Uganda.

Other sensitive issues will include wealth- and power-sharing as well as the economic and social development of northern Uganda.

Rugunda agreed, saying the next three weeks would be crucial to the process as rebels start assembling in two areas in southern Sudan, but he was hopeful that a compromise such as that reached during the debate on halting hostilities would also be reached on other outstanding issues.

The Ugandan government and LRA on Saturday signed an agreement to cease hostilities with effect from 29 August. Rugunda said the process would require all stakeholders, including the Ugandan population, to be vigilant. "There are still suspicions and we should not give detractors a chance to exploit any weak points that may show in the implementation of the agreement," he said.

The truce calls for the safe passage of LRA forces to two sites designated as assembly points, one at Owiny-ki-Bul in Sudan's eastern Equatoria on the east side of the Nile, for those rebels in southern Sudan and in Uganda, and another for those in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at Ri-Kwangba in western Equatoria to the west of the Nile.

Those fighters in Uganda who cannot move to southern Sudan are allowed to assemble in any place of worship in Uganda, according to the agreement.

"The forces of the LRA shall surface wherever they may be present ... places of worship in Uganda, designated in consultation with religious leaders, may serve as sanctuary for the LRA forces," the agreement states.

LRA's second in command, Vincent Otti, called a local radio in the northern Uganda town of Gulu on Sunday to urge LRA fighters to respect the cessation of hostilities deal, saying it was "real".

"Do not abduct people or steal food. If you want food, ask the community. Do not commit atrocities and no ambushes as you move," Otti said on MEGA FM, a semi-official broadcaster. He said he had spoken to LRA commanders who were expected to lead their forces to the two designated assembly areas in southern Sudan.

In the past, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni had maintained that the ceasefire should only be part of a final deal as the rebels had used such opportunities to re-arm and recruit new fighters.

A legislator from northern Uganda, Jimmy Akena, who had attended part of the talks before Saturday's breakthrough, said there was mistrust between the two groups, "but they all agree that there is a need for peace and they are only haggling on how that peace should be delivered".

What was not clear was what would happen to the assembled rebel fighters in case the two parties failed to reach a final agreement. "In the unlikely event of failure of the peace talks, the LRA shall be allowed to leave the assembly areas peacefully. The possibility of failing is a bit unlikely," Rugunda said.

During the next round of talks, the truce will be reviewed bi-weekly as the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army will look after the rebels.

A truce-monitoring group led by the southern Sudan government will comprise two members from the LRA and two each from the Ugandan government and the African Union. They are supposed to be in Juba by Tuesday to begin monitoring the implementation of the agreement.

The Juba negotiations are seen as the best bet to end the two-decades-long conflict in northern Uganda that has since spread to southern Sudan and the northeastern DRC.

Tens of thousands have been killed and nearly two million displaced in northern Uganda since the LRA took over leadership of a regional rebellion among the Acholi tribesmen in what relief agencies say is the world's worst and most-forgotten humanitarian crisis."

## **SPLA attempts to mediate talks between LRA and government (May 2006)**

- SPLA delivers message of peace from Joseph Kony, leader of LRA to President Museveni.
- Museveni offers to protect Kony if he stops terrorizing the population.
- ICC responds and says Uganda must arrest indicted LRA leaders.
- Government of Uganda reluctant to take part in talks due to the ICC warrants.

### **IRIN, 25 May 2006:**

"KAMPALA, 25 May 2006 (IRIN) - The insurgent Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is ready to engage the Ugandan government in talks to end two decades of fighting that has killed thousands and displaced close to two million people in the country's north, rebel leader Joseph Kony has said.

Rare video footage seen by IRIN shows Kony addressing a delegation of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) headed by south Sudan's vice president, Riek Machar. "The LRA is ready to talk peace and end the war in a good way, not by force. We are fighting for peace and I am not a terrorist," Kony said during the 2 May meeting.

The LRA commander-in-chief said he was ready to talk peace with the Ugandan government and had "no problem" with President Yoweri Museveni. He also said he accepted an offer of mediation extended by Machar. South Sudan - where the LRA operates from - is now run by the SPLM/A, which signed a peace deal with the Khartoum-based Sudanese government in January 2005.

At the end of the meeting, Machar is seen handing over food aid and what he says is US \$20,000 in cash to Kony as part of an agreement for the rebels to halt attacks in southern Sudan, but warns him not to spend it on arms.

Sources said the video, which contains the first images of Kony to have appeared in years, was given to Ugandan authorities by Sudanese officials after the meeting, which took place near the border between Uganda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Kony, clad in a blue beret and a military uniform with general's pips, looked healthy. He said he had been unfairly blamed for atrocities the LRA had not committed.

"The whole [world], even the journalists, don't know me, because to get to me is very difficult ... so people believe the propaganda that Kony is a killer," he said.

Kony and four other top LRA commanders - including his deputy, Vincent Otti, who also appears in the video, - are on the run, having been indicted in October 2005 on war crimes charges by the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague.

"I am not a terrorist," he insisted. "I am a rebel in military opposition ... I am in opposition. If Museveni says that, then it means that all opposition leaders in Africa should also be taken to The Hague."

Earlier this week, Museveni said he would "guarantee [Kony's] safety" if the LRA stopped fighting and agreed to peace talks by the end of July, although the nature of the promised protection was not immediately clear.

Kony claims to be fighting to replace Museveni's government with one based on the Bible's 10 Commandments, but LRA fighters are more notorious for their brutal attacks on civilians and their abduction of tens of thousands of children for use as porters, sex slaves and child soldiers.

The United Nations has described the war in northern Uganda as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, which has gone largely unnoticed by the international community.

Since the ICC indictments, which led to increased cooperation between Kampala and Khartoum, Uganda has accused the rebels of moving from their bases in southern Sudan to northeastern DRC."

**See also [Government must stop rhetoric of declaring war is over \(March 2006\)](#)**

### **ICC issues arrest warrants for top LRA commanders, complicating peace efforts (January 2006)**

- Chief peace mediator says ICC arrest warrants undermine peace efforts
- Amnesty process confused by ICC arrest warrants
- ICC warrants draws widespread praise
- International Crisis Group offers strategy to resolve 20-year conflict

"The decision by the International Criminal Court's (ICC) to issue arrest warrants for the leaders of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has changed the dynamics of ongoing peace talks between the Uganda government and the rebels, the mediator said.

"You can no longer talk to the LRA as before, the dynamics have changed. The situation is different and I would not like to talk to the LRA now because the ICC has not yet given me details of the warrant," Betty Bigombe told IRIN on Monday."

[...]

"The head of the Uganda Amnesty Commission (UAC), a statutory body set up by the government to give a blanket amnesty to surrendering rebels, also said the decision by the international court had left their work in "total confusion".

Since the commission started its work, we have based our sensitisation on the blanket amnesty and the impact has been tremendous. But now the issue has changed and we also have to deal with the uncertainty the ICC warrants have brought about," Peter Onega, the UAC chairman, told IRIN on Monday.

Onega said the warrants would scare away willing rebels and frustrate the commission's efforts to negotiate for ex-rebels' return.

"It means we have to start afresh to sensitise them [the rebels] that the warrant is only for a few people and the rest are free to come back home," he said.

"The statute establishing the ICC overrides the national laws and the court may decide to issue other warrants of arrest for people we have even issued amnesty to. Where does this leave the amnesty statute, where we derive our mandate?" he added" (IRIN, 10 October 2005).

"The EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, called on countries in the region to cooperate with the court to take its first ever indictments off the ground.

"I welcome this historic decision - the first ICC indictments ever - which expresses the Court's wish to put an end to the impunity in a region that suffered so much from grave human rights violations," Solana said in a statement on Friday.

"The EU has supported the ICC since its early beginnings. I call upon all countries in the region to cooperate with the ICC in the execution of this decision," he added.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the indictments would "send a powerful signal around the world that those responsible for such crimes will be held accountable for their actions."

"The Secretary-General calls on all states, particularly those in the region concerned, to extend their full cooperation to the ICC, including by acting expeditiously to execute the arrest warrants against the suspects, while taking seriously their responsibility to protect civilians, particularly women and children," a UN statement said on Friday" (IRIN, 17 October 2005).

### **Revived hopes for peace (November 2005)**

- LRA requests peace talks with government
- Reduction in LRA support from the Sudanese government and a more effective Ugandan Army are beginning to have a settling effect
- Primary obstacle to a realistic peace settlement is the leader of the LRA, Joseph Koney
- The LRA is in "survival mode" because of cuts in its supply lines from Sudan

"The rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has called for the resumption of peace talks with the Ugandan government, a call mediators say rekindles hope for a peaceful settlement of the 20-year civil war in the north of the country.

The chief mediator in the on-and-off talks and former Ugandan minister, Betty Bigombe, said on Wednesday that LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti had contacted her and expressed willingness to resume talks with the government.

Otti, the number two in the LRA hierarchy, called the BBC on Tuesday to announce that the rebels were willing to negotiate an end to the brutal war that has ravaged northern Uganda.

"We have been talking these days, and it is through these talks that we can get moving," Bigombe told IRIN.

She emphasised, however, that she needed to find out the government's view on Otti's proposition.

An aid worker in northern Uganda who preferred not to be named said the overture by the rebels was encouraging. "The statement by Otti is a positive move, considering that he is even saying that he is ready to talk to the ICC [International Criminal Court]," he said" (IRIN, 30 November 2005)

"Northern Uganda, which has been torn by decades of fighting between the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), has perhaps its best chance for peace in the last 18 years, says the special advisor to the president of the International Crisis Group (ICG), a nongovernmental organization.

John Prendergast, a former advisor on African issues at the National Security Council, said confidence-building measures such as cease-fire negotiations, the reduction in LRA support from

the Sudanese government, and a more effective Ugandan Army are beginning to have a settling effect on the region. He was speaking February 7 at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington.

Uganda has had an ongoing civil war for 18 years and as many as 1.4 million people have been displaced in northern Uganda, according to the State Department. The LRA is held responsible for the violence and for the abduction of children from towns in the north to serve both as soldiers and as sex slaves.

In August 2004 President Bush signed the Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act, which calls for a congressional report in February 2005 detailing the causes of conflict and the sources of support for the LRA. The United States has also provided more than \$13 million to support the reintegration of former child soldiers and other formerly abducted persons and to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Additionally, the United States provided nearly \$4 million in emergency non-food humanitarian assistance for FY 2003, and almost \$9 million in such assistance for FY 2004. It also gave \$62 million to World Food Program efforts in Uganda, more than 50 percent of total assistance to the country, primarily for a massive feeding program for refugees in northern and eastern Uganda.

The primary obstacle to a realistic peace settlement is the leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony. Recent interviews by Prendergast with LRA commanders in Uganda who have come out of hiding paint a "bizarre portrait of a man rooted in a grotesquely distorted view of the Old Testament," he said.

Kony believes he is led by God to destroy anyone who collaborates with the Ugandan army, Prendergast said. "He likens himself to Moses - and like Moses he doesn't believe he'll make it to the Promised Land, which provides a very dangerous ambiguity to whether he will ever let himself personally be part of the peace process."

Meanwhile, the LRA is in "survival mode" because of cuts in its supply lines from Sudan, Prendergast said. Its members are stealing food and stealing children to make up for those who have been killed in battle. However, the LRA has "a long track record of bouncing back," he said.

"If Kony were to be killed or captured, the LRA would unravel," Prendergast said. But to ensure there is not another uprising, other strategies besides military action, such as aid and humanitarian assistance, are key, he said.

Prendergast suggested that one way to encourage members of the LRA to put down their guns would be through the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program. The Ugandan government and the World Bank have not yet implemented this program, but must do so soon to further the peace process, he said."(US DOS, 9 February 2005)

### **IDPs prefer peace before justice (July 2005)**

- International justice may hamper national peace efforts
- Representatives from Lango, Acholi, Iteso and Madi community leaders have requested the International Criminal Court (ICC) to reconsider its investigations against rebel leaders
- The conflict is still ongoing and the ICC has no special powers of arrest
- Pro-government politicians favour combining the peace and ICC processes
- Fear that the LRA will have no incentive to dialogue with the Government if they face arrest and detention by the ICC

"In response to numerous failed military attempts at resolving the conflict – with disastrous consequences for civilians – the government, under pressure from civil society, enacted an Amnesty Act in 2000, which allows rebels to receive amnesty if they voluntarily come out of the bush and renounce rebellion. Seen primarily as a tool for ending the war, it has allowed a significant number of combatants to escape from the rebels and, in theory, return to their

communities. It must be noted that this conception of amnesty is very different than amnesties that have been implemented in other situations of transitional justice. The amnesty granted in Chile, for example, was granted to military personnel after the conflict was finished, and in blanket form, to keep them from being prosecuted in the trials that would come after. The amnesty granted in South Africa as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process was granted on an ad hoc basis in exchange for testimony. The amnesty in Uganda has been declared before the end of the conflict. While people in Uganda appear to perceive of the amnesty as having been very much a tool to end the war, there is less clarity over the consequences it might have afterward.

At the same time, the [International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#) was asked by President Museveni in December 2003 to investigate the actions of the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda. The ICC has now determined that there is enough evidence to begin an investigation. What this means, of course, is that those found guilty of crimes, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, all of which have almost certainly been committed in the long-running conflict, will be sentenced and imprisoned according to the penalties set out in the Rome Statute, the legislation upon which the ICC is based.

As a result, there appears to be a contradiction between the Amnesty Act, seen by many as an alternative to punishment, and the investigations and subsequent punishment by the ICC.

Indeed, several delegations of Lango, Acholi, Iteso and Madi community leaders have prevailed upon the ICC to reconsider or at least to carefully consider its actions in light of the fact that the conflict is still ongoing and the ICC has no special powers of arrest. In other words, people want the amnesty to take precedence at the moment, even though the granting of amnesty to senior members of the LRA is not necessarily a final measure in the minds of many; certain individuals could still face prosecution by the ICC. It also raises the question as to just how far down the chain of command such prosecutions will reach – at what “rank” or number of crimes against humanity or war crimes committed will the prosecutors cap their investigations? Yet another question is the perceived adequacy of any punishment that the ICC can offer, since internationally-conceived prison conditions are vastly different than what prisoners could expect in Uganda. Numerous additional logistical and legal questions surround the whole viability of the process. Ultimately, however, the people living in the war-affected region will have to live with the decisions that are being made.”(Refugee Law Project, July 2005, p.5)

“Another issue that complicates the search for peace in northern Uganda is the continuation of the investigation of senior LRA commanders, by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity committed during the insurgency. While civil society organisations, religious, traditional, and some political leaders from northern Uganda believe that the investigations and the potential issuance of arrest warrants against top LRA commanders do not serve the cause of peace in northern Uganda. Pro-government politicians favour combining the peace and ICC processes to put pressure on the LRA.”(UNOCHA, 22 June 2005)

“The initiation of an investigation by the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Northern and Eastern Uganda has sparked intense debate on its impact on the prospects for peace in the region. On one side of the debate, it is argued that the Chief Prosecutor’s timing negatively impacts the efforts of Betty Bigombe, chief mediator between the Government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), to re-initiate talks. The fear is that the LRA will have no incentive to dialogue with the Government if they face arrest and detention. Second, the investigation provides a disincentive for rebel commanders to come out under the provision of the Ugandan Amnesty Act (2000). Third, the investigation undermines the efforts of locally-based civil society groups to support the peaceful return and reintegration of combatants under the Amnesty. On the other side, the Chief Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo’s investigation has had a positive impact, facilitating prospects for realizing sustainable peace, primarily by drawing greater international attention to the conflict and pressuring conflicting parties to resolve it.



This Human Security Update examines the origins and evolution of the two sides of the debate on 'peace vs. justice' and attempts to bring them into conversation. Recent efforts to exchange information and views on this topic may provide an entry point for finding a balanced approach between international and local initiatives. Both approaches have relative merits and limitations. Neither are a stand-alone solution, but a well-planned, long-term, coordinated and transparent approach could stimulate both peace and justice in the region.

#### THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE DEBATE

The current debate surrounding the ICC's investigation does not revolve around the necessity of an international criminal justice system, nor the concept of the International Criminal Court; the issue is timing. As His Highness Rwot David Onen Acana II, Paramount Chief of the Acholi, explains: "we all need justice. Peace and justice go together, but let's work on the peace first and the justice later on".<sup>1</sup> Bryn Higgs, Uganda Programme Development Officer for Conciliation Resources, further explains the position: "to start war crimes investigations for the sake of justice at a time when northern Uganda sees the most promising signs for a negotiated settlement of the violence risks having in the end neither justice nor peace delivered".<sup>2</sup> This view should not, however, be seen as the population's support for either LRA leader Joseph Kony or impunity.<sup>3</sup> Nor is the ICC viewed as an irrelevant or anti-conflict resolution institution; its inception will have a tremendous impact on the future protection of human rights and justice of those committing genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression."(LIU Institute, May 2005)

#### **Local stakeholders organise reconciliation conference (December 2004)**

- Main objectives were to find out the priorities regarding reconciliation
- The Acholi community should reconcile among themselves
- The Acholi communities are united behind the Betty Bigombe peace effort
- Further reconciliation activities will be planned

"As the conflict in Northern Uganda appears to be drawing to a close, planning for the post-conflict environment must now begin. When it comes, the end of the conflict will come along with another set of problems that Ugandans must now begin to plan for and put in place appropriate measures to resolve them. These problems include reception of returnees, their rehabilitation, their resettlement, and, most important, reconciliation among all those who have been affected by the conflict.

It is with this objective in mind that Government, through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with cultural leaders, religious leaders, and the Northern Uganda Peace Initiative have begun preparations for a process of national reconciliation. A first conference was therefore organised in Gulu to bring together all key Stakeholders from the heart of the conflict, the Acholi Sub-region, to dialogue with the Government on how to proceed with the reconciliation process. The conference was held on 9-10 December and entitled "Reconciliation: the Way Forward", bringing over 130 stakeholders together for dialogue. The main objectives were to find out the priorities of people on the ground regarding reconciliation and develop a Plan of Action of both Government and Civil Society to move the reconciliation process forward.

The conference was a landmark event, launching the national reconciliation process. The Hon. Minister of Internal Affairs, Dr. R. Rugunda, presided over the full two days of the conference, together with presentations from Mrs. Betty Bigombe, cultural and religious leaders, and IDP camp leaders. Many contentious issues were discussed, including land, the ICC, the blessing of the LRA, inter-regional tensions, and others, but overall the discussions were held in a calm,

reasonable and flexible manner. The frank and open dialogue from both Civil Society and Government stakeholders that resulted was a sign of the beginning of confidence being built up between all parties. The conference was a true start of a consensus-building process, with controversial issues being talked about openly and with greater understanding.

Some of the key conclusions from the conference include the following:

The peace process is important, but reconciliation involving communities will be an equally important process over the coming years;

The reconciliation process will involve community, district, regional, and national reconciliation efforts. However, a consensus was emerging that it should start in the Acholi sub-region because a reconciled community can then engage much better in reconciliation with other regions and the nation;

There is a need to engage the grassroots communities in reconciliation;

The Acholi communities are united behind the Betty Bigombe peace effort;

The cultural leaders were praised highly for the respect they enjoy and their peace efforts. They were encouraged to increase reconciliation ceremonies.

Further reconciliation activities will be planned on the basis of the conference and will be undertaken over the coming months and years."(GoU, 16 December 2004)

### **US supported peace initiative (September 2004)**

- NUPI is an inter-agency initiative of the U.S. Government to support peace efforts
- Main aim is to advise and consult the Government of Uganda regarding peace and reconciliation in the north
- A possibility that a new Presidential Peace Team (PPT) team will be established
- Need to clarify how NUPI plans to organise the database for peace and reconciliation project
- NUPI is currently only playing an advisory/counselling role

#### "Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI) presentation

NUPI is an inter-agency initiative of the U.S. Government to support peace efforts in Uganda. In their presentation, the NUPI officials introduced the Initiative and made the following remarks:

• NUPI's main aim is to advise and consult the Government of Uganda regarding peace and reconciliation in the north. NUPI's focus is on: assisting the government in developing a strategy for national reconciliation; and working with NGOs, CSOs, and other local leaders to help facilitate the process of national reconciliation.

• Initially, NUPI was to work towards assisting the Presidential Peace Team (PPT) in getting to meet with the LRA. Facilitation for such involved actively seeking contact with the LRA. This role was, however, later modified to building the capacity of the PPT. NUPI is also working towards establishing a national agenda for conflict resolution, in consultation with the government.

• The PPT is not yet active, and some people on the original team are no longer members. There is a possibility that a new team will be established. NUPI is trying to promote a holistic approach, where the government would invite major civil society organisations and other actors, such as the Amnesty Commission, to be members of the team.

• There are positive signs on the part of government regarding dialogue with the LRA, and NUPI is working to ensure that the government remains committed in this regard. NUPI has met with the Vice President and the Minister of State for Northern Uganda, and hopes to meet the President over the same.

- NUPI perceives reconciliation and peace-building as long term goals that require a carefully planned strategy, as well as the participation of stakeholders like government, communities, humanitarian agencies, NGOs, etc. Confidence building is a vital component in such a strategy.
- NUPI is constantly seeking consultation and advice from various circles and people in Uganda – MPs, religious leaders, NGOs, civil society, etc – in order to include as many views and concerns as possible in their advice to government.
- NUPI has distributed a questionnaire on requiring agencies to provide information on their involvement/work in peace building and conflict resolution activities.

#### Discussion/ comments on NUPI presentation

The attendance reacted as follows to the presentation:

- NUPI needs to clarify on their conceptual framework, i.e. how they plan to organise the database for peace and reconciliation project. This did not come out clearly in the questionnaire that has been sent out by NUPI. NUPI needs to liaise with organizations undertaking similar initiatives in conflict resolution and peace-building for effective coordination and to avoid duplicating resources.
- There is a need to clarify on what is their scope of “peace building” is, i.e., does it refer to the government’s relationship with the LRA; the Acholi with fellow Acholi, political and socio-economic dynamics between northern and southern Uganda? NUPI responded that they are still at the consultation stage and are trying to define their terminology. However, they perceive conflict resolution and peace building as encompassing demobilisation and reintegration, where the government should try to address the priority needs of the affected districts/communities.
- NUPI is currently only playing an advisory/counselling role and helping create the database, with the hope that government will coordinate the efforts."(UNOCHA, 2 June 2004)

"NUPI presentation at the Contact Group meeting, 29 September 2004

#### 1. Strategy:

The broad purpose of NUPI remained providing expert assistance to the Government of Uganda (GOU) in the peace process. The Statement of Work (SOW) highlights the provision of expertise in assisting the GOU to develop a peace strategy and strengthen its ability to participate constructively in a negotiation process.

While NUPI had prepared contingency plans towards capacity-building and training programs of the Presidential Peace Team, additional activities focus on assisting and counseling the Government in the preparation and implementation of a coherent and coordinated peace strategy, which takes a starting point in reconciliation playing a prominent role in that strategy. It is increasingly realized that the peace process is in fact a part of a wider peace building strategy that should broadly combine elements of conflict management, conflict transformation, peace building, reconciliation and economic boosting efforts both at a local and national level. The critical aspect this process will seek to address remains one of ultimate ownership to all levels of national reconciliation by the GOU.

Analysis of the conflict is important prior to attempting to apply viable solutions. Ethnic-based explanations may be too simplistic in explaining the conflict, since ethnicity is a fluid and complex tool, which may be subject to manipulation by political elites for their own objectives. However, politics is often split along ethnic lines, with one group or a coalition of groups monopolizing power at the direct expense of other groups. Such situation may lead to severe economic underdevelopment and undemocratic patterns of governance." (OCHA, 29 September 2004)

#### **Anti-terrorism laws undermine Amnesty Act of 2000 (May 2004)**

- The Amnesty act was intended to grant any combatant who surrendered voluntarily immunity from prosecution
- It initially ran for six months, but has been extended six times – most recently on 17 January 2004 for an additional three months
- While the Amnesty Act grants amnesty for those engaged in ‘war or armed rebellion’, the Anti-Terrorism Act provides for the death sentence for someone ‘influencing the government or influencing the public... for a political, religious, social or economic aim
- The amnesty does not apply to the top LRA commanders
- Very few LRA rebels – only 3,848 – have taken advantage of the amnesty law and been resettled

"The Ugandan government's Amnesty Act of 2000 has been completely undermined by the War on Terror. The act was passed as a result of pressure from non-governmental organisations, many supported by Christian Aid, which were concerned about the plight of the conflict's victims. Many of them are also the perpetrators. The act was intended to grant any combatant who surrendered voluntarily immunity from prosecution.

It initially ran for six months, but has been extended six times – most recently on 17 January 2004 for an additional three months. The whole process, however, has been plagued by a lack of resources for adequate resettlement packages. The World Bank has promised US\$3.6 million to help resettle 15,000 former rebels. But, according to Justice Peter Onega, the chairman of the Uganda Amnesty Commission, it is demanding proof of the government's commitment: ‘One of the conditions of the World Bank is that the commission must be in existence at least for the next two years.’

Of more concern to those involved in the amnesty process is the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2002 – another of the Ugandan government's moves following September 11, 2001. While the Amnesty Act grants amnesty for those engaged in ‘war or armed rebellion’, the Anti-Terrorism Act provides for the death sentence for someone ‘influencing the government or influencing the public... for a political, religious, social or economic aim’. Furthermore, the Anti-Terrorism Act designated the LRA a terrorist organisation, membership of which is a criminal offence.

Thus, anyone attempting to establish a dialogue with the LRA is immediately branded a collaborator. This has particularly affected the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARPLI), a multi-religious organisation, which advocates communication with the LRA. Members of ARPLI, which is a Christian Aid partner, are under surveillance and have been threatened by the military.

Loud public statements by the government advocate a military end to the war and so directly contradict the concept of amnesty. President Museveni has repeatedly said that the amnesty does not apply to the top LRA commanders. As one man in a camp for displaced people in Kitgum asked, ‘Museveni has agreed [to] the amnesty, but then he starts to talk of killing the rebels, of wiping them out. How can Kony know which one is true?’

Predictably, very few LRA rebels – only 3,848 – have taken advantage of the amnesty law and been resettled. Peter Olowa, in the Kitgum office of the Uganda Amnesty Commission, says that without money the whole amnesty process is doomed to failure" (Christian Aid, 10 May 2004).

## Why there have never been any real "peace talks" ( July 2003)

- At the beginning of the war, in 1986, and later on there is no doubt that the first groups of rebels enjoyed much popular support
- The generous support that the LRA has been receiving from the Khartoum regime has been a major factor in keeping the war going
- If a group of well-armed rebels come to your village and ask for food you have no choice
- Parents want the war to end, however they also want their children to come back home alive, not to be killed.
- Prominent NRM public figures expressed in the past their total opposition to any kind of peace talks with the LRA
- It does not seem that the LRA enjoy any significant financial or logistical support from Acholi communities abroad
- A few individuals are making profit from the war

"Have a quick look at the phrases in bold below. We have all have heard or read these or similar statements, whether we live in Northern Uganda or elsewhere. In conflicts all over the world people have and express "perceptions", that is, assumptions or stereotypes about the parties in conflicts and the elements that sustain the violence. Such ideas are often distorted and barely correspond to reality, but if repeated again and again they can fan the flames of conflict, increasing hatred and further division in the community. There is reason for concern when statements of this kind are expressed in public by somebody who may stand as, for instance, an RDC (Regional District Commissioner), a Presidential Advisor or an Army representative.

The long duration of this conflict puzzles everyone and has given rise to a good number of such stereotypes. I am just putting across some of the more common perceptions about the war that has ravaged Acholiland and other parts of Northern Uganda for the last seventeen years, and giving my comments as somebody who has lived events in Acholi from within for most of the time. I do not believe that any of the following statements are true, and I am trying to explain why.

"The war does not end because the Acholi people support the rebels"

Advocates of this statement should be able to answer a crucial question: If that is the case why is Kony killing so many Acholi civilians, accusing them of supporting the Government?

At the beginning of the war, in 1986, and later on there is no doubt that the first groups of rebels enjoyed much popular support. However, such popularity increasingly faded away and it turned to open lack of support to the rebels from the average person in Acholiland. This explains why the LRA, since the early nineties, resorted to large-scale child abduction to beef up their forces since they could hardly do any voluntary recruitment.

Different civil society groups (elders, rwodi, religious groups, peace committees, women groups, local NGOs...) have consistently, for more than a decade, advocated for peace. Many outstanding Acholi leaders have brought a good number of rebels out of the bush, undergoing great risks, but unfortunately these positive events have not always attracted much public attention. Our religious leaders' peace group has been organising peace rallies at the end of every year in Gulu and Kitgum.

Those who raise a pointed finger at the Acholi population are fond of establishing comparisons on how rebellions ended in places like Teso, Lango or West Nile. They seem to forget, however, that Acholi -unlike those other regions- has a long border with Sudan and that the generous support

that the LRA has been receiving from the Khartoum regime has been a major factor in keeping the war going.

"The war does not end because the Acholis do not support the UPDF"

Even the most pacifist of all people would acknowledge that the Armed forces have a necessary role to play in protecting the population. It is because of this need for self-defence that many Acholis responded positively to the call to join the Local Defence Units, although a good number of them ended up being taken to Congo or elsewhere to fight other kinds of war. This particular factor eroded trust between the population and the Army.

Unfortunately, a common scenario during these years goes like this: A man goes to a UPDF detachment and reports the presence of rebels in a certain location. The local commander sends the man away without taking any action, or alternatively compels him to guide the UPDF to that place, putting him and his whole family at tremendous risk. That man is more than likely to keep quiet the next time!

We should not forget two other obvious facts: first, that if a group of well-armed rebels come to your village and ask for food you really have no choice (I myself did give them everything they wanted once that they entered in the Mission where I was. Had I refused I probably would be writing this article now in St. Peter's office!). Secondly, people who have had their children abducted have a difficult dilemma to face: on one hand they want the war to end, on the other hand they want their children to come back home alive, not to be killed. What would any normal person in such situation do?

"The war does not end because the Government is not interested in peace"

Let us be fair. The Government, much as it has pursued the military option, has always shown signs of good will as far as peaceful means to end the war are concerned: After the collapse of the 1993-94 peace talks spearheaded by Betty Bigombe, it still tried to get in touch with the LRA and at the end of 1997 a Government delegation met twice with one of their representatives in Rome (who later on was arrested by Kony and narrowly escaped death). In 1999 the Government of Uganda reached a peace agreement with the Sudanese government and passed the Amnesty Law, which has enabled many rebels to come back home without being taken to court or victimised in any way.

Although some prominent NRM public figures expressed in the past their total opposition to any kind of peace talks with the LRA, in August last year President Museveni appointed a Presidential Peace Team (PPT) and expressed his willingness to engage in direct negotiations and declare a ceasefire provided certain conditions were met. The Government has later on become increasingly flexible and accepted even the possibility of going abroad for talks. The Presidential Peace Team, as well as some other figures in authority, has at least been able to talk to the rebels on phone. By the way, the PPT is still relevant and needed and it would be most helpful if they could again find ways of being more present on the ground.

"The war does not end because of the support that the LRA get from many Acholis living abroad"

It is true that in the past some prominent Acholis in the diaspora tried to organise some fund-raising for the LRA and some of them used to be regular visitors of the rebels in their camps in Sudan. These links, however, seem to have been greatly weakened, partly because of the disappointment of some of these rebel sympathisers, and also because Kony has made himself more and more isolated and does not seem to accept any influence from outside. At the moment it does not seem that the LRA enjoy any significant financial or logistical support from Acholi communities abroad.

One of the common stereotypes of this war is the one that suggests that Acholi from the diaspora are necessarily supporters of the LRA. It is true that some Acholi diaspora, who have both been away from home for a long time and lack objective information, certainly do sympathise with the rebels. However, we cannot forget that many others have been active in peacebuilding initiatives, particularly through the "Kacoke Madit" secretariat in London, who are partners to different peace groups in Acholi, including ARLPI.

"The war does not end because of so many people in the North making economic profit of it".

One cannot deny that there are some few individuals who are definitely making quite a lot of "blood money" and investing it into their businesses, but this is far from being a widespread practice. Nevertheless, these persons who obtain economic gain may have a great negative influence on the LRA and discourage them from engaging into negotiations or accepting the Amnesty. There is no doubt that this problem must be addressed. However, it is important to avoid a scenario in which almost everyone who is building a new house or opening a new shop is automatically assumed to be a rebel collaborator.

"The war does not end because during the period of those useless peace talks the rebels were able to re-organise themselves".

Is this really the case? Well, to begin with there have never been any real "peace talks" as such, since the LRA and the Government of Uganda representatives have never met face to face. For the last year there have been some contacts (about twenty of them) between religious and cultural leaders and some LRA commanders in the bush. On the 10th March this year, when the prospect of a first meeting were very much at hand President Museveni agreed to declare a limited ceasefire in Lapul sub-county (Pader district). This ceasefire was initially given for five days and eventually extended several times until it reached a period of about five weeks. During that time military operations continued elsewhere and, interestingly enough, the LRA rebels were not very much present in the ceasefire zone for much of the five weeks, so it is difficult to understand how they could get such a boost from something so limited. By the way, the Lapul Presidential ceasefire was not a waste of time: it gave the signal to everyone, including the LRA, that the Government was serious about peace talks, and it allowed a number of rebel officers to come out of the bush safely." (ARLPI, 1 July 2003)

### **Leaders of a peace initiative have rejected calls to offer money to the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)(October 2003)**

- The Uganda Human Rights Commission suggested borrowing money to buy the rebels off
- The commander of the Reserve Forces, Lt-Gen Salim Saleh, is upset with government failure to fully fund his 4bn-shilling (US\$2m) project aimed at ending the LRA war
- The proposal was issued in May and the government has only released about US\$ 7,000 dollars

"The Ugandan army and leaders of a peace initiative have rejected calls to offer money to the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in a bid to stop its devastating insurrection. The Uganda Human Rights Commission suggested borrowing money to buy the rebels off in a desperate last attempt to end the 17-year armed rebellion.

In a similar vein, the commander of the Reserve Forces, Lt-Gen Salim Saleh, is upset with government failure to fully fund his 4bn-shilling (US\$2m) project aimed at ending the LRA war. In his Security and Production Programme (SPP) proposal, Saleh asked government for 4.7bn shillings, about US\$ 2.35m dollars to use on specific projects aimed at ending the 17-year long insurgency that has ravaged much of northern Uganda, and recently parts of Teso. The SPP project also aims at reducing dependence on food aid for about one million people living in camps for the internally displaced in the Acholi sub-region. The proposal was issued in May and the government has only released 14m shillings about US\$ 7,000 dollars.

Meanwhile, the LRA have rejected government's offer of amnesty to end the rebellion in northern Uganda. However, the Amnesty Commission says that the Joseph Kony-led LRA rebels are still the biggest single group to have taken advantage of the three year-old amnesty. LRA commander, Brig Parliament passed the Amnesty Act in 2000, pardoning rebels who give up fighting and report to the Amnesty Commission." (UN OCHA, 8 October 2003)

### **Premature peace hopes, 1994-2005**

- Tight limitations on February 2005 ceasefire risk undermining it as soon as it starts
- Glimmer of hopes for peace in January 2005
- Hopes for peace and return shattered in March 2003
- Hopes for return shattered in February 2002
- Hopes for gradual return shattered in November 2001
- Peace talks ended in 1994 when President Museveni gave the LRA seven days to put down their weapons and turn themselves over to the government

"The new ceasefire between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda, which takes effect today, has been welcomed, but Oxfam warns that 18 years of conflict cannot be ended in 18 days.

The Government of Uganda has today announced a renewed but limited ceasefire with the LRA. The ceasefire will last for only 18 days and cover an area of only 50 square kilometres.

"This is a desperate situation and any step towards peace is a step in the right direction. The LRA needs to respond to this ceasefire positively. At the same time, we are worried that the tight limitations on this ceasefire risk undermining it as soon as it starts. Attacks by both sides have led to a break down in trust that has to be rebuilt. We think that more time and patience is needed to rebuild confidence in the process and get down to real discussion about how to end this war. 18 years of conflict cannot be ended in 18 days," said Emma Naylor, Head of Oxfam Uganda.

The conflict has already had dire humanitarian consequences for the lives of 1.6 million people. Oxfam is calling for the international community to use its influence to end the suffering and support the peace process. The United Nations Security Council met last week in New York. The council offered nothing more than a few remarks to the press and failed to take any substantive action.

"We must ensure a supportive environment for these talks. We urge the Ugandan government and the LRA to give this process their full commitment, whatever setbacks may occur along the way. We also call upon the international community to support these talks. We must make this peace process work and end the suffering of millions of people hanging in the balance," added Emma Naylor, Head of Oxfam Uganda."(Oxfam, 4 February 2005)



"Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said on Wednesday [January 2005] his army had defeated the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, whom he advised to surrender, saying no retribution awaited them.

In an address to the nation marking the 19th anniversary of his rise to power, Museveni made no reference to on-going peace efforts aimed at ending the 18-year war between the military and the LRA, which has displaced hundreds of thousands of people in northern Uganda.

There had been a glimmer of hope on Tuesday that the peace process might be moving ahead when the chief mediator, former Ugandan minister Betty Bigombe, announced that "by the end of the week, both sides will have agreed on a date when to sign a ceasefire agreement".

Museveni said: "Kony's group has been completely defeated and its remnants are simply fugitives whom we are capturing day by day [...] Those still remaining in the bush should come out now, because they have nothing to fear."

Museveni took power on January 26, 1986 after a five-year bush war. A few months later, armed men - mostly from the defeated government army - began a rebellion in the north of the country.

In 1987, an agreement was reached between Museveni's government and the main rebel Uganda People's Defence Army. However, some of the rebels joined a new group, the Holy Spirit Movement led by Priestess Alice Lakwena, which later gave rise to the LRA."(IRIN, 27 January 2005).

"Has anything changed in Northern Uganda during the last few months? [...]"

Judging things from the ground, experience has taught us that in the Northern Uganda war things need to be taken cautiously avoiding being over-optimistic. During the 18-year old war there have been some other similar moments. The much-repeated statements that "the war is almost over" or that "it is generally calm" are not new to our ears. There are moments in which we think that the violence is scaling down, only to be taken by surprise by another massacre, as it happened in Odek on April 29 (see chronology attached). The situation continues to be very serious, and so far the supposed wearing out of the LRA is not having much effect in having any significant impact in changing in the lives of the at least 1.6 million displaced persons staying in the camps. Abductions, although generally unreported in the Press these days, continue almost on a daily basis and a good number of them end up being killed in armed clashes and reported as "rebels killed".

Is an outright victory by the UPDF possible? Supporters of this view often refer to the defeat of the ADF in Western Uganda as an example. Whether this is possible or not, ARLPI's view has always been that peace achieved by military means on the long run is not as sustainable as peace achieved by dialogue. The thousands of parents whose children were abducted and who have lost them during armed clashes may remain with a bitterness that will not go away easily.

Moreover, even with the scenario of a weakened LRA without support from Sudan the chronic insecurity might not stop at once. The LRA violence may continue even without any military assistance from Sudan. In order to get a comprehensive solution that will last we need to keep working on a peaceful settlement that will end with a general demobilisation of the LRA. This is the main challenge still lying ahead of us.

In this respect, President Museveni's public statement on April 15 [2004] that he was ready to talk to the rebel leaders either directly or through mediators is surely a step in the right direction. The UPDF new top command is also more positive about peace dialogue with the rebels. Although

there is not yet a clear response from the LRA –whose second-in-command Vincent Ottii rings people here and there every now and then but so far with no concrete proposals- all these new developments open a glimpse of hope for the near future, even if we may not go beyond a cautious and moderate optimism.

Announcements about the intended amendment of the Amnesty Law (which expires on May 17th) and the International Criminal Court's possible prosecution of the LRA top leadership have had an adverse effect in making the scenario of peace talks easy (ARLPI, 31 May 2004).

"Apart from the Ugandan army's troubled campaign against Kony, there have been some, so far unsuccessful, attempts to bring a peaceful end to the war. These peace initiatives have included a presidential peace team, which was established by Museveni with a view to starting serious negotiations.

However, the initiative has floundered after a ceasefire agreement was dishonoured, and it is now a widely held view in the north that the Ugandan government is primarily interested in wiping out the LRA by force, rather than reaching a settlement through dialogue.

Some civil society groups, most notably the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARPLI), have tried to fill the vacuum left by the failure of government-led initiatives. However, members of this team have also been frustrated by an apparent unwillingness on the part of the rebels to come out of the bush to negotiate, and by the difficulties in talking peace while war is still being waged.

Fr. Carlos Rodriguez, a high-profile member of the ARPLI, says the time has come for international mediation to resolve the conflict, and that the LRA would also respond positively to such engagement.

This is a sentiment shared by Baker Ochola, the retired Bishop of Kitgum. 'Those being targeted are the children, women and the elderly. This is why we feel there is a need for the international community to put pressure on the Ugandan government and Sudan in order to give a break to the people,' he told IRIN." (UN OCHA, 15 September 2003)

"Following recent peace moves by the Ugandan government and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army( LRA), there is hope that finally an end may be in sight to the bloody insurrection in the north of the country" (IRIN 12 March 2003)

"The government is estimating that peace will have returned to the north of the country by February 2003 and resettlement of displaced populations to have taken place in March. However it has not put forward any timetable for peace talks with rebels." (OCHA 2 October 2002)

***Government hoped that IDPs would be able to return to their homes by early April 2002***

"As Kony's position is weakened and the UPDF estimates LRA numbers in Uganda at only 100 with a further 300 in southern Sudan, Museveni appears confident that there will be a direct, and positive, impact on the situation for IDPs in the north and he has expressed a hope that IDPs will be able to return to their homes by early April. While there continue to be a small number of attacks and ambushes on roads, these are often attributable to banditry and incidences of abduction have decreased. In response, IDPs have begun to venture out of the camps to work in their gardens and travel to their villages, a trend that had already been noticed in Kitgum over the last six months, and is now apparent in Gulu where 25% of the IDP population are estimated to be accessing their gardens. " (OCHA 28 February 2002, pp.31-33)

***Hopes for gradual return of the civilian population to their homesteads or villages of origin(2002)***

"The North (Gulu, Pader, Kitgum):\_ *Most Likely Scenario*: it is assumed that the Amnesty Act (Section 1.2), with its option for active combatants to report for their Amnesty Certificate and return to normal life, will weaken the strength of the LRA and its impact on the civilian population. Additional efforts will be made by Khartoum and Kampala to bring an end to the meaningless attacks on the civilian populations. LRA rebel activity will consequently decline, including looting, abductions and sporadic attacks, as was experienced during 2001. This will result in a gradual return of the civilian population to their homesteads or villages of origin."(UN Uganda 30 November 2001)

***Increasing isolation of LRA facilitated return(First half of 2002-before military offensive)***

"Improvements in security in the north and increasing isolation of the LRA in recent months had facilitated the spontaneous return of several thousand IDPs to their home areas, humanitarian sources told IRIN on Thursday, 10 January 2002.

'It is happening in a fairly ad hoc manner. It is pretty slow but it is going in the right direction,' they said.

The population of one of the largest camps at Pabbo, Gulu District, had fallen by around 5,000 and was now estimated at 41,000 people, sources added. (IRIN 11 January 2002)

***The president assuring IDP that they would be able to return during 2002***

"Although the Ugandan government has no clear policy on tackling internal displacement, Museveni said in his end of year address that the security status of the northern and western Uganda would improve enough to allow the IDP camps to be dismantled.

"I would like to assure those Ugandans that are still in those camps that they will be able to go back to their homes this year," he said on Radio Uganda on 31 December." (IRIN 11 January 2002)

***Political changes may result in the resolution of the long-running LRA rebellion (2001)***

"Events that have contributed to the comparative quiet include:

The ongoing Amnesty;

A number of community based peace initiatives such as the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI);

Government's efforts to dialogue with the LRA rebels, spearheaded by the Gulu LCV Chairperson's meeting with several LRA Commanders on June 4th; and

Improved relations between the governments of Sudan and Uganda, which led to Sudan Government's formal decision to cut support to the LRA on August 20th.

Further, as part of the peace overtures to restore diplomatic relations (broken in 1995), Sudan reopened its embassy in Kampala August 2001, with Uganda doing the same in Khartoum a month later. These political changes may result in the resolution of the long-running LRA rebellion. Gulu district officials are already reviewing the possibility of resettling IDPs in camps nearer to their homes." (UN November 2001, p.6)

***Peace talks ended when President Museveni gave the Lord's Resistance Army seven days to lay down weapons in 1994***

"By 1994, things had once again reached a state where the government felt it needed to attempt to bring peace to the north. Thus, in 1994, peace talks were held between Kony and the NRM.

These talks were facilitated by Betty Bigombe. Bigombe, herself an Acholi, was then the Minister for Pacification of the North. Bigombe's efforts very nearly came to fruition. It is said that, at the time, LRA soldiers were staying freely in the trading centers and that a cease-fire existed. These talks ended badly when President Museveni suddenly announced that he was giving the LRA seven days to put down their weapons and turn themselves over to the government. Within three days of this announcement, the LRA had once again begun attacking.

After the breakdown of the 1994 talks, any support that the LRA had enjoyed from the Acholi people dried up. Thus, the mass abduction of children began in early 1995.

[...]

Clearly, the people of Acholi-land have little stomach for a movement that has inflicted so much harm and contributed so greatly to the destruction of their culture and people. Whatever support the LRA has enjoyed in the past in Acholi-land has long since dissipated." (Westbrook June 2000, sects. III, VI)

"The Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) deployed in all main trading centres throughout Gulu, Kitgum and Padar Districts and continued to engage in low-intensity battles with the LRA until February 1996, when the later, buttressed by alleged arms and logistical from Khartoum, escalated its attacks against Acholi communities. By July 1996, the LRA had attacked numerous locations throughout Gulu in what appeared to be a campaign to breed fear amongst the population and to force the UPDF to respond in a more forceful and imprecise manner. There followed numerous incidents of Acholi citizens being caught up in "friendly fire" or of being brutally interrogated and accused of being LRA collaborators." (OCHA 23 May 2001, "Historical Backdrop")

### **Kacoke Madit (KM) - an organisation of the Acholi community in exile working for peace (1996-2000)**

- KM was established in 1996 by Acholi people living in the 'Diaspora'
- Peace initiative dedicated to the restoration of peace to Northern Uganda through peaceful means

"Kacoke Madit (KM) was established in 1996 by Acholi people living in the 'Diaspora' in response to the escalation of the N. Uganda conflict. It is a peace initiative dedicated to the restoration of peace to Northern Uganda by peaceful means. It has now grown into a world-wide network of community groups, organisations and peace initiatives working together to end the conflict and to promote reconciliation. The initiative has helped to establish and to build the consensus among Acholi people, other Ugandans and the international community at large, for the conflict to be resolved by peaceful means.

In addition to its peace-making role, KM provides a forum for the development of post war plans and strategies to meet the socioeconomic and development needs of the war-ravaged districts and the rehabilitation of education, health care, communication and other infrastructure.

'Kacoke Madit' is an Acholi phrase, which means "Big Meeting or Big Conference". The name was originally coined in reference to the first conference organised by KM in 1997.

### **The Origin of KM**

In 1995, Acholi community in North America unsuccessfully lobbied the Uganda North America Association (UNAA) to include the conflict in Northern Uganda on the agenda of their 1995 Convention in Chicago. They therefore held a separate meeting during the Convention at which

they agreed to call a meeting involving all members of the Acholi community of North America to discuss the conflict between LRA and the Uganda Government.

The meeting took place the following year during the UNAA convention in Toronto Canada, (August 30 - September 2 1996), under the chairmanship of Dr. Ben Ochora Latigo. It was attended by Dr. Martin Alier, who was then the Uganda Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (Regional Cooperation). The meeting produced a 9-point resolution, which was delivered to President Yoweri Museveni by Dr. Alier. President Museveni did not respond to this initiative, and attempts to get a response were unsuccessful.

It was also proposed in Toronto that an all-Acholi Meeting should be organised in London, United Kingdom. In late 1996, following circulation of the proposal, and widespread consultation, a team of volunteers from the Acholi community in the United Kingdom formed the London Organising Committee. They elected Dr Patrick Oguru Otto as Coordinator, and embarked on the task of organising the first Kacoke Madit (KM).

### **The first Kacoke Madit (KM97)**

The first Kacoke Madit took place in London, United Kingdom on the 5th and 6th April 1997. It was attended by more than 300 delegates from Uganda, the USA, Canada, the UK, Sweden, Germany, Denmark and Kenya. The main objectives of the conference were to raise awareness of the conflict in N. Uganda, to exchange views on the causes and consequences of the conflict and to determine the most viable and practical means of bringing the conflict in Northern Uganda to a speedy end. The Uganda government was represented by the Ministers for State for Foreign Affairs, Dr Martin Alier and for Northern Uganda, Mr Alphonse Owiny Dollo, while the LRA sent their Secretary for External Affairs and Mobilisation, Dr James Obita and 2 other members of the LRA/M High Command.

The conference produced an eleven-point resolution, which principally called on the Government and the LRA to cease hostilities and to embark upon a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

### **The Second Kacoke Madit (KM98)**

KM98 built on the achievements of KM97. It was held between the 17th and 19th July 1998 in London, UK again. In view of the setbacks experienced in implementing the 1997 resolutions, and unsuccessful attempt by the government and the LRA to establish a viable negotiation process in 1997 and 1998, the theme, '*Removing the Obstacles to Peace*' was adopted for the conference. The conference was attended by more than 300 delegates from all sectors of the Acholi communities, as well as many non-Ugandan individuals and representatives of Governments and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

KM98 identified the main obstacles to peace and proposals to overcome them, which were encapsulated in the 11-point conference resolution. The conference also re-affirmed the delegates' commitment to pursuing a peaceful resolution as stipulated at KM97." (KM 2000)

### **How can the US support the peace-process? (July 2005)**

- The Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act of 2004 provides a framework for U.S. action and diplomacy
- The U.S. should support the work of Betty Bigombe to revitalize the peace process
- The U.S. should work with the Sudanese government to pressure the LRA
- The U.S. should tie its non-lethal military aid to Uganda to stipulations of improvement in the military's respect for human rights in the war zone

## "The U.S – Uganda Working Relationship

The United States and the Republic of Uganda enjoy a strong bilateral relationship, working closely together in fighting HIV/AIDS and in combating international terrorism. This partnership dates back to the Clinton Administration, which developed a strong alliance with President Museveni against the Sudanese government in Khartoum. The United States used Uganda as a route to deliver military assistance to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in southern Sudan. "Sudan People's Liberation Army." See; Global Security.<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/spla.htm>

As much of Uganda experienced economic growth in the 1990s through World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies, the United States publicized Uganda as a "success story." The United States provides significant amounts of bilateral aid to Uganda to combat HIV/AIDS U.S Department of State Bilateral Programs. Office of U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator. <http://www.state.gov/s/gac/bilat/>, and millions of dollars to the Global Fund, an international campaign to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, from which Uganda has received \$45,461,655 to date. The Global Fund Portfolio of Grants to Uganda. <http://www.theglobalfund.org/search/portfolio.aspx?countryID=UGD>. In 2005, the United States also provided \$68,502,000 through USAID to child survival and health programs, development assistance, development credit authority and an economic support fund. USAID Uganda Budget. <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2006/afr/ug.html>. After September 11th, 2001, the relationship between the U.S. and Uganda further strengthened as President Museveni lent President Bush moral and logistical support in the U.S.-led global "war on terror." "The Hidden War, the Forgotten People: War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda." Human Rights and Peace Center, 30 October 2003. (81-87)

The United States also lends direct support to the Government of Uganda in its efforts to defeat the LRA and bring peace to the North. In 2003, the U.S. government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), commissioned the Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI) to facilitate local peace and reconciliation initiatives. The U.S. also provides military assistance to the Government of Uganda, giving \$4.9 million in 2004. This support bolsters the Ugandan government's reliance upon a military strategy to defeat the LRA, and potentially empowers the government's lack of faith in the peace process. The United States government has further placed the LRA on its list of foreign terrorist organizations.

In 2004, the Congress of the United States passed the Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act (S.2264) that declared in Section 3, Article 1 that the United States should "work vigorously to support ongoing efforts to explore the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in northern and eastern Uganda." This Act further called upon the United States government to support relief efforts, development projects, resettlement of internally-displaced peoples, protection of civilians, human rights monitoring and rehabilitation of abducted children. S.2264 provides a useful framework for U.S. action to support peace initiatives, but its lack of mandate has prevented it from having a serious impact on the ground.

The strong working relationship between the governments of the United States and Uganda has elevated the influence of U.S. policy and practice relating to Uganda. Consequently, the limited attention and support of the United States government towards the peace process has hindered substantive efforts to resolve the conflict. The diplomatic efforts of the European troika of Norway, Netherlands and Great Britain in support of peace talks have fallen short without stronger U.S. leadership. "Shock Therapy for Northern Uganda's Peace Process." International Crisis Group, 11 April 2005.

The Role of the United States Forward

The Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act of 2004 provides a framework for U.S. action and diplomacy to seize this opportunity for peace in northern Uganda. First, the United States government should affirm the work of Betty Bigombe to revitalize the peace process as the key road to resolving the conflict. The U.S. State Department should publicly express support for Bigombe's initiative and explore opportunities to support the African Union and United Nations in giving a more robust framework to the initiative.

The Bush Administration should further appoint a special envoy to raise the visibility of Bigombe's efforts. The envoy would work both to hold President Museveni accountable to the process and to alleviate mistrust between the LRA and the Government of Uganda. U.S. involvement in the peace process would give President Museveni an opportunity to show his commitment to peace, which critics often call into question. Finally, financial assistance should be allocated to support Bigombe's work, which is deeply in need of basic funds for transportation and communication.

Beyond playing a more active role in establishing and facilitating negotiations, the United States can provide greater financial and human resources to help with protection, relief and development needs. The United States can assist in the creation and financing of an unarmed, civilian preventative peace force in northern Uganda. Financial assistance can also help mental health services, the rehabilitation of abducted children and development projects, all of which are deeply under funded. S.2264 provides a framework for such a bolstering of relief and development assistance. Finally, the United States government should provide significant funds to cover the projected shortages of approximately \$100 million by the UN World Food Program for the 1.6 million internally-displaced people. "UGANDA: Northern rebels undermining IDP coping mechanisms – UN." *Reuters AlertNet*. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/e53805d8bd1a4bb0e7875faaf48f9733.htm>.

The United States government should further use its existing alliances and relationships to ensure that relevant actors are committed to the resolution of this conflict. The U.S. government should exert greater pressure on the Sudanese government to fulfill its commitment to play a more aggressive role in arresting Kony and expelling the LRA from southern Sudan if they continue to stall negotiations. The government in Khartoum must continue to work to ensure that the army in the south stops providing funding and haven to the LRA. The United States, with its growing leverage in Khartoum, can work with the Sudanese to pressure the LRA. On the Ugandan side, the U.S. government should tie its non-lethal military aid to stipulations of improvement in the military's respect for human rights in the war zone. With recent reports of systematic rape of vulnerable women by UPDF soldiers, the United States should use its leverage to ensure that the military of Uganda is reformed and focused on the goal of peace and reconciliation.

New opportunities for peace have arisen in northern Uganda; the United States government, by a variety of actions, can contribute to the optimization of these opportunities. The U.S. government should act not only out of moral principle, but because security and stability in the Great Lakes Region is in its interest for countering terrorism, promoting democracy and standing for liberty. By its leadership on this issue, the United States government will not only win international political capital with many of its European allies, but set new and bolder standards for human rights and accountability in sub-Saharan Africa in the decades to come."(UCAN, 27 July 2005)

### **Tribal animosity subsided in Lango region (September 2004)**

- Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese went to Pader and Gulu districts to conduct peace animation sessions

- Acholi are travelling again to Lira after ethnic tensions in February 2004
- The number of displaced persons in Lira town has reduced from 200,000 to 40,000
- People in Puranga seem quite optimistic about a progressive end of the war
- Hopes on the rise, but people continue to meet violent death in Northern Uganda

"Having an exact idea of what is going on in Northern Uganda has never been a simple task. Things can easily change from one day to another and while a visit to a certain area can give you an impression of normality it may hide high insecurity just a mere eighty kilometres away. Analysis made barely a couple of months ago may not be very valid at the moment. With no international journalists based here and local media heavily dependant on Army statements, having access to reliable and independent sources is not easy and it requires to verify things on the ground by travelling to rural areas, which at times can be risky.

Three staff of our Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese moved last week to Puranga (Pader district) and later on to Anaka (Gulu district) to conduct peace animation sessions. This is what we saw and heard.

As one travels from Lira, Puranga is the gateway to Pader district. One gets at least two good news moving from the capital of Lango up North: the first is that the number of displaced persons in Lira town has reduced from 200,000 to 40,000. The second is that Acholi businessmen from Kitgum and Pader are travelling again to Lira, one of the most important economic hubs of the region. Quite remarkable, if one keeps in mind that following the February riots that took a nasty ethnic outlook many Acholis started fearing passing through Lango territory and preferred to go the long, more dangerous route to Gulu. The tension seems to have subsided, although as local leaders often put it a lot of work for reconciliation is needed to avoid further eruptions of tribal tension.

Also, the reduction in the number of the displaced cannot hide the facts that most local people are still highly traumatised and that camps North and East of Lira (Agweng, Ogur, Aloj and others) are still filled up with thousands of people who fear returning to their homes. A quick visit to a nutrition centre run by *Medecins Sans Frontières* in the outskirts of Lira town reveals that 265 children from different camps are admitted there because of malnutrition, some of them quite severe cases. Often their mothers are so traumatised that they need counseling to help them get over the tendency to neglect the child. While people in Teso have started returning to their homes, it may still take quite some time for those in Lango to do so, especially keeping in mind that some killings by the LRA in Lango still took place as recently as two weeks ago (see attached chronology).

The estimated 15,000 displaced persons at Puranga seem quite optimistic about a progressive end of the war and a return to their homes. It is understandable, if one keeps in mind that generally people in Pader have been the last ones to be displaced (hardly two years ago) and are likely to keep the desire to return home more alive. Also, Puranga –like other places in Pader such as Pajule, Atanga and Acholibur- has seen some rebel commanders surrendering during the last few months. One of them, LRA Maj. Ochan Lwete, came out of the bush in July with some of his fighters thanks to the efforts of some of the local religious leaders, who have been very active in keeping people united for peace. As we met for two days a group of about 60 people who had come from Awere –surely one of the most dangerous places up to now-, Kilak and Rackoko the news of the surrender of another LRA captain with six combatants in Acholibur was greeted with jubilation. People generally speak well of the UPDF soldiers in charge of the protection of the camp and remark that they are quite serious about night deployment and that as a consequence it is quite some time since there was an attack. Nonetheless, everyone is very bitter about the on-



going practice –tantamount of forced labour- of stopping people on the road by soldiers and forcing them to fell trees or slash the grass.

With the improvement of the situation, a good number of people are able to go to their fields, up to about three kilometres away from the camp, and dig hard taking advantage of the second rainy season.

Two days later, on the 21st and 22nd September, we were in Anaka. The camp was one of the first to be created in Northern Uganda, way back in 1996, and at present it hosts 40,000 people. In a place like Anaka it is easy to detect the effects that long-term displacement has on human beings, with loss of cultural values, high alcoholism, early motherhood and lack of perspectives. Also, despite the fact that soldiers generally are disciplined, their relations with the local population is not the best and it is an open secret that there is a high number of LRA collaborators living within. Nevertheless, people are also very positive about the common trend of surrendering rebels. Since April up to the beginning of September 43 have done so in Anaka, and just the day before we arrived some rebels released one of Brig. Kenneth Banya “wives”, who arrived at the detach.

As in Puranga, the improvement in the situation is seen in the high number of people who go to their fields –Anaka is one of the most fertile areas of Northern Uganda- to dig. To travel to Gulu, these days most people follow the road through Alero, which up to recently was practically closed to all traffic for almost two years and now has been repaired and put in a good shape. UPDF patrols are almost everywhere and give a certain feeling of safety. But things are not always bright. Hardly two weeks ago a total of 20 abductions, mostly of young people took place at Purongo, Agung and Wi-Anaka, camps located few kilometres away.

Things are turning hopeful, but people continue to meet violent death in Northern Uganda, and many efforts are still needed so that we may one day say that peace is really round the corner, just in sight.”(ARLPI, 23 September 2004)

## **Uganda-Sudan-DRC relations**

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### **LRA commits atrocities in eastern DRC and southern Sudan, UN Security Council responds (March 2006)**

- LRA kills 8 UN peace keepers in eastern DRC
- LRA causes internal displacement in southern Sudan and commits atrocities against civilians
- UN Security Council responds with two resolutions and condemns LRA and reminds governments in the region of protection responsibilities

### **UN Security Council, January 2006:**

“Expressing its deep concern at the devastating impact of conflict and insecurity on the humanitarian situation throughout the Great Lakes region and their implications for regional peace and security, especially where arms and armed groups move across borders, such as the long-running and brutal insurgency by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda which has caused the death, abduction and displacement of thousands of innocent civilians in Uganda, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”

### **UN Security Council, March 2006:**

*“Expressing its deep concern at the movement of arms and armed groups across borders such as the long running and brutal insurgency by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) which has caused the death, abduction and displacement of many innocent civilians in the Sudan.”*

### **Government must stop rhetoric of declaring war is over (March 2006)**

- Government must stop the rhetoric of declaring war is over
- UN and international community should encourage the government to engage in talks with the LRA
- War in northern Uganda is an obvious threat to peace and security

### **RLP, March 2006, pg 9-10:**

“The government must demonstrate a genuine commitment to ending the conflict through peaceful means. It should stop the rhetoric of declaring that the war has ended, and should refrain from using inflammatory language. Instead, it should work towards building trust with the rebels and local communities, as it did with the peace process in West Nile. In addition, the LRA should stop their cowardly acts of attacking and killing innocent civilians and demonstrate a sincere commitment to a peace process. Considering the LRA presence in both the eastern DRC and southern Sudan, the war in northern Uganda is an obvious threat to regional peace and security, and the UN and international community should take robust action to encourage the government to negotiate with the LRA, with a specific framework for discussion. Finally, the International Criminal Court (ICC) should carefully consider whether its involvement needs to be reviewed in light of the fact that the conflict is still ongoing[...].”

**See also [SPLA attempts to mediate talks between LRA and government \(May 2006\)](#)**

### **Sudan maintains alleged support to LRA while SPLA joins Uganda in hunting the LRA (November 2005)**

- Alleged support to LRA continues from central Sudanese government through Sudanese army personnel based in Juba, south Sudan
- SPLA joins the Ugandan army and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in fighting the LRA

“Despite Vice President Garang’s unexpected death in a helicopter crash only three weeks after his swearing-in in Khartoum, many in the SPLA, particularly those responsible for operations in the area where the LRA has been present, are also concerned about eliminating the LRA. One high-ranking SPLA commander responsible for that sector, Obuto Mamur Mete, suspects that the LRA still receives support not from the central Sudanese government but from Sudanese army personnel based in Juba, southern Sudan’s capital some one hundred miles north of the Uganda border. This SPLA commander alleges that the deliveries have continued on at least four occasions in April, May and June 2005 in two locations south of Juba.

Cmdr. Obuto Mamur, who is from the Latuka people of the area in southern Sudan affected by the LRA, said that the SPLA has fought the LRA in Sudan many times. The LRA has attacked and displaced southern Sudanese inside Sudan since 2002 on an ongoing basis—in late July 2005, the LRA killed nine in southern Sudan; since early 2005, 9,000 southern Sudanese have fled for refuge in Uganda on account of LRA attacks on them in Sudan.<sup>19</sup> The LRA has attacked Sudanese in refugee camps in Uganda as well over the years, causing many to be relocated within Uganda.<sup>20</sup> Cmdr. Obuto Mamur claims that the LRA numbers some 1,000

fighters inside Sudan, and has avoided capture or destruction in 2005 by slipping inside Sudanese government lines near Juba. He insists that cutting off this escape and the supply lines from Juba are essential if the LRA is to be expelled from Sudan. Commander Obuto Mamur has also expressed willingness to chase the LRA into northern Uganda” (HRW, September 2005, p.11).

“The Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) has joined the hunt for the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in southern Sudan. The UPDF, Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and SPLA on Saturday agreed to jointly execute the International Criminal Court arrest warrant against the LRA top commanders. The three armed forces will for the first time carry out joint operations against Kony and his rebels” (The New Vision, November 2005).

### **LRA enters DRC, new displacement feared in northwest Uganda (November 2005)**

- LRA enters eastern DRC, although reason remains unclear
- UN Peacekeeping mission in DRC, MONUC deploys troops to DRC-Uganda border
- Ugandan President threatens to invade DRC
- Real presence of LRA in DRC remains unknown

"More than 300 fighters of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) left their bases in northern Uganda and southern Sudan and crossed into northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on 13 September. The group, supposedly led by the LRA's second-in-command, Vincent Otti, and reportedly heavily armed, initially moved to the remote Garamba National Park, in Orientale's Haut Uele district. Following unsuccessful pleas by the UN Mission in DRC (MONUC) and the governments of DRC and Uganda to the rebels to disarm and surrender unconditionally, several hundred soldiers of the Congo army (FADRC) moved to the area to forcefully disarm the LRA. The DRC government, which had given all foreign armed groups until 30 September to voluntarily disarm, leave the country or be forced to disarm, warned the LRA that they were not welcome and

their presence would not be tolerated. Among the illegal combatant groups in DRC are the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), both composed of Ugandan dissidents. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, fearing that the LRA might destabilize Uganda from the DRC side, said on 29 September that he would send troops to the DRC if the rebels were not disarmed by the end of October. The Congolese government responded, saying DRC would defend itself against any Ugandan invasion, and officially asked the UN Security Council to impose sanctions against Uganda. The presence of the LRA in north eastern DRC has caused fear that they might cause insecurity and displacement in the neighboring

West Nile region of Uganda, particularly Arua and Nebbi districts at the Uganda-DRC border" (UNOCHA, September 2005).

### **International pressure on Sudan to end all support for the LRA is very low (June 2005)**

- Sudan bears major responsibility for the duration of the conflict in Northern Uganda
- Defectors from the LRA indicate that at least ammunition is being supplied by the Sudanese army as of June 2005
- SPLM/A has promised not to let the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operate from Sudanese soil

- The LRA has long used southern Sudan as a launching pad for cross-border raids into northern Uganda
- In the past Kampala has accused the Khartoum government of supporting Ugandan insurgents, just as Sudan charged Kampala with backing the SPLM/A

"Sudan bears major responsibility for the duration of the Northern Uganda conflict because it has played a central role in revitalising and sustaining the LRA during the last decade. Although it is clear that the government has reduced its support, there continue to be reports of aid from its army and intelligence operatives in southern Sudan. Defectors from the LRA indicate that at least ammunition is still being supplied. Since command and control in the military is very tight, it is very unlikely that whatever re- supply and sanctuary continues is unsanctioned by senior levels in Khartoum. Ugandan military intelligence indicated that Kony and his deputy, Otti, crossed back into Sudan on 16 May 2005. Such movement of LRA commanders between Uganda and Sudan has been common for many years. These are tactical moves, aimed at looting food, abducting children or evading

capture and reorganising. President Bashir, who met with a Ugandan delegation led by Defence Minister Amama Mbabazi, indicated

that LRA attacks against Sudanese civilians in southern Sudan, which are on the rise, were unacceptable and were leading Khartoum to enhance cooperation with the Ugandan government in order to remove the insurgents as a problem. Sudanese and Ugandan military personnel are to meet soon to map out a plan to deal decisively with the LRA. Liaison officers from both

armies are to be deployed in the area of operations, particularly in Juba and Nisitu. Although the Sudanese have pledged they will be more assertive in attacking the LRA, President Museveni remains sceptical, for practical if no other reasons. "The Sudanese troops" he told Crisis Group, "don't walk on

foot; they move on the road, so what effect will their

promises have?" The level of international pressure on Sudan to end all

support for the LRA and to use its leverage to encourage Kony to be forthcoming in peace talks is very low. The Darfur crisis, the implementation of the government's peace agreement with the SPLM, and desire for cooperation on counter-terrorism trump issues related to Northern Uganda.

"We are now just giving lip service to the Sudan factor", said one diplomat based in Kampala.

"We can't just let the [Ugandan army] chase Kony around an area the size of Texas". (ICC, 23 June 2005)

"The leader of the SPLA and designate vice president of the Sudan together with the president of Uganda paid a visit to Gulu on January 27th 2005 and promised to deploy the SPLA to fight the LRA alongside the UPDF within Uganda and in southern Sudan to ensure that peace returns to northern Uganda and southern Sudan."(NRC, 12 February 2005)

"The leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), John Garang, said on Friday that his movement was ready to help end a rebellion in neighbouring Uganda.

Noting that southern Sudan's people would not enjoy peace if rebellion continued in northern Uganda, Garang said during a lecture he delivered in Kampala that the SPLM/A would not allow the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) - a Ugandan rebel group - to operate from Sudanese soil.

The LRA has long used southern Sudan as a launching pad for cross-border raids into northern Uganda. Sudan's government had been accused by Uganda' s of backing the rebel group, while Khartoum had accused Kampala of supporting the SPLM/A.

"We will not be putting down our arms," Garang said with reference to countering LRA actions. "We are going to defend our country and we don't want any foreign armed groups within our territory." Garang added: "We are expressing our unreserved willingness to help [...] We are

determined to achieve peace in northern Uganda, so that all our people can put their lives together again and engage in development.

Uganda's 18-year-old war has taken a heavy toll on the inhabitants of the north of the country. Many have been subjected to atrocities, including abductions, rape, forced labour and forcible recruitment, while an unknown number have been killed. About 1.6 million people have been displaced.

Under a peace agreement signed on 9 January between the SPLM/A and the Khartoum government, Southern Sudan will enjoy a large measure of autonomy within the state of Sudan. This includes having a regional government that will administer the internal affairs of the south.

"We will do everything as a government in Sudan to see that peace is achieved in northern Uganda," Garang said. "The government of southern Sudan will not give guns to [LRA leader Joseph] Kony to come and kill people in northern Uganda. The complication in the past was that the government of Sudan was supporting the LRA. We, as part of the central government, will not be supporting any foreign armed groups anywhere in southern Sudan."

Efforts to end the Ugandan war through peaceful means have been limping along as mediators continue to engage both sides on a possible ceasefire agreement."(UNOCHA, 31 January 2005).

"The Ugandan army said[...] that accords signed by the Sudan government and the country's main rebel group to help end a war in the south of Sudan should bring neighbouring northern Uganda closer to peace.

Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) late Wednesday signed three agreements on power-sharing and the administration of three disputed regions, paving the way for a comprehensive peace deal to end Africa's longest-running war.

"This is a great step forward because peace in Sudan is peace in Uganda and vice versa," Ugandan army spokesman Major Shaban Bantariza told AFP by phone.

Uganda's government has been fighting the rebel Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) both in northern Uganda and in southern Sudan, where the group has bases.

In the past Kampala has accused the Khartoum government of supporting Ugandan insurgents, just as Sudan charged Kampala with backing the SPLM/A.

"Nobody was taking responsibility over the territory in southern Sudan where (LRA leader Joseph) Kony was hiding, but with these agreements, now we shall have one person accountable and that will be the (post-conflict) Sudanese government," Bantariza explained.

"Kony will no longer have a safe haven in Sudan and we hope that this time the Sudanese government will be able to occupy areas deserted by LRA forces as we have demanded in the past," Bantariza said.

The notoriously brutal LRA has been battling the government of President Yoweri Museveni since 1988 with the ostensible aim of replacing it with one based on the Biblical Ten Commandments."(AFP, 27 May 2004).

## **Agreements between Sudan and Uganda and between Khartoum and the SPLM/A have left the LRA increasingly isolated (January 2005)**

- The Ugandan government has in the past accused its Sudanese counterpart of supporting the Lord's Resistance Army
- In turn, the Sudanese government has accused Uganda of backing the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A)
- In March 2002 Uganda and Sudan signed a protocol allowing Ugandan troops to hunt LRA fighters in southern Sudan
- LRA leaders had moved their headquarters to southern Sudan from northern Uganda and had been receiving arms and supplies from the Khartoum government
- The protocol might be re-negotiated in Khartoum

"While war raged in southern Sudan, the LRA used the neighbouring country as a rear base, with the Ugandan government accusing its Sudanese counterpart of supporting the rebels. The Khartoum government, in turn, accused Uganda of backing a Sudanese rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

However, agreements between the two governments, and between Khartoum and the SPLM/A have left the LRA increasingly isolated.

At Wednesday's celebrations, [marking the 19th anniversary of Museveni's rise to power in January 2005]] Museveni's SPLM/A leader John Garang pledged to work towards peace in northern Uganda.

"We have just achieved peace in southern Sudan," Garang said. "We will now work towards peace in northern Uganda - the people there, and Uganda as a whole, are also my people."

The Ugandan government and the LRA had been expected to sign a peace deal on 31 December 2004, but the process collapsed when the rebels asked for more time to consult on a draft agreement the government had proposed.

The government then launched a new military offensive against the rebels, but Bigombe kept up her mediation effort, meeting rebel leaders in northern Uganda, where they are based." (IRIN, 27 January 2005).

"In early March,[2005] the governments of Uganda and Sudan renewed their bilateral military protocol and signed a three-month extension of their military agreement. Operation Iron Fist II (OIF II) allowed Ugandan troops to pursue the LRA across Sudanese borders. OIF II had two repercussions: the renewed pursuit of the LRA in southern Sudan significantly weakened the rebels as their bases were overrun; and the increasing pressure forced the LRA to cross from Sudan to Uganda, resulting in more attacks on villages and IDP camps as the rebels raided for food and recruits. In April, the LRA entered Adjumani district, and carried out 40 attacks on refugee settlements, leading to the displacement of 25,000 refugees – one-third of the refugee population of the district. A similar number of Ugandans was also displaced, but was accommodated by host communities.

Since July, there has been a marked improvement in the general security situation following high rates of LRA desertions, partly as a result of OIF II, a trend that started in April and included both middle-ranking commanders and soldiers. LRA attacks on camps became less frequent, creating a feeling, especially among government officials, that the LRA had been significantly weakened

and that the war was about to end. However, the security in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts has not yet improved enough to have a positive impact on the humanitarian situation."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, p. 5)

"Uganda for the first time openly accused Sudan on Friday of resuming support for northern rebels in violation of a border cooperation pact, but said it would talk to Khartoum next month to resolve the matter.

'Our information is that the rebels have set up new camps near and beyond Sudan army lines,' Uganda's military intelligence chief Colonel Noble Mayombo told reporters, referring to the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) rebels.

'This intelligence we did not get from them (Sudanese authorities). If the intelligence exchange had been there, the LRA may have been defeated by now.'

One of Africa's strangest rebel movements, the LRA has fought a 17-year insurgency against the government of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and is feared for its habit of abducting children for use as child soldiers and sex slaves.

In March last year Uganda and Sudan signed a protocol allowing Ugandan troops to hunt LRA fighters in southern Sudan, marking an end to Khartoum's support for the rebels which included permission for the rebels to have bases in Sudan.

But earlier this week former child soldiers who gave themselves up to the army told members of parliament that LRA leaders had moved their headquarters to southern Sudan from northern Uganda and had been receiving arms and supplies from the Khartoum government in recent months.

MPs also quoted Museveni as saying in a closed-door speech to parliament that Sudan had resumed the support and he would teach Khartoum a "lesson" if it persisted.

The Sudanese embassy in the Ugandan capital Kampala denied the accusations, which they said were based on hearsay.

Uganda's state defence minister Ruth Nankabirwa told a news conference officials of the two countries would discuss the matter at a meeting in Khartoum in October.

'In Khartoum we will renew the protocol and present evidence of the new links between the Sudan army and the LRA,' she said.

She was speaking at a ceremony with Sudanese ambassador Mohammed Surjudin where they signed a one-month extension of the protocol to the end of September at army headquarters outside Kampala. The protocol ran out at the end of August.

Nankabirwa's comments suggested the terms of the protocol might be re-negotiated in Khartoum. At the ceremony, Surjudin repeated his government's denial that they were aiding the LRA.

More than 14,000 Ugandan troops backed by tanks, artillery and helicopter gunships were deployed in the north last year to fight the rebels but have so far failed to defeat them.

LRA leader Joseph Kony, who locals say talks to "angels", has previously said he wants to overthrow the Kampala government but he has never given detailed reasons for his rebellion. Northern residents said the rebel leader has no clear agenda." (Reuters, 12 September 2003)

### **Lord's Resistance Army assisted by Sudan in retaliation for Ugandan support to SPLM/A (July 2003)**

- President Museveni claims that the Sudanese rebels receive political support only , but this is not accurate
- In 1997 the SPLM/A received the assistance of the UPDF, including troops
- LRA seemed to have better arms, communications equipment, and newer uniforms than the UPDF
- LRA boasted that it had stockpiled enough arms to last for five years
- Airdrops by low-flying planes, possibly by the Sudanese armed forces, in northern Uganda in 2003

"The LRA has been assisted by the Sudanese government since about 1994, in retaliation for the support that President Museveni gives to the Sudanese rebels, the SPLM/A. President Museveni claims that the Sudanese rebels receive political support only, but this is not accurate. In 1997, for example, the SPLM/A received the assistance of the UPDF, including troops, in its sweep from the Ugandan border north through Equatoria and Bahr El Ghazal. With the help of the UPDF and others, the SPLM/A captured many Sudanese army garrisons from Yei to Tonj towns, and took thousands of prisoners of war. Among the prisoners of war were at least one thousand members of the West Bank Nile Front, a Ugandan rebel group also supported by the Sudanese government. The West Bank Nile Front was effectively disbanded." [...]

"It is unclear from where the new supplies for the LRA might have come-if not from Sudan, its long-term supplier. The LRA claimed that it was supplied through capture of goods from the UPDF (or corruption), which was probably only partly true, as the LRA seemed to eyewitnesses to have better arms, communications equipment, and newer uniforms than did the UPDF.

Undoubtedly the LRA was in and out of Sudan even after it returned in force to northern Uganda in June 2002; former child abductees reported to UNICEF that in late 2002 the LRA took at least 500 children to Sudan. In early March 2003, LRA second-in-command Vincent Otti reportedly crossed from northern Uganda into southern Sudan with some 300 LRA fighters and civilian abductees. A social worker who counsels LRA abducted and escaped child soldiers said that many children reported that the stronger boys were forced to march into Sudan in 2003 and porter back a large cache of arms. Other children reportedly said that the LRA boasted that it had stockpiled enough arms to last for five years.

Agencies based in northern Uganda and others reported airdrops by low-flying planes, possibly by the Sudanese armed forces, in northern Uganda in 2003. The planes were Antonovs, a make frequently used by the Sudanese government, and the planes came from the direction of Juba, Sudan and returned back after dropping, without landing. Further evidence of continuing Sudanese army involvement with the LRA came in the form of detailed interviews conducted in Luo, the Acholi language, with LRA senior returnee officers, according to the ARLPI. The Sudanese government denied all accusations." (HRW, p 13, 15 July 2003)

### **Agreement Between the Governments of Sudan and Uganda, 8 December, 1999**

"In order to enhance relations between our two countries and to promote peace in the regions, we make the following commitments:



1. Each of us will respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other, in accordance with the charters of the United Nations and the Organization for African Unity.
2. We renounce the use of force to resolve differences, and will take steps to prevent any hostile acts against each other.
3. We will make every effort to disband and disarm terrorist groups and to prevent any acts of terrorism or hostile actions that might originate in our territory that might endanger the security of the other nation.
4. We agree not to harbor, sponsor, or give military or logistical support to any rebel groups, opposition groups, or hostile elements from each others' territories.
5. We will join in a common effort to promote regional peace, both on our own initiative and in full support and in no way to prejudice or interfere with IGAD's role in bringing an end to the civil war in Sudan.
6. We will refrain from hostile and negative propaganda campaigns against each other.
7. We will return all prisoners of war to their respective nations.
8. We especially condemn any abuse or injury of innocent citizens, and will make a special effort to locate any abductees, especially children, who have been abducted in the past and return them to their families. All information about such cases will be shared with The Carter Center, UNICEF, and other international organizations and we will cooperate fully in the search and rescue of these victims, beginning immediately with those who can be identified.
9. We will honor international laws governing refugees, NGO activities, and cross-border transportation, and facilitate the return or resettlement of refugees in accordance with UNHCR regulations.
10. We will offer amnesty and reintegration assistance to all former combatants who renounce the use of force.
11. If all other terms of this agreement are honored satisfactorily, we desire to reestablish normal relations between our two countries. Within a month of this date, we will open offices in both capital cities and assign junior diplomatic personnel for service. By the end of February 2000, ambassadors will be exchanged and full diplomatic relations restored.

In order to implement this agreement, designated members of our contact groups will act as an interim committee. As soon as practical, a joint ministerial committee will be established with at least three sub committees, to deal with political, security, and humanitarian issues.

We understand that, when requested, the Carter Center will publicize this agreement and continue to play a role in its implementation."( United States Insititute for Peace, 8 December 1999)

## **Background to the conflict in the Karamajong affected area**

### **Complex causes of conflict result in displacement within Karamajong cluster (August 2005)**

- No single cause to account for frequent, unpredictable and intermittent conflict amongst Karamojong
- Peace building initiatives have been unable to bring about resolution, due to complexity of cause-effect relationship
- A web of social-cultural, economic, political and environmental factors have led to intensified conflict
- Conflict and displacement contribute to poverty levels

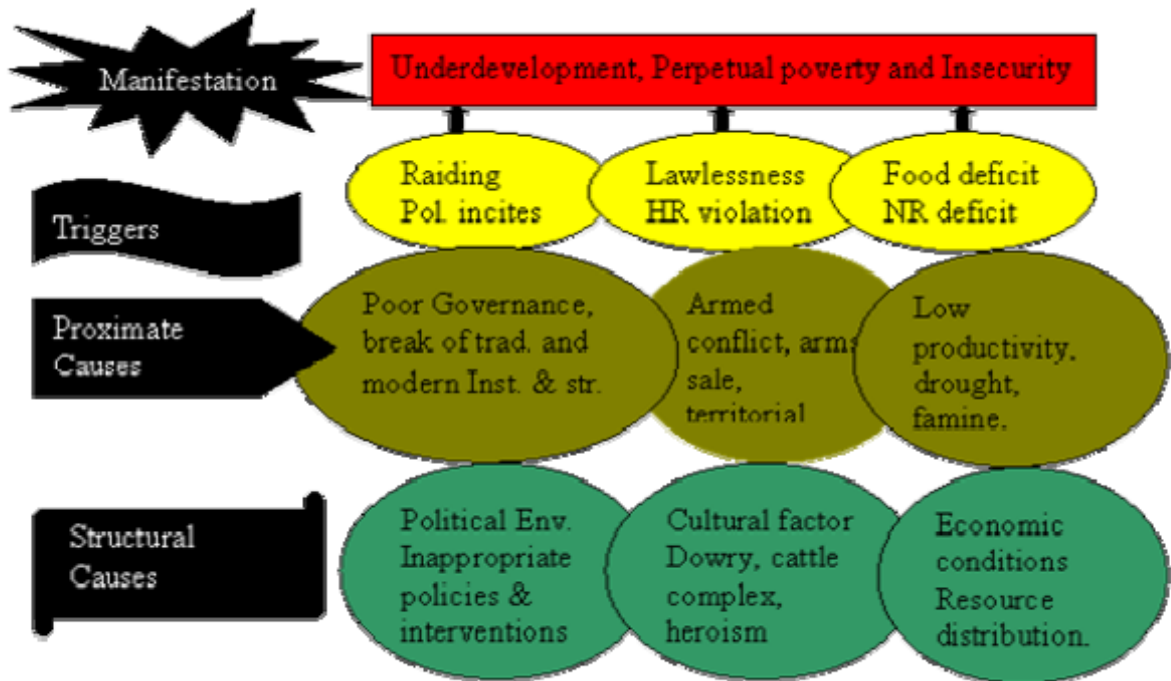
#### **USAID, August 2005, Pg. 12 and 30:**

“The causes of conflict in Karamajong cluster are varied and complex. There is no single cause to account for the frequent, unpredictable, and intermittent conflict in the Cluster.

There is no clear distinction either between the causes and outcomes of conflict in the region. At the far end of the continuum, the two appear to merge i.e. what appears to be a cause appears as a consequence too. Some issues emerging as causes as well as results pose a challenge to processes analysis and to the design of strategies and program to address them. The complexity of cause-effect relationship is probably one of the main reasons why peace building initiatives are not able to bring an end to conflict in the region.

A web of socio-cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors has led to intensification of conflict in the region. There is general agreement by respondents on a number of factors leading to conflicts in the Cluster. However, different people give differing emphasis and significance on varied causes. The main causes of conflict identified in the Cluster are summarized in the model below.”

Figure 1: Main causes of conflict in the Cluster



“Although conflict and poverty influence each other, conflict is one of the major causes of the poverty prevalent in the Cluster. Conflicts within the Cluster are reportedly responsible for the pastoralists’ under development. The unrelenting skirmishes are blamed for the displacements of whole settlements and for destitution in the region. In Todonyang village (Lapur division, Turkana District) for instance, frequent raids from neighboring Dassenech forced the relocation of the entire village to Lowareng’ak, twenty-three kilometers away. The attendant poverty and destitution is visible in the kind of livelihood activities undertaken by the newly displaced. These activities include fishing, basketry, and small scale retail trade. In such areas, pastoralism as a livelihood activity is itself threatened since very few pastoralist respondents are willing to take up the activity again because of lack of initial capital and the prevailing insecurity.”

#### Different types of pastoralist conflicts in the Karamajong Cluster (August 2005)

- Intra-clan conflicts
- Inter-district conflicts
- Cross-border conflicts

USAID, August 2005, Pg: 10-11:

“Pastoralist conflicts in the region are very complex and take place within several levels of the Cluster:

1. Intra-clan conflicts, the most common type, are characterized by sections of one

community (clan) or one Sub-county (Sub division) fighting with one another. The Tepeth and Matheniko have long been in conflict, and the Dodoth and the Ik (Teuso) have sometimes clashed over suspicion that the Ik give protection to the Turkana. Intra-clan conflicts increased in scale in 1980s. Myth in Matheniko holds that raiding began in Karamoja as a curse from the most prominent elder, Lokolimoi. Inter-clan conflict brings the different clan of Karamoja against each other, for instances, Pokot versus Matheniko, Jie versus Bokora, Turkana versus Pokot, or Pian versus Bokora. Since 1987, inter-clan clashes have become more violent and regular and involve all different clans of Karamoja confronting each other.

2. Inter district conflicts bring the Karamajong against other tribes/ communities living in the districts neighboring the Cluster, possibly within the same country.

3. Cross border conflicts take place across the international borders of the Karamajong cluster groups where conflict exists between one tribe in one country against another tribe in the neighboring country. For example, the Karamajong of Uganda fighting the Turkana of Kenya or the Toposa of Sudan, or the Turkana of Kenya fighting the Merile of Ethiopia. Due to their complexity, cross border conflicts between the Turkana and the Karamajong pose a challenge to conflict analysis and management. Conflicts do not involve an entire group within either country, but one particular clan of Karamoja in Uganda against one particular section of the Turkana of Kenya. It may at any one time be the Jie against Kwatela, the Dodoth against the Lukmong, the Matheniko against the Woyakwara, or the Ngisonyoka against the Pokot. Each of these paired sections share frontiers."

### **Historical complicity between the government and Karamajong warriors (June 2005)**

"Cattle rustling in Teso Region have existed since the 1940s. In the beginning, the cattle rustlers used spears and later locally made guns called "Amatida". This low capacity limited cattle rustling activities to the borderline areas of Karamoja and the then Soroti District. Cattle rustling reached its peak between 1986 and 1990 when the Karamajong warriors overran the whole of Teso region. This was at the time when there was rebellion in Teso against the government and delivery of social services including security broke down. The affected people moved into government facilities like sub county H/Q, dispensaries, schools which later became camps where government provided security through the local militia and soldiers. Today there are over 74 Karamajong induced camps hosting about 176,911 people in Katakwi district."(GoU, 15 June 2005)

### **Background of the conflict in the Karamajong north-East, 1970s-2003 (December 2001)**

- Introduction of modern weapons removed relevance of elders as a stabilizing element within the Karamajong communities
- The "so-called "Karamajong problem" arose partly because the colonial government adopted a policy to maintain Karamajo's natural heritage for tourism purposes
- In line with this colonial policy, the Obote I government Created Kidepo National Park thus destroying the Karamajong's access to grazing and watering points
- Endemic mistrust also developed, which furthered repressive policies, such as the use of heavy artillery and tanks in the region.
- Collapse of pastoral economy and lucrative arms trade has created vicious circle of violence
- The Sahara desert has continued to move southwards
- The Museveni government allowed the Karamajong to retain their arms

### ***A Century of Deterioration of Social Order***

"In the area of social and political pressures, this century has seen an ever-increasing level of violence. Forces from the outside have invaded the relative stability of Karamoja, and generally failed to understand the civil order that was already present. As conformity to foreign ways was forced on the Karamojong, they put up with it for periods of time but occasionally rebelled against it when their very way of life seemed threatened.

The introduction of modern weapons made rebellion against these external forces more and more effective, but these weapons themselves had an effect of changing the internal dynamics of Karamojong life. As the younger warrior class of Karamojong became increasingly the de facto "law" in Karamoja, the elder/wisdom class of Karamojong became less of a stabilizing and effective influence. Eventually, respect for the elders and their traditions has slipped away into a state of near irrelevance.

In the end, all of these pressures taken together produced a bitter fruit of turmoil, enmity, and abandonment of the traditional order, causing a headlong rush into cattle-raiding, general lawlessness and violence, and a prevailing low regard for human life."  
<http://www.karamoja.org/karmjong/needs.htm>

"The so-called Karamoja problem arose because the colonial government adopted a policy to maintain Karamajo's natural heritage for tourism purposes, a policy that never took of due to a break-down of law an order after Uganda gained independence. Successive post-independence have dealt with the 'Karamajo problem' as a problem of refusal to change and integrate, i.e. as a 'social deviance' problem. Government policies, as reflected in the wording of relevant laws and decrees, for example the Pacification of Karamoja Decree, deny the Karamajong any meaningful participation in their own social-cultural reforms. Extremes of post-independence policy came under in the mid-1970s. The government sought to 'civilise' the Karamajong using heavy artillery, including tanks, to stop Karamajong cattle raids in neighbouring areas. This lead to a very heavy death toll that Amin billed as a 'final solution to the Karamajong problem'. However, after the fall of Amin, the Karamajong renewed their resistance to government pressure to abandon their pastoral lifestyle.

During the 1960s, the Turkana from the West and the Toposa from the North with modern firearms and especially high-powered rifles-began frequent incursions into Karamoja, raiding for cattle and whatever else they could take. The armed police of the Ugandan government who were stationed in Karamoja were ineffectual in responding to these raids. This predicament continued until the coup by Amin in 1971 brought a different armed force into the district. While Amin's Army was more brutally efficient in stopping the raiders, the recovered livestock was stolen by the soldiers and sold to local cattle traders. This caused the Karamajong to distrust all formal government initiatives and to increasingly resort to self-help, creating a vigilant culture in addition to traditional cattle raiding.

[...]

Competition for scarce resources, particularly water and pasture, and the high value placed on cattle have produced a culture of raiding and warfare within which men are noted for their bravery and their wealth. This practice leads to a vicious circle in which the Matheniko raid the Bokora, Jie and labwor; and the Bokora and the Jie raid the Matheniko. The Dodoth and Matheniko seem to have a permanent peace treaty, but the Dodoth raid the Jie and Turkana of Kneya. The Bokora, Dodoth, Jie and Matheniko all raid Labwor. This complicated cycle is underlain by the fact that men need cattle to marry. Young men have a powerful incentive to establish their reputation and build their own heirds through mounting raids on other pastoral groups. [...]

Since colonial times, the Ugandan government has pursued legislative and taxation policies which, in practice, have led to only wild animals being allowed to live inside the national parks and reserves. The establishment of given areas as game parks and reserves has, since its inception in colonal times, caused affected minority groups to be totally uprooted and

dispossessed. ... One enduring example is the British colonial government-originated 'conservation of Karamoja for tourist purposes' project.

[...]

This 'human reserve'-type scheme harmed and stigmatized the Karamajong, and reinforced false and offensive images of their being 'primitive' or 'backward'. In the 1960s, the Obote I government followed this policy and created Kidepo national Park. The creation of this park destroyed the Karamajong's access to grazing and watering points during the dry seasons. This has resulted in conflict between the Karamajong (in search of water and pasture) and their neighbours during the dry seasons. The fact that the Sahara desert has continued to move south and has therefore prolonged the droughts-sometimes lasting for a year at a time-has also prolonged the Karamajong's search for water. This has led to an intensification of conflict, mainly with their southern neighbours, the Itesot. Most governments have failed to understand this process.: instead they have often sanctioned fighting the army to attack and kill the Karamajong, frequently in large numbers, or have sanctioned fighting between rival groups." (Minority Rights Group International 12 March 2001, pp. 6, 14, 19 )



### ***Karamajong: A thorn in the side of all governments***

"The issue of the Karamojong warriors has been a thorn in the side of all Ugandan governments since independence. The current government of President Yoweri Museveni allowed the Karamojong to retain their arms in order to protect themselves from external raids by the Turkana and Pokot in neighbouring Kenya.

[...]

The Karamojong have maintained their armouries by buying guns cheaply from the SPLA [Sudan People's Liberation Army], and other sources in Somalia and northwestern Kenya, Wairagala Wakabi, a journalist with 'The EastAfrican' who specialises in the movement of small arms in the region told IRIN. "They have the option of barter trade where they exchange animals for guns." (IRIN 22 March 2000)

"The north-east of the country is inhabited by the Karamojong pastoralists, a marginalised minority of about 100,000 people. Since the Karamojong acquired automatic weapons the region has become a virtual no-go area. The area is suffering from environmental degradation and is periodically struck by famine. The military has been involved in regular punishment expeditions in the fight against cattle-raiding. Vigilantes have taken the law into their own hands, resulting in a breakdown of law and order. Guns are plentiful and gangs have terrorised the local population. An estimated 30,000 illegal weapons are in circulation which are used to rustle cattle and ambush and raid vehicles. These raids extend across the borders into Kenya and Sudan and on numerous occasions have provoked serious incidents with neighbouring countries." (EPCPT December 2000)

## **Different types of pastoralist conflicts in the Karamajong Cluster**

- Intra-clan conflicts
- Inter-district conflicts
- Cross-border conflicts

### **USAID, August 2005, Pg: 10-11:**

“Pastoralist conflicts in the region are very complex and take place within several levels of the Cluster:

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## **Monthly humanitarian update**

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### **OCHA Monthly Humanitarian Reports**

# POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

## Global figures

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### 1.7 Million IDPs in northern Uganda (November 2006)

- 1.7 IDPs in northern Uganda, including Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, northern Apac, northern Lira and Adjumani.
- 1.4 IDPs receive food assistance from the World Food Programme in northern Uganda.
- In 2004-5, 300,000 IDPs returned home in Teso and Lango region.

### OCHA, November 2006, Pg. 11:

"Despite relative improvement in the security situation, approximately 1.4 million people remain in IDP camps in Uganda. The humanitarian and human rights situation, particularly in the Acholi sub-region, remains dire. Persistent violations of economic, social and cultural rights, overcrowding in IDP camps, inadequate provision of basic social services, frequent epidemic outbreaks and restricted freedom of movement all aggravate the IDPs' vulnerability. In Katakwi and Amuria districts, over 130,000 IDPs remain displaced in 61 camps due to insecurity largely linked to Karimojong cattle rustling activities that have adverse effects on agriculture and livestock, the main sources of livelihood in the two districts. The situation has been exacerbated by the forceful disarmament of Karimojong warriors by the UPDF, which has encouraged them to flee in the neighbouring districts, including in Amuria, Katakwi, Kitgum and Pader, generating in some cases new waves of displacement. Numbers of Karamoja girls are also seeking income generation opportunities in these districts and beyond and are exposed to exploitation and abuse. The two districts will require closer attention and the strengthening of monitoring of recurrent cycles of internal displacement as well as reinforcement of both protection and assistance programmes.

On 4 May 2006, the President launched a six-month "Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Actions for the North" with proposals for the enhancement of protection and assistance to IDPs and their gradual return home or other priority areas to urgently address the plight of the 1.7 million IDPs. The plan, which presents an opportunity for the Government to dispel perceptions of its marginalisation of the North by providing concrete and tangible improvement to conflict-affected districts, constitutes a significant effort by the Government to improve coordination and systematically address the humanitarian emergency in northern Uganda."

### 130,000 IDPs in Karamoja (November 2006)

- 130,000 estimated IDPs in 61 camps in Katakwi and Amuria Districts
- Ongoing waves of displacement due to Karamajong warriors
- 700 newly displaced as a result of attack on Kotido Senior Quarters on 30 October 2006

### 130,000 IDPs in Karamoja (November 2006)

### UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 11:



“In Katakwi and Amuria districts, over 130,000 IDPs remain displaced in 61 camps due to insecurity largely linked to Karimojong cattle rustling activities that have adverse effects on agriculture and livestock, the main sources of livelihood in the two districts. The situation has been exacerbated by the forceful disarmament of Karimojong warriors by the UPDF, which has encouraged them to flee in the neighbouring districts, including in Amuria, Katakwi, Kitgum and Pader, generating in some cases new waves of displacement.”

**Kotido Report OHCHR, 23 November 2006, Pg. 5-6:**

“Following the incidents of 29 October, on 30 October 2006, Karimojong armed elements pursuing the retreating army attacked Kotido Senior Quarters (houses where civil servants and their dependents reside) in Kotido town. The armed Karimojong retreated at around 5 p.m. when an army patrol approached the vicinity. Once the army had left, the attackers returned again at around 6 p.m., and the inhabitants had to flee their homes, which were eventually looted. In the course of the attack, an unnamed child was wounded by a bullet reportedly shot by one of the armed Karimojong.

The total number of persons affected as a result of the armed Karimojong attack on Senior Quarters was estimated at 702, including women and children. About 400 of those were reported to have relocated to the local government premises since 31 October 2006. The mission met with some civil servants and their dependants who were displaced and also visited the site. Doors and windows of at least 16 houses were broken and the houses looted. Four houses of civil servants (including that of the Magistrate), reportedly belonging to persons from the Karimojong community, were not looted.

The mission noted that the displaced were living in difficult conditions with poor sanitary facilities. The displaced women and children sleep in ten offices and vacate them in the morning as civil servants resume work. Many of the displaced men spend the night on verandas, in office corridors or under trees. They indicated that WFP, UNICEF and OXFAM have been supplying food, non-food items and water, but that they had not received any kind of assistance from the local authorities. Especially as civil servants, they expressed grief over the lack of assistance from the local authorities. The displaced reported that they had received a letter from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer notifying them that they should make arrangements to relocate from the Government offices at the earliest opportunity.”

**Number of night commuters drops (May 2006)**

- Number of night commuters drops from 30,000 last year to approximately 14,000, due to improved security conditions.
- In May there was a reversal in the declining trend of night commuter figures registered in Gulu, the numbers of night commuters increased due to increased security incidences in Koch Keyo area as well as school holidays.

**UNICEF, April 2006:**

“In April, an estimated 14,000 children in Gulu, Kitgum and Kalongo towns were abandoning their homes for the relative safety of urban areas and the centres of the larger IDP camps each night, up from 13,000 in the previous month. This “night commuting” practice reveals a striking community response to insecurity, particularly to the threat of abduction, as well as other vulnerability factors encountered on a day-to-day basis in the conflict-affected region.”

**OCHA, May 2006:**

“According to UNICEF May 2006 data, there was a reversal in the declining trend of night commuter figures registered in Gulu until April 06. In May, the numbers increased by 13.67%, from 5,884 in April to 6817 children. According to MSF who operate a night commuter’s centre in Lacor, the increase was attributed to increased insecurity incidences in the Koch Keyo area as well as to the school holidays during which more children are at home. In Kitgum, preliminary head count results for May from 13 of the 15 centres stands at 4,696, a decline from 6,718 in April. In response to the steadily declining numbers, one centre at Kitgum government Hospital B has been phased out and another due in June 2006. In addition, NGOs in Kitgum are considering shifting their outreach from night commuters centres directly to communities.”

### **Estimated 25,000 children abducted since the start of the LRA conflict (April 2006)**

- 25,000 children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) since the start of the conflict.
- 1,000 ‘child mothers’ who conceived while in captivity.

#### **UNICEF, April 2006:**

“Child protection issues remain of particular concern, owing to the child-centric nature of the conflict. The LRA uses boys and girls as fighters and porters, with children often subjected to extreme violence shortly after abduction and many girls allocated to officers in a form of institutional rape. Of an estimated 25,000 children (7,500 girls) abducted by the LRA since the start of the conflict, some 1,000 are “child mothers” who conceived children of their own while in captivity.”

## **General**

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### **IDPs in Lango and Teso (April 2006)**

- The UN Country Team and OCHA perform a comprehensive profiling exercise of the IDP population in two sub-regions.
- In the Lango sub-region, there are an estimated 105,428 IDP households located primarily in IDP camps and 56,153 IDP households in Teso sub-region.
- The profiling determined that 55% and 54% of the IDP population in Lango and Teso sub-regions are under the age of 14 years old respectively.
- Regarding return, of the IDPs who wish to return in Lango, 27% say they plan to return home in 2006, while another 3% have stated 2007 as their desired date for return. In Teso, 42% plan to return during 2006, with a further 8% stating return in the year 2007.

#### **IOM, April 2006, Pg 6:**

“A need for updated data of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) population in Lango and Teso sub-regions of north-eastern Uganda, particularly in regards to movement patterns and return intentions, prompted a request to IOM from the UN Country Team, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the Government of Uganda, to perform a comprehensive profiling exercise of the IDP population in the two sub-regions. With the financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and UNICEF, IOM Uganda performed an IDP Profiling exercise in the six districts of Lira, Apac, Kaberamaido, Amuria, Katakwi, and Soroti in Lango and Teso subregions between November 2005 – March 2006. The Profiling exercise included an IDP household survey, gathering data on camp and return area

profiles, as well as building capacity of the Government of Uganda (GoU), particularly at the district level.

The results of the IDP Profiling exercise are intended to provide the GoU, humanitarian actors, and other relevant stakeholders with invaluable information regarding IDP profiles and needs, as well as intentions of return and resettlement in Lango and Teso sub-regions. Through the provision of an evidence basis, the Profiling will facilitate planning of appropriate interventions for the IDP population, including IDP camps, host communities, and return locations, as well as contribute to a successful voluntary return and reintegration process.

The results of the IDP Profiling in Lango and Teso are presented in the form of several different reports, of which this is Edition 1 - Results on locations, displacement patterns, living conditions, and dwellings and environment. Other reports making up the IDP Profiling include: a Preliminary Results report; Editions 2 - 4: Edition 2 – results on demographic and education characteristics, health and mortality, Edition 3 – Results on livelihood, service provision, household economy, land use and agriculture, Edition 4 – Results on return intentions, return plans, social and political situation, perception about future and return process; as well as Narrative Location Profiles Volumes 1-4: Volume 1: Lango, Volume 2: Amuria, Volume 3: Katakwi, and Volume 4: Soroti and Kaberamaido.

The methodology for the IDP Profiling was initially developed in relation to the Norwegian Research Centre “Fagbevegelsens center for forskning” (FAFO) and UNDP Profiling Study in Acholiland in northern Uganda in 2005, when several consultation sessions were held with FAFO, UNDP, IOM, other relevant UN Agencies and NGOs in early 2005.

In an effort to harmonize the IDP Profiling in Lango and Teso sub-regions with the UNDP/FAFO Profiling Study, IOM utilized the methodology and survey forms from the Fafo Profiling Study and adapted them to fit the context in Lango and Teso subregions, particularly in relation to the need for information regarding return patterns and return intentions. Additionally, the GoU, both at the central and district levels, UN Agencies were further consulted in order to ensure a harmonized Profiling

exercise designed to fill information gaps and provide a comprehensive understanding of the current IDP situation.

The exercise comprised of household survey forms for interviewing randomly selected households, in addition to location assessment forms for all identified locations, including IDP camps, host communities, and return locations. The profiling focused on IDPs currently living in camps, and IDP returnees now living in their place of origin. The results offer vital information regarding the IDP settlements and return areas, as well as the socio-economic and demographic information in relation to IDP home communities.

The IDP Profiling exercise comprised a strong capacity building component that has contributed to enhanced capacity of the GoUs disaster management structures at the central and district level. The GoU, through the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), has been closely involved in the planning, implementation, and reporting of the IDP Profiling exercise, particularly at the district level with the support of the district authorities, including the District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs), the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and the District Disaster Preparedness Committees (DDPC).

A workshop with the District Disaster Preparedness Coordinators (DDPCs) from each respective district of Lango and Teso sub-regions was held in Kampala the weekend of April 1st and 2nd, 2006. The workshop allowed IOM to provide the DDPCs with a thorough explanation of the profiling results, the detailed tables and statistics files, instruction on the use of the database, and to receive input on the final reporting from the district authorities. IOM subsequently handed over

a computer equipped with the database, a printer, plus the necessary IT equipment to effectively assure

sustainability of the profiling results to the DDPCs to install in their particular districts. Additionally, operational structures in the field, notably the establishment of field offices in the district authorities' office buildings in Lira and Soroti districts, further facilitated government involvement in the overall process and developed capacity for long term sustainability of the profiling results.

The Profiling results found that in Lango sub-region there are an estimated 105,428 IDP households located primarily in IDP camps, with less than 1,000 of these located in host communities. Return locations in Bata and Dokolo in Lira district comprise of an estimated 10,760 households. Furthermore, there are 56,153 IDP households in Teso sub-region, more specifically 3,489 in Soroti, 35,466 in Amuria, 812 in Kaberamaido, and 16,386 in Katakwi districts.

The profiling determined that 55% and 54% of the IDP population in Lango and Teso sub-regions are under the age of 14 years old respectively. The working age population of 15-64 years of age makes up 42% of the IDP population in Lango and 44% of the IDP population in Teso, while the remaining percentage of 3% and 2% in Lango and Teso are IDPs over the age of 65 years old. The gender composition of the IDP population in both Lango and Teso sub-regions is equal, with 50% being male and 50% being female.

The Heads of Household in Lango and Teso sub-regions are predominantly male, with 78% in Lango and 70% in Teso.

For the most part, the IDPs have been displaced within their district of origin, with the majority even being displaced within their own sub-county. The majority of the IDPs have stated insecurity as the primary reason for displacement.

The major movements of IDPs in Lango sub-region occurred in 2002 and 2003, whereas roughly half of the IDP population in Teso sub-region was displaced before and during 2002. The remaining half was displaced after 2002. More than half of the IDP community has never completed any schooling. Nevertheless, 75% numbers of IDP children in Lango sub-region between the ages of

7-14 years old are attending school, of which 76% of the male population and 73% of the female population in this age group are attending. In Teso sub-region, 89% of the IDP children of the same age category are attending school, with 90% of the male population and 88% of the female population between 7-14 years in attendance. In Lango, 36% of the IDPs intend to return to their place of origin, whereas 80% of the IDPs in Teso sub-region have intentions to return. Of the IDPs who wish to return in Lango, 27% say they plan to return home in 2006, while another 3% have stated

2007 as their desired date for return. In Teso, 42% plan to return during 2006, with a further 8% stating return in the year 2007."

### **IDPs in Northern Uganda (September 2005)**

- IDP Situation in Pader is the worst, followed by Kitgum and then Gulu.
- More than 50% of IDPs are under the age of fifteen.
- 25% of children have lost one or both of their parents.
- If peace comes to northern Uganda, more than one third of the IDP population will begin to move out of the camps spontaneously.

**FAFO, September 2005, pg. i:**

“The level of human suffering for the 1.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader is high, but even within Acholiland there is a clear hierarchy of suffering: across almost all indicators used in this study the situation for the IDP population in Pader is the worst, followed by the one in Kitgum. The overall situation in Gulu is only slightly better.

The IDPs in Northern Uganda are constantly afraid, both outside of the camps and inside them as well. They are extremely poor, with limited possibilities for cash income, almost no credit available, and very few receive remittances from relatives. They depend on humanitarian aid. A minority believe that their situation will improve. Most believe it will deteriorate. Our research shows that, in their experience, the situation can almost always become worse, and if the war continues very much longer this is precisely what will happen.

The IDP population is young, more than 50 percent are under the age of fifteen. As many as 25 percent of the children have lost one, or both of their parents, and a huge number of the women are widows. The role of men in the camps has been noted in other studies and, while to a certain degree it appears that their traditional role is vanishing, the present study indicates that that men are just as involved as women in economic activities.

There are few positive aspects about the IDP situation. One of the very few, is the school system in the camps. The report indicates that there is an educational system in the camps that is working. This should be taken into consideration while planning for return.

The IDPs are effectively displaced from their homes, but their displacement is only a short geographical distance. If a peace comes to Northern Uganda, as many as one third of the IDP population, or approximately 400,000 people, may start moving out of the camps spontaneously. Another third will move if some assistance is given, while a final third will remain in the camps, at least for a while. The implications are that assistance providers will have to plan for at least three scenarios that may take place at more or less the same time and place.”

### **IDPs in Adjumani District (September 2005)**

- Patterns of displacement in Adjumani found to be from the areas bordering Gulu District
- Main reason for displacement insecurity
- A majority of IDPs found to be living with relatives or friends

### **IOM, September 2005:**

"As no coherent and systematic registration took place before April 2005, IDP numbers remained unclear and the humanitarian situation in Adjumani district not adequately documented, hence hindering adequate support and protection of the rights of the IDP in accordance with the national IDP policy.

In 2005, the Government of Uganda (GoU) and district authorities in Adjumani requested the Danish Assistance to the Self-Reliance Strategy (DASS), present and operational in Adjumani since year 1999, to support an IDP registration exercise in the district. As the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had been similarly requested by the GoU and the UN Agencies to support IDP registration exercises in Northern Uganda, cooperation was agreed, with DASS as the lead agency and IOM providing extensive technical support. The Registration Project was implemented between April-September 2005.

The IDP registration form and the methodology was developed using the models from Darfur,

Sudan, developed and used by IOM, WFP and its implementing partners. Inputs were gathered and the registration form and methodology were adapted in order to fit the local context in Adjumani, Uganda.

Information dissemination was conducted on two levels; towards the authorities and towards the IDPs. During all these meetings greatest emphasis was made to make the participants understand the importance of only including IDPs in the registration exercise and that the registration would not be followed by any immediate assistance. This message was understood, accepted and supported by the participants, which was crucial for performing the registration exercise.

The first part of the registration involved a Head Count exercise, which was done all over the district within one week. The second part of the registration was interviews for filing the registration forms. As it was agreed with Adjumani district, five computers were installed in the Planning Unit in which the database was installed. Data entry was completed by August 15th 2005.

The IDP Registration performed at 29 registration sites enabled a good coverage of the area of Adjumani district. In total 10,222 household with 41,005 members were registered and identified as IDPs. The average household size was found to comprise of 4 family members. The IDP population in Adjumani district were found to be predominantly displaced within the same Sub County as where they originated from. For example, of the IDP households that originated from Pakele, 76.2% are displaced within the same Sub County. In general, the pattern of displacement in Adjumani district was found to be from the areas bordering with Gulu district, with movements towards central areas of Adjumani. The main reason for displacement given by 88.5% of interviewed heads of the households was insecurity.

Another 10.2% of the heads of households stated armed conflict as their main reason. Most of the displacement happened in 2004 and 2005 (80% of registered IDP households). 67% of the IDP households were found to be living with relatives or friends, 15% had their own house/hut, 5% were renting a house, and 12% were squatting or in camp/IDP settlement. For the remaining 1% of the IDPs data were not available.

More than half of IDP population were children. 56.4% of the 41,005 registered persons were found to be between the ages 0 – 14 years old. The working age population was only 42.3%, IDP Registration in Adjumani district, Uganda, August 2005 4 and 1.3% of the IDPs was 65 years and older. The average age of the registered IDP population is 17.3 years old.

More than half of the households, 58%, are female-headed households. 62% among the female population were unemployed, with 36% stated to be unemployed and 26 % were housewife. Among the male population 48% reported unemployment. Although the total number of vulnerable persons was not so high (9%), they were found in one third of the IDP households. According to the registration results there was at least one vulnerable member in 33% of the IDP households".

# PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

## General

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### **Movement outside of displacement camps in the Acholi sub-region (June 2006)**

- Small numbers of IDPs have moved out of large camps to smaller “settlement sites,” service provision in these sites remain uneven and varied.
- While in these sites many IDPs enjoy greater access to land, other services such as education and health care are non-existent.
- A concern that humanitarian agencies are focusing on these new sites when the most vulnerable remain in larger camps.
- Restrictions on freedom of movement remain in place.

### **IDMC Overview, 2006:**

“In the Acholi districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, a number of “settlement sites” have been reported. The sites have emerged as a result of population movements from larger camps to areas closer to home villages where access to land is better and military detachments provide some security (UNOCHA, 15 May 2006, p. 3-4). Access to services in these new sites remains uneven and varied. For example, in Kitgum district an assessment in April 2006 found that while in many new settlement sites IDPs enjoyed greater access to land (still within a security perimeter), access to health services and education remained extremely poor. While some latrines exist in the new sites, open defecation was reported in all three of the sites visited. The newest settlement sites do not have schools, and none of the settlements had a police presence (Inter-Agency Assessment, April 2006). The number of those moving to new settlement sites is small in proportion to the total number displaced. As the main motivation for such movement is increased access to land, the movement does not constitute return. Service provision is poor or non-existent in new settlement sites, however conditions in existing large camps remain equally poor. Decongestion, originally intended to improve conditions in overcrowded camps by moving IDPs to smaller camps, did not have the impact the initiative sought to achieve. UNOCHA has recently observed that focus and attention of agencies has been directed at populations in new settlement sites, while often the most vulnerable remain in existing camps (UNOCHA, 17 May 2006).”

### **UNOCHA, 29 May 2006:**

“Despite ongoing population movement outside displacement camps to new settlement sites in the Acholi districts, freedom of movement has not necessarily improved. Security arrangements in the new sites remain as stringent as in the displacement camps with imposed curfew and security perimeters. Access to land has increased principally along side main roads patrolled by the UPDF. In fact, increased access to land is the main motivating factor for families to move. Living conditions have neither improved in the original displacement camps nor in the new settlements. The movement is gradual with children attending school and the elderly remaining in the displacement camps while the rest of the family sets foot in the new sites. The lack of grass for thatch roof and dry bricks will hamper the construction of new houses till the next dry season. Following assessment of new sites in Kitgum and Gulu districts, an inter-agency assessment of the 18 *decongestion* sites was carried out in Pader from 9 to 12 May. Preliminary findings confirm the trends identified in Gulu and Kitgum.”

## **IDPs move from camp to camp in Acholi region as return process continues in eastern Uganda (September 2005)**

- A number of new camps reported in Gulu district
- Satellite camp in Kitgum grows
- Return continues in eastern Uganda

**Acholi:** The leader of Paicho IDP camp in **Gulu** reported that many people had left the camp for another one about 11kms away. The movement was attributed to the presence of an army detach in the area. The emergence of a new IDP camp in St Thomas-Minakulu with about 8,050 people has been reported to the DDMC. The Bobi sub-county disaster management committee will investigate/verify and report to the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC). The population size of Ogili satellite camp in **Kitgum** needs to be verified. An assessment team comprising the District Department of Health Services (DDHS), MSF and UNICEF that visited the camp estimated a population of 6,000-7,000 and anticipated that another 2,000 people may join the camp during the next school holiday; records from the camp leadership point to close to 11,872 people, while the WFP figure for July 2005 stands at 4,256.

**Lira:** Light Force International carried out a re-verification exercise in municipal camps. Results revealed a decrease in population in all camps from April 2005 to end of September. Significant reductions were recorded in: Lira P.7 camp (from 1,175 in April to 522), Anai Church of God (from 1,804 to 1,028), Ireda (from 2,075 to 1,295), PCU (from 1,104 to 714) and Telela (from 2,569 to 1,864). The IDPs in these camps are mostly from Dokolo, Batta, Barr and Abako sub-counties, where most of the displaced population is in the process of return. NRC is piloting camp planning and design in Ogwette IDP camp in Olilim.

**Teso:** Soroti and Kaberamaido have registered about 95% return of IDPs. However more than 90% of IDPs still in Soroti are from Katakwi and Amuria district, and 20% in Kaberamaido are from Lira. The number of IDPs in Soroti and Kaberamaido camps has continued to reduce. IDPs hailing from within Kaberamaido and Soroti constantly oscillate between their villages and camps. In Katakwi, some IDPs from Obalanga main camp in Obalanga sub-county have moved to smaller camps in the interior, re-establishing camps that existed before the LRA incursion in 2003. Likewise, some IDPs in Kapelebyong camp have moved back to Airabet and Amaseniko camps. The LRA incursion in Amuria caused fresh displacement of an estimated 4,000 people to main camps in the sub-counties of Obalanga, Kuju, Orungo and Morugantuny. The chairpersons of the affected sub-counties and camp leaders were asked to register the new IDPs. Meanwhile, violence by Karimojong warriors in Ajeliek in Amuria led to IDPs from smaller camps returning to Acowa main camp in Acowa sub-county.

## **IDP movements in Teso region from June 2003 to November 2004 (February 2005)**

- In June 2003, people fled their villages as a result of LRA attack
- In March 2004, people started returning to the camps near their villages in small numbers
- In May – June 2004, IDPs returned again to camps due to Karimojong attacks in Katakwi
- In August 2004, IDPs were gradually and steadily returning to their villages
- In November 2004, IDPs started to return into the camp again due to LRA attack in Katakwi

"Trends of movement over the past one year



In June 2003, the people fled their villages as a result of LRA attack and went to live in camps in Kaberemaido, Katakwi and Soroti.

March 2004, people started returning to the camps near their villages in small numbers.

May – June 2004, IDPs returned again to the camp due to the Karimojong attack in Katakwi and also fear that LRA would again attack in June as they did previously.

August 2004, IDPs were gradually and steadily returning to their villages.

November 2004, IDPs started to return into the camp again due to LRA attack in Katakwi where lives were lost and abduction took place.

Conclusion:

Population figures were not available in most camps. There is no systematic data collection. Information is collected when it is needed by someone, no copies left behind. Even where the figures exist, they are not updated. Though the detailed population figures could not be got, it was generally noted that the children constitute a bigger population, followed by the youth and finally the adults. In all the categories, it was again noted that the females were more than the males. The respondents said that this is as a result of many young men joining the auxiliary forces, many of them die during war times and are also being killed by the Karimojong

The population between 18-49 years of age are engaged in agriculture. Most IDPs have left the camps within Kaberemaido but there are more IDPs in Anyara camp. The reason being that Anyara camp hosts IDPs from Lira and Katakwi district bordering Kaberemaido. These borders are feared to be hiding areas for the LRA. These IDPs come from Katakwi (Morungatuny and Orungo) Lango (Bata, Abako)."(GoU, 28 February 2005)

#### **Night Commuters' pattern of displacement (May 2004)**

- At around five o'clock, children are bathed and dressed, and a meal is prepared
- By six o'clock, the sun is just hanging on the horizon, and the trickle has become a stream. The children begin to run to urban centers.
- Thousands who used to sleep by street lamps and in doorways, crowding the streets of Gulu town, now sleep in large dormitory tents and sheds in shelters
- Sunrise in Gulu lights up a refreshed stream of children heading in the opposite direction from their shelters, to home and school

"The nightly trek for protection begins in a small family village like that of Paul's, just about two kilometers from the town of Gulu. Here the family tend their fertile land by day, never venturing further than a shout from the cluster of huts. [...]

At around five o'clock, the children are bathed and dressed, and a meal is prepared. They pack blankets into hessian bags, and walk from their village to the main road, where they join a trickle of other children, and mothers with babies, walking to town.

By six o'clock, the sun is just hanging on the horizon, and the trickle has become a stream. The children begin to run in spurts. Some WFP trucks rumble down the road, and several army patrols in trucks and on foot. Dust swirls around as people converge on the main road from tracks through the shivering tall grass. Small children are carried by older children, or ride on the centre bar of bicycles.

UNICEF is supporting several of the centres that have sprung up to shelter children in the towns of Gulu and Lira. Thousands who used to sleep by street lamps and in doorways, crowding the streets of Gulu town, now sleep in large dormitory tents and sheds. They are counted upon

entering and leaving, fed, given basic medical attention, and secured by armed guards who patrol the perimeters. [...]

Sunrise in Gulu lights up a refreshed stream of children heading in the opposite direction from their shelters, to home and school. These children are lucky in some way because they slept beyond the prevailing fear. Most children in Gulu and Lira cannot even be reached by aid workers for basic health care because of fear of attack by the LRA." (UNICEF, 28 May 2004)

### **Recognizable change in the system and consequences of abduction and abductees (2003)**

- Number of people abducted to carry loot is increasing
- More children manage to escape than before due to the forced mobility of the rebels
- Abductions have a terrible impact even on those who are not abducted
- Children travel into the towns, Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader, nightly from surrounding areas

"There is a recognizable change in the system and consequences of abduction and abductees since the return of the LRA to Uganda in June 2002. The number of people abducted to carry loot is increasing, yet the majority of the adult abductees-some 2,000 from June 2002 to early 2003-are used as porters and released by the rebels.

More children manage to escape than before, due to the forced mobility of the rebels-a result of encounters with the UPDF. Frequent movements also meant that the new recruits received less military training. Most captives were not taken to now-abandoned camps in Sudan (where they were trained before), but were kept with LRA units in Uganda-and the familiar surroundings made it easier for abductees to escape. UNICEF estimated, based on interviews with escaped children, that some 500 abductees were taken to Sudan in 2002-a far smaller proportion of the abductees than previously [...]

"These abductions have a terrible impact even on those who are not abducted. Thousands of children still live at home, but fearing LRA abduction, travel into the towns, Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader, nightly from surrounding areas to sleep on verandas, in the bus park, on church grounds, and in local factories before returning home the next morning. These children are known locally as "night commuters." In early February 2003, more than 1,000 children were sleeping each night in Gulu town, and about 3,000 people, the vast majority unaccompanied children, sought safety at Lacor hospital outside of Gulu. By May 2003, the number had tripled, to 13,400 children staying in six buildings in and around Gulu, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Gulu.

Adults usually stayed in their homes to protect their property during LRA raids. Adults abducted by the LRA are generally kept for short periods to help carry the looted goods, and then released. For children who are abducted, captivity can last for years." (HRW, 15 July 2003, p 18)

# PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

## Physical security

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### **Military operations, ongoing violence and human rights abuses lead to further displacement in Karamoja (January 2007)**

- Increase in military operations as part of disarmament plan from March 2006 to date
- Security situation declining
- Forceful disarmament causes serious human rights violations against civilian population
- Intensification of disarmament causes direct confrontations with the Kajamorong warriors
- Ongoing violence and human rights abuses lead to further displacement

#### **UN, 30 November 2006, Pg 9:**

“In Karamoja however, there has been no recognisable improvement in the security situation with already over 400 incidents recorded between January and August 2006.”

#### **OHCHR, 23 November 2006**

“From 29 October to 15 November, the report indicates, there were at least 55 civilians killed, including women and children. There were also 68 arbitrary arrests, 14 cases of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, the rape of one woman and the burning or destruction of over 200 homesteads, resulting in the displacement of over 500 persons, in various locations in Kotido district, Karamoja. In retaliatory attacks by armed Karimojong during the same period, an unknown number of Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) soldiers, one teacher and one policeman were reported killed, with over 700 displaced from their homes following looting.”

#### **Government of Uganda, January 2007 , Pg 12-13:**

“After the February 2006 Presidential elections, disarmament in Karamoja acquired a new dimension in which military interventions took centre stage in a bid to rid Karamoja of illegal arms and ammunition. As the implementation of the KIDDP which emphasised voluntary disarmament gathered pace, some limited successes with regards to voluntary gun collection was registered. For example, a total of 400 guns were voluntarily surrendered Nakapiripirit district alone by August 2006. However, road ambushes and revenge killings also continued throughout much of Karamoja.[...]. The continued raids and revenge raids have been used by the UPDF to justify the introduction of ‘Cordon, Search and Disarm’ operations, which started in May 2006.

The UPDF resorted to the ‘Cordon, Search and Disarm’ strategy “*because of persistent violations*” by Karimojong warriors of conditions for restoration of Law and Order made during 21 March 2005 Moroto Workshop. The warriors were hiding illegal arms and ammunition in their places of abode.[...] The Commander of the 3rd Infantry Division of the UPDF issued a number of the guidelines for all UPDF Men and Officers in the Division to follow during forceful disarmament operations, and included: executing cordon, search and disarmament operations transparently; treating wananchi with courtesy; involving local leaders during cordon and search operations; using proportionate fire power, in case shot at; among others.

Some of these guidelines were not followed during ‘Cordon, Search and Disarm’ operations. There were reports of the UPDF allegedly rounding up people in market places and villages and

detaining all the adult men, who would be required, in exchange for their freedom, to hand over guns in their possession. Some men would send for their wives and relatives to deliver guns from their homes.[...] There were also reports that some Karimojong women would sell domestic animals to get money to buy guns to take to the military to secure the release of their husbands.[...] While there has been unanimous support to the removal of illegal arms and ammunition from Karamoja from members of the public [...] and politicians from Karamoja, allegations of widespread human rights violations during 'Cordon, Search and Disarm' military operations, which the UPDF has dismissed as unfounded, have led to calls for the UPDF to revert to voluntary disarmament approaches.

...The intensification of forceful disarmament by government in this current phase of the disarmament campaign has only led to a spiralling of not only violent inter and intra ethnic conflicts,[...] but also direct confrontations between the UPDF and armed Karimojong warriors.[...] This culminated into the infamous Lopuyo incident in Lopuyo Village, Kacheri sub-county, Kotido District of 29 October 2006, when soldiers of Yankee Battalion of the 3rd Infantry Division cordoned off the village, leading to an exchange of gun-fire in which several people were killed, including a UPDF major.

Even with widespread criticism from civil society and development partners of 'Cordon, Search and Disarm' operations in particular, and forceful disarmament in general, the UPDF intensified military operation to forcefully disarm the Karimojong.[...].”

### **Violence and displacement in Kotido district, Karamoja (November 2006)**

- OHCHR Uganda dispatched fact-finding mission to Kotido district to investigate human rights violations since October 2006
- Numerous abuses documented, including misconduct, indiscriminate and excessive use of force by UPDF and abuses on civilian population in Lopuyo and Kokodini villages during cordon and search exercises
- Failure of the government to protect population
- Karimojong harassing civilian population, 700 persons displaced

#### **OHCHR, 23 November 2006, Pg. 5-6:**

“The mission found that in the early morning of 29 October 2006, soldiers from the 405th Brigade of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) surrounded the village of Lopuyo, Kotido district, Karamoja, North Eastern Uganda, during a cordon and search exercise as part of the ongoing disarmament process. Members of the Karimojong ethnic group, a pastoralist nomadic population of the region, have in recent years used increasingly violent methods including automatic weapons to steal cattle. Various sources<sup>1</sup> indicate that between early morning of 29 October and the evening of 30 October, an exchange of fire between the army and armed Karimojong resulted in the death of 48 people. Information gathered indicates that 26 men, 13 women of various ages and 9 children were killed. According to various sources, approximately 30 UPDF soldiers also died. At least 12 other individuals were injured and testimonies of victims indicate that at least 7 men were subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and one elderly woman was raped. The soldiers are reported to have caused damage to properties which affected 166 households. Civil servants in Kotido town also reported that their houses were looted by armed Karimojong pursuing the retreating army. As a result, one child sustained gunshot wounds in the process and 702 civil servants and their dependents were displaced in the Kotido district offices.

In the evening of 10 November 2006, the UPDF surrounded the village of Kadokini, Kotido district, during a cordon and search exercise. Eyewitnesses and victims reported that the soldiers ordered the community out of their huts. UPDF tanks then drove through the village crushing and damaging properties, including huts and granaries. As a result, 50 households were affected. Following a request by the soldiers, five guns were handed over by the population. Women were then ordered inside and reportedly 68 men were arrested and taken to the army barracks. At the time of the mission, some of those detained had returned and 7 claimed to have been subject to acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Others still remained in custody. According to evidence gathered, 3 men were killed and one woman and one man were injured by bullets by soldiers during the events. In the early morning of 14 November 2006, the UPDF attacked the village of Kanawat, Kotido district. In the process, 3 men and one young girl were killed while fleeing their houses, and 3 men and one young boy were injured.

These events demonstrate the indiscriminate and excessive use of force by the UPDF and the failure of the Government of Uganda to take adequate measures to protect all persons under its jurisdiction. The actions of the UPDF do not comply with international human rights law and domestic law. The Government of Uganda has the obligation to protect persons under its jurisdiction from armed elements and to provide adequate security and human rights protection. Similarly, any methods used by the military in carrying out the disarmament process have to be in compliance with international treaties ratified and relevant constitutional provisions. Moreover, there is evidence that UPDF soldiers were responsible for destruction of property, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment, extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions, forced labour and one case of rape.” pp.2-3.

“Following the incidents of 29 October, on 30 October 2006, Karimojong armed elements pursuing the retreating army attacked Kotido Senior Quarters (houses where civil servants and their dependents reside) in Kotido town. The armed Karimojong retreated at around 5 p.m. when an army patrol approached the vicinity. Once the army had left, the attackers returned again at around 6 p.m., and the inhabitants had to flee their homes, which were eventually looted. In the course of the attack, an unnamed child was wounded by a bullet reportedly shot by one of the armed Karimojong.

The total number of persons affected as a result of the armed Karimojong attack on Senior Quarters was estimated at 702, including women and children. About 400 of those were reported to have relocated to the local government premises since 31 October 2006. The mission met with some civil servants and their dependants who were displaced and also visited the site. Doors and windows of at least 16 houses were broken and the houses looted. Four houses of civil servants (including that of the Magistrate), reportedly belonging to persons from the Karimojong community, were not looted.

The mission noted that the displaced were living in difficult conditions with poor sanitary facilities. The displaced women and children sleep in ten offices and vacate them in the morning as civil servants resume work. Many of the displaced men spend the night on verandas, in office corridors or under trees. They indicated that WFP, UNICEF and OXFAM have been supplying food, non-food items and water, but that they had not received any kind of assistance from the local authorities. Especially as civil servants, they expressed grief over the lack of assistance from the local authorities. The displaced reported that they had received a letter from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer notifying them that they should make arrangements to relocate from the Government offices at the earliest opportunity.”

## **Study reveals a need for a new humanitarian protection strategy for Uganda (December 2006)**

- Need for a narrower definition of protection to distinguish it from protection-sensitive humanitarian programming
- Agencies should not overemphasize predetermined vulnerable categories, and be open to determining vulnerability as their work unfolds
- Protection activities should be undertaken in cooperation with local actors
- Traditional protection programming, i.e. monitoring of abuses and holding to account those responsible, is still sorely lacking and requires a significant investment.

### **Overseas Development Institute, Pg. 18-19:**

#### *“The humanitarian protection framework*

• *The broad definition of protection, as adopted by many humanitarian actors, risks rendering the term meaningless. In fact, the broader the definition, the softer it gets. Recommendation: What is beginning to constitute the soft outer edge of the protection spectrum (e.g. locating a borehole in a way that minimises the risk of women being raped while collecting water), although falling within the ICRC concept of ‘complementarity’, should not be described as protection, but rather as protection-sensitive humanitarian programming.*

• *Protection-sensitive programming should not be mistaken for the far more difficult task of promoting protection through holding duty-bearers to account. The traditional core of protection programming, the monitoring of abuses and the holding to account of those responsible, is still sorely lacking and requires a significant investment of effort and resources. In terms of the UN agencies, OHCHR is best placed to lead on such work.*

*Recommendation: Organisations should have people with specific skills in protection work, together with the necessary budgets. The UN Country Team should promote OHCHR’s role in holding government to account, with active support from the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator. The latter should also press the government to reduce its intimidation of humanitarian actors, and make recourse to higher bodies such as the UN Security Council should such pressure prove fruitless.*

• *The over-emphasis on pre-determined vulnerable categories results in many needs not being addressed. The considerable reluctance before 2004 to engage with the protection needs of the community as a whole, and the long-standing refusal to consider the UPDF and its auxiliaries as perpetrators, has in many instances fed into the overall pattern of protection problems. Arising from the restricted understanding of who the perpetrators and victims are, there remains a risk that, if a peace agreement is reached in Juba, it will be widely assumed that the need for protection work is substantially reduced or removed. This would be a mistake: there is a long way to go before northern Uganda is fully demilitarised (including a comprehensive demobilisation process), and until this happens a range of very immediate protection threats remain [...].*

#### *Attracting international attention*

• *The humanitarian response was largely triggered by the intervention of Jan Egeland in late 2003. Generally, major humanitarian actors and donors lack independent critical analysis (or budgets).*

*Recommendation:* Humanitarian actors who are serious about protection should be pursuing their own situation analyses, working with concerned local actors and lobbying donors for increased funding for protection work. Furthermore, it is critical that the members of the UN Country Team forward such information to their respective headquarters.

#### *Protection roles and responsibilities in ongoing conflict situations*

- *International NGOs and the UN are not well placed to conduct serious protection monitoring activities in ongoing conflict situations, primarily because they are rarely in the most affected places at the most difficult times.*

- *Even if INGOs and the UN were in place, their capacity to identify the less visible forms of human rights abuse – such as rape – needs to be informed by an understanding of the particular cultural context.* This kind of understanding is rarely achieved by international NGOs in general, still less by humanitarian actors who are in situ for only limited periods of time. As such, some areas of serious human rights abuse are likely to be overlooked, particularly by those wearing a vulnerabilities lens. For example, international NGOs consistently underplay or simply ignore the issue of male rape.

*Recommendation:* Protection work needs to be undertaken not just for, but also with, local actors. Humanitarian protection organisations must establish working relations with local organisations and must provide the necessary political support to enable them to carry out protection monitoring activities when international organisations are absent due to security concerns

- *Engagement with protection issues is not optional.* In northern Uganda, the failure to denounce the IDP situation, and to base most interventions inside the camps without any corresponding efforts to analyse the camps or to resolve the causes of displacement, amounted to complicity with the government's policies and served to entrench displacement for many years.

*Recommendation:* While humanitarian actors may feel compelled to address immediate suffering, this must always go hand in hand with careful analysis of the underlying issues and calculated action to address those issues. The need to avoid further complicity is particularly critical at a time when there is talk of planned returns, some of which may not be fully voluntary.

#### *Planning and needs assessments*

Agencies need to suspend their assumptions about who exactly is most vulnerable and assess this in the light of the local context.

*Recommendation:* Humanitarian protection agencies need to seek some understanding of local context, in particular gender and generational issues, both through existing reports and informants, and through new data collection.

*A lack of analysis prior to implementing activities can compound problems.*

- *Base-line data is necessary if any quantitative analysis of the impact of protection work is to be made.*

*Recommendation:* Newly arriving agencies should avail themselves of existing reports, but also consider investing in baseline data-collection activities.

#### *Community involvement in delivering protection*

- *Egeland's success can only have been achieved in the context of many years of painstaking and largely unrewarded work conducted by local organisations to document the harsh realities of life for their fellow citizens.*

*Recommendation:* Closer attention should be paid to local actors prior to and during interventions. More extensive protection monitoring in conflict situations requires a degree of creativity around, and trust in, the use of local partner organisations. For international organizations involved in protection monitoring, careful documentation of their humanitarian activities, if presented in the right way, could go a long way to inform the outside world of the gravity of a given situation.

- *Alternative mechanisms of community involvement need to be found.* At times community members may be more willing to come to the humanitarians than the humanitarians may be to go to the community. In such instances, mechanisms can be established to ensure ongoing consultation between the two, even where the humanitarians do not have a physical presence.

#### *Coordination and leadership*

- *Public denunciation of human rights abuses places those involved at risk (both the victims and those denouncing the abuse).* Humanitarian actors wishing to get involved in this form of protection activity therefore need to make strategic alliances in order to protect themselves. This is most likely to be an issue for local and international NGOs, and these actors need to educate their donors on the importance of such work and on the leverage that donors can potentially exercise on their behalf. The protection cluster also offers the potential for inter-organisational solidarity in the face of government opposition to protection findings.”

### **Gradual improvement in security situation in Northern Uganda (November 2006)**

- Gradual improvement of security situation as a result of landmark Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed in August
- Improvement in security allowed for increased freedom of movement
- LRA capacity to abduct extremely low

#### **UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 9:**

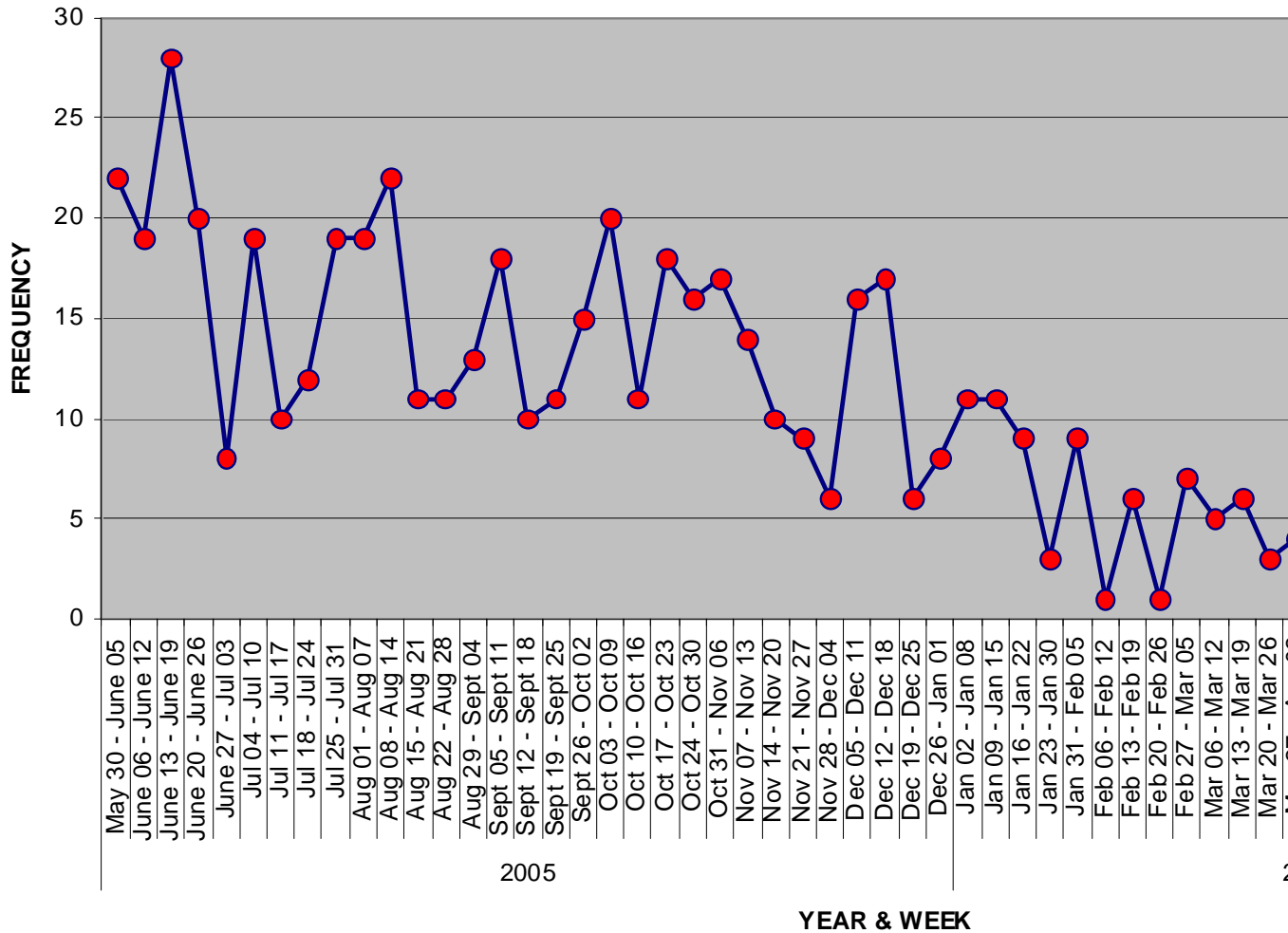
“The GoU and the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) signed a landmark Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 26 August, the first such agreement in the 20-year conflict. Significant numbers of LRA troops have converged in two assembly points in Southern Sudan as required by the agreement. Many of these combatants originally come from northern Uganda. The agreement has resulted, at least for the moment, in the further consolidation of the gradual improvement of the security situation in northern Uganda that began in January 2006 (see the graph below). In Karamoja however, there has been no recognisable improvement in the security situation with already over 400 incidents recorded between January and August 2006.

According to the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) the activities of the small mobile LRA groups (abductions, raiding for food) registered before the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement were aimed at self-preservation. A UNDSS report [...] for the period of 1 January to 31 July 2006 indicates that most LRA abductions were on temporary basis, where



people were abducted to transport loot obtained during raids; and that on average, there was one permanent abduction for every ten temporary abductions.”

## SUMMARY OF LRA ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN UGANDA FROM 1st JUNE 2005 TO 30th JUNE 2006



### Lack of civilian police still an acute problem (November 2006)

- Efforts to restore civilian police yield limited progress
- 1700 Special Police Constable (SPCs) deployed to Lira, however lack of training and resources for new police a concern
- Rights violations against IDPs by Ugandan Army and LDUs continue to be committed with impunity

**OCHA, November 2006, Pg.12:**

“Efforts to restore civilian police presence in northern Uganda have yielded limited progress. 1,700 Special Police Constables (SPCs) and Anti Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) have reportedly been deployed in Lira return areas and in areas threatened by Karimojong incursions in Katakwi. While this is a positive step, it belies the priority of the restoration of an adequate civilian justice, law and order system throughout northern Uganda. In addition, the lack of adequate training, resources and equipment for the new police to be deployed to northern Uganda remains of concern. The absence of fully functioning judicial and penal systems in Pader, Kaabong and Nakapiripirit constitute chronic human rights challenges. Human rights violations especially against IDPs by UPDF and members of the Local Defence Units is another serious human rights challenge in Acholiland, Lango and Teso sub-regions, compounded by the persistent impunity of the perpetrators.”

**Local defense units commit abuses against civilians (May 2006)**

- Local defense units (LDUs), otherwise known as ‘local militias,’ commit abuses against civilians, often with impunity.
- Often LDUs are recruited from IDP population itself, which violates IDP policy, and raises concern about the militarisation of IDP camps
- LDUs have a reputation of being undisciplined and lack training

**IRIN, 23 May 2006:**

“At least 10 people were killed and 14 wounded when a local militiaman opened fire at a camp for internally displaced people in northern Uganda, an army spokesman said on Tuesday.

The assailant, a member of a civilian-protection militia known as Amuka, randomly fired on people on Monday in Ogwete camp in Lira District. The assailant escaped.

"These people were drinking beer before they developed a quarrel, and this man ran amok before shooting whomever was in his sight, killing 10 people instantly," said the spokesman, Lt Chris Magezi. "We have recorded 14 injuries, and they have been admitted at Lira hospital." The army had detained two of the militiaman's colleagues for interrogation. Local media reports said the incident was sparked by a disagreement over a woman.

The Amuka militia was established by the government to guard villages in northern Ugandan against attacks by rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a brutal insurgency that has killed thousands and led to the displacement of almost 2 million people during the past two decades.”

**RLP/ IDMC, March 2006, pg. 23:**

“A major concern with regard to the area of military protection was the deployment of LDUs throughout the conflict zone, formed following an increase in LRA attacks in the aftermath of ‘Operation Iron Fist’ in 2002. In order to respond to the increased levels of violence, the government recruited LDUs, until then a civil force under the police, and encouraged the formation of local militia such as the Amuka and Arrow Boys under the command of the UPDF.

A number of concerns were raised regarding the role of LDUs. First, numerous informants noted that it was difficult to differentiate between regular UPDF soldiers and auxiliary forces and, as such, to determine who was responsible for the protection of IDP camps or, indeed, who was violating the rights of camp residents [...]. As one informant said, “Tribal militia are the ones who are guarding the IDPs with some pockets of UPDF in commanding aspects” [...]. Another

individual, when asked who was responsible for violating the rights of IDPs, said, "It's a mixed bag. It can be LDUs [or] traditional UPDF."<sup>95</sup> He further stated,

It became problematic when the government denied responsibility for acts of human rights abuses by LDUs, saying "LDUs are not our responsibility." The high court established that the UPDF is liable because they provide them with guns, etc. That ruling has not been challenged. The LDUs are auxiliary forces[...].

Second, and as this statement illustrates, informants also raised the issue of the legitimacy of the LDUs and militia groups. While it was stated by some informants that the LDUs are under the institutional command of the UPDF[...], others said that responsibility for LDUs and local militia is ambiguous, and therefore their legal status is unclear [...]. This ambiguity was confirmed by the nature of the remuneration of the LDUs: while officers of the UPDF are paid a salary and given field allowances drawn directly from the Ministry of Defence budgets, LDUs and the different militia groups are only paid allowances amounting to Ug Sh 60,000 per month (approximately USD 33) drawn from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and channelled through the Ministry of Defence.

Third, numerous informants expressed concern over the implications of using a force drawn from among IDPs, which is akin to having IDPs protecting themselves. It raises the more complex issue of the militarisation of camps, for instance with off-duty LDUs carrying their guns in the camps [...]. Thus, while the relative improvement in the security situation within the IDP camps is due in large part to the deployment of auxiliary forces, the use of LDUs and local militia for civilian protection is problematic. The insufficient training and lack of proper remuneration and supervision of these forces has led to numerous human rights concerns, and there is growing concern about what will happen to these forces once the conflict is over – will they be incorporated into the national army and police or will they return to civilian life? If they are to return to civilian life, what plans are in place for their demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration into society?"

### **Government army commits abuses in northern Uganda with impunity (September 2005)**

- Government military personnel responsible for abuses not prosecuted
- Government military commits multitude of abuses against civilian protection in northern Uganda
- Current protection and accountability structures within IDP camps grossly inadequate

"The government has failed to meaningfully prosecute military personnel responsible for abuses or otherwise discipline its forces in the north. These forces have committed deliberate killings, routine beatings, rapes and prolonged arbitrary detentions of civilians to such an extent that there is extreme resentment against their presence. Most complaints of army abuse result in no action. Even when action is taken, it is usually transfer of the offending soldier or unit, the dispersal of a small sum of money for "medical costs," or the beating of the soldier in the barracks.

Human Rights Watch found that the 11th Battalion of the UPDF based in Cwero and Awach camps of Gulu district committed numerous deliberate killings and beatings of civilians during the months in 2005 when it was assigned to those camps; it was transferred out of the area after numerous international complaints.

The current protection and accountability structures within the camps and within the

army are grossly inadequate—charges the Ugandan government denies. In effect the safety of the camp population rests with the local army commander: where he does not tolerate undisciplined behavior, the level of abuse is far less. Unfortunately most commanders, up to the highest levels, show far too much tolerance for abuses, despite lip service given to respect for human rights.

The importance of army discipline is even greater because in most displaced persons camps the army post is the only government presence—aside from local councilors who are often intimidated by the army. Police are far too few to address the widespread criminal acts committed by UPDF soldiers (and civilians) in the more than eighty displaced persons camps of northern Uganda. The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), a government body, is almost entirely absent from northern Uganda, with only four of its one hundred officers placed there.

While increased police and UHRC presence could provide other avenues of redress for the population against government army abuses, these organizations would need the consistent backing of higher authorities, up to President Museveni, to affirm their mandates to investigate and prosecute soldiers in the northern “war zone.” The active involvement of civilian officials and the high command of the army in efforts to end impunity could radically improve the situation. In Bobi camp, Gulu district, training in 2004 of local leaders by a Ugandan human rights nongovernmental organization helped build confidence and understanding in the displaced population on what their rights were and how to complain about abuses. A high-ranking Ugandan army official was invited to and attended the workshop. His subsequent intervention with the local battalion helped to halt recurring sexual abuse in the camp. Such interventions are rare, however.

An international protective presence in the camps is just beginning—again, very late. Some protection activities were undertaken by UN agencies such as UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Activity (OCHA) and nongovernmental relief organizations in 2003 but their protection efforts remain a work in progress. The May 2005 decision of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to deploy several human rights monitors in northern Uganda is to be welcomed. It should make assistance to local nongovernmental rights organizations its priority.

The international community and the Ugandan government must act now to radically overhaul the protection and accountability structures in the north to ensure that, in peace or war, the continuing suffering of the people of northern Uganda is alleviated" (HRW, September 2005).

### **Widespread human rights violations against IDPs continue (June 2005)**

- The LRA have been active in all counties in Gulu throughout May 2005
- LRA rebels continue to move in small groups of five to 15
- IDPs hacked to death in May 2005
- No security incidents were reported in Soroti, Katakwi and Kaberamaido during May 2005

" Following the disruption of the peace talks and the surrender of Brig. Kolo, there has been a marked decline in security in the Acholi sub-region and northern parts of Lira and Apac districts in the Lango sub-region. The LRA has dared infiltrating suburbs of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader towns,

often involving murders, abduction of civilians and targeted attacks on UPDF detachments. There have been serious ambushes on the roads and a number of incidents where civilians, especially women, have been maimed or murdered by the LRA whilst working in their fields. Night commuter numbers in 20 sites in Gulu have increased from 11,000 in February to 18,000 in mid-April (a total of 41,000 in Gulu, Kitgum and Kalongo towns), due to increased LRA activities around the town. The UPDF has responded by restricting the daily movements of IDPs from the camps to the fields to between 0900hrs and 1700hrs, because of an increased fear of LRA attacks. There have also been allegations of some UPDF soldiers harassing/killing/arresting civilians found outside the IDP camps."(UNOCHA, 22 June 2005)

"Gulu - The LRA have been active in all counties throughout the month. On 5 May at 9:00 a.m., the LRA attacked a group of camp residents from Koch Goma who were working in their fields about 3km from the camp. The rebels clobbered 20 IDPs to death, using the victims' agricultural tools. There is a perception of increased insecurity in Gulu and aid workers were less confident to travel along the Gulu-Kitgum road.

There were a number of incidents peppered through the month including the killing of two UPDF soldiers near Opit on the 9 May and of two LRA by the UPDF near Paicho on 16 May. On 15 May, the UPDF apprehended a group of about 10 LRA who were reportedly operating on the outskirts of Gulu town for most of the month, often abducting people close to Gulu University. Four LRA were wounded and one of the abductees killed. On 24 May, a UPDF soldier allegedly raped two women from Palwong parish and attempted to rape a third woman He has been arrested. There were periods of nightly gunfire in Gulu town.

Kitgum – Rebels were active in the north and western part of the district particularly the areas of Lukung, Madi Opei, Agoro, Palabek, Palabek Kal, Padibe, Lalak and Lamwo hills, with more casualties reported on the LRA side. On three occasions, the LRA rebels raided the suburbs of Kitgum town, reportedly targeting food and abducting civilians. The army successfully repulsed an attempt by the LRA to infiltrate Potika IDP camp. An attempted LRA ambush on an OXFAM hired six-vehicle convoy between Padibe and Lukung was also unsuccessful.

LRA rebels continue to move in small groups of five to 15 and are reported to be criss-crossing between Pader, Gulu and Kitgum. Two rebels surrendered to the UPDF at Lacekocot and Lukung respectively.

Pader - The security situation remained highly unpredictable, with the attacks concentrated in the eastern part of the district, in and around Patongo, Adilang and Kalongo. Some of the major incidents included that of 5 May when suspected LRA rebels ambushed a truck on the main Kalongo-Patongo road, killing five passengers and injuring many others. There was also a raid on Patongo IDP camp on 13 May and other security incidents reported on 14, 16, 18, and 24 May. Security authorities feared that road travel was becoming more risky because in all road ambushes, travellers came across rebels as they were crossing the main roads.

Teso – No security incidents were reported in Soroti, Katakwi and Kaberamaido during the month, although the frequent LRA incidents in neighbouring Lira district influenced the movement of IDPs in Teso, especially those displaced in the border areas. Furthermore, the returning IDPs fear the sparsely populated rural areas because they believe there are individuals with small arms that pose a security risk.

Lira - There was an increase in LRA movement and activities southwards, a pattern not observed since the beginning of the year. LRA activities have been focused mostly in Otuke County and parts of Erute North. But in May there were four confirmed incidents (7, 15, 16 and 19 May) within the same areas in Erute South and southern parts of Moroto County. There were also many other

unconfirmed reports of rebel movements within these two counties, in the sub counties of Aloi, Orum, Adwari, Apala, Amugo and Ogur.

According to the army, the rebels are forced to move southwards in search of food, which is now very scarce in the Northern part of Lira where most of the population is in the camps and have done very little cultivation. It is noted that the security in Lira depends on the ability of the army to 'contain' the LRA within Pader or Gulu (through northern Apac). The army reported that small groups had all been pushed back to Pader, although their presence was still observed along the border areas. "(UNOCHA, 27 June 2005)

### **IDP women in Karamajong affected districts suffer beating and rape (June 2005)**

- Women harassed and abused by drunken husbands and soldiers

"Protection problems facing women in IDP sites were wife/partner beating, abandonment by husband, being harassed by drunk men, rape including marital rape, sexual exploitation by soldiers and their partners taking money earned from local brew, which in effect result in other problems

Early pregnancy, abandonment by sexual partner/spouse after pregnancy, harassment by drunk men, sexual abuse and exploitation, lack of basic necessities including tuition that resulted in girls opting for relationships with men who seemed to be willing to provide. But after men abandon the girls, an estimation of about 10 –50 girls were reported to be affected per camp.

While women and girls faced the above problems, there were no community based protection committees for them. The only Committees that women acknowledged to be existent in some camps were family guidance and counselling groups initiated by CCF [Christian Children Fund]to teach women their rights."(GoU, 15 June 2005)

### **The extent of the mine problem in the north is unclear (June 2005)**

- Three decades of conflicts have left unknown numbers of mines and unexploded ordnances (UXO)
- Landmine and UXO contamination primarily affects the border regions with DRC and Sudan
- Sporadic mine usage by the LRA
- Systematic mine clearance in the north is not possible for security reasons
- Ad hoc clearance is carried out by the Ugandan People's Defense Force

" Uganda has mine/Unexploded Ordnances (UXO) contamination problems resulting from successive conflicts over the past three decades, including the conflict-affected areas in northern Uganda. The full extent of landmine/UXO contamination in the north will be known once access to those areas has improved. Landmine and UXO contamination primarily affects the border regions with DRC and Sudan, but there is also UXO contamination in the interior of the country. The available data indicate that the total number of landmine/UXO casualties to date in the country is approximately 2,000. Data gathered by AVSI shows that 422 landmine/UXO survivors were treated in its rehabilitation centre in Gulu town and an additional 66 survivors identified in 2004 are still awaiting treatment. "(UNOCHA, 22 June 2005)

"1. The nature of contamination in the different regions of Uganda varies significantly. The extent of the mine problem that exists primarily in the north is unclear due to the sporadic nature of mine usage by the LRA and the overall security environment. An estimated 80% of the population in the northern districts are confined to camps to protect them from the LRA, which further limits the knowledge and exposure of local inhabitants for the time being. Systematic mine clearance in the north is not possible due to the sporadic, spot nature of LRA mine usage. *Ad hoc* clearance is carried out by the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) engineers, though with inadequate procedures and equipment. UXO are the main problem in the western region and, to a lesser degree, in the center of the country. Due to insufficient surveillance mechanisms, it is unclear how many victims of UXO have occurred in the West though anecdotal evidence is plentiful and UXO now impede the return of IDPs to their homes.

2. Mine risk education (MRE) is offered in both the north and the west by non-governmental organizations working with district officials and the UPDF, and in coordination with the Ministry of Health in the north. Activities began as a preventative measure in response to growing numbers of victims. These efforts have taken place mostly in isolation without reference to existing international standards, drawing on local capacities in a manner reminiscent of early mine action efforts in other mine-affected countries.

3. The surveillance of mine victims is not comprehensive. Reporting of deaths is limited and no central data gathering method or repository exists. Available statistics in the north show 385 people suffered amputations as a result of mine or UXO accidents between 1999 and 2003, the largest single recorded cause of disability in the region. While some emergency medical and physical rehabilitation assistance exists, coverage is limited and little follow-on vocational or psycho-social care is available."(UN, 30 July 2004)

### **Night commuters exposed to sexual harassment and rape (February 2005)**

- Most parents are not accompanying their children to the sleeping spaces
- In Kitgum, more night commuters are coming from nearby IDP camp to town centres
- The IDP children are fleeing ongoing insecurity and threat of abduction by the LRA

"Girls, women, boys and men amongst the night commuters and staff report that sexual harassment and rape continue to occur along transit routes and in sleeping spaces in the town centers. Most youth report that they are still walking either alone or with a small group of other youth. A small percentage of the night commuters are adults and parents, but generally, most parents are still not accompanying their children to the sleeping spaces. The roads that lead to the sleeping centers remain unlit and perilous for the unaccompanied children. In Kitgum, more night commuters responded that they are coming from nearby IDP camps; in previous investigations, they listed the villages as their primary point of origin. This is attributed to the lack of sleeping spaces in the camps as well as the ongoing insecurity and threat of abduction by the LRA. The night commuters remain at a high risk of exposure to infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy. Access to sanitation and clean water at several of the sites either remains scarce, or has become altogether absent."(Women's Commission, 1 February, p. 6)

### **Sexual and gender based violence in Teso IDP camps (February 2005)**

- Widespread domestic violence
- Poverty, drunkenness and idleness in IDP camps

"Domestic violence was reported in all camps visited. [During inter-agency mission to Teso region in November 2004] These are in the form of wife beating, family neglect/abandonment. Marital rape was mentioned by a number of women who revealed that their husbands returned home drunk to forced them into sex. It is a common practice for spouses to get new partners in the camp so they abandon their wives with children. This is attributed to poverty, drunkenness and idleness.

Sexual Harassment was prominent in camps visited, except in Kasilo camp in Soroti.

Ø Sexual Exploitation was reported in the camps and attributed to poverty, women in most camps exchange sex for money. Majority of the girls are involved in camps visited. It is more important in the urban camps compared to the rural camps. The main perpetrators are said to be businessmen and soldiers.

Ø Rape was reported in the camps visited. This is prevalent in camps adjacent to army detachments. Girls in Orungo camp reported this strongly."(GoU, 28 February 2005)

### **Sexual and Gender Based Violence in IDP camps (June 2005)**

- Rape and marital rape perpetrated by UPDF, husbands and strangers
- Child sexual abuse, defilement and incest, perpetrated by uncles, friends, teachers and soldiers
- Physical assault, perpetrated by intimate friends, soldiers, strangers and spouses
- Transactional sex is considered to have increased to serious levels as a response to food insecurity
- Forty-one percent of night commuting children in Gulu report that they know someone who has been offered money for sex

"Nature and forms of SGBV in Pabbo:[ Hosting approximately 63,000 people] The three most common forms sexual and gender based violence identified in Pabbo camp, in order of reported frequency, are found to be the following:

Rape and marital rape perpetrated by UPDF, husbands and strangers. Rape and marital rape are defined as forcing a woman into sex either by the husband or any other person. Research demonstrated that men in Pabbo do not regard marital rape as an offense.

Child sexual abuse, defilement and incest, perpetrated by uncles, friends, teachers and soldiers. This form of violence is defined as any sexual relations / interaction with a child.

Physical assault, perpetrated by intimate friends, soldiers, strangers and spouses. Female interviewees in the camp reported battering by their husbands, especially when drunk.

2. Most Vulnerable Groups: Based on the data compiled from both the Police Post and the Health Center in Pabbo, results suggests that the girls aged between 13 and 17 are most frequently reported as survivors of SGBV, followed by women aged from 19 to 36, then younger children aged from 4 to 9. Girls are found to be most vulnerable to STIs, mental, emotional and health illnesses.

3. The Magnitude and causes: It is difficult to estimate the actual extent of SGBV incidences in the camp. Actual incidence of sexually inappropriate behavior in Pabbo camp is estimated to be much higher than the cases reported. The population remains silent about the occurrence of SGBV due to the resistance to recognizing the phenomenon among the population, lack of awareness or lack in confidence that cases will be handled sensitively. There is no one single cause for SGBV in the camp. Poor living conditions, expose women and girls to vulnerabilities, lack of civilian security creates a weak protective environment. These circumstances are compounded by a general lack of awareness of the issues. The research



shows that triggers of SGBV in Pabbo include alcohol abuse, cultural practices like wife inheritance and poverty. Survivors of SGBV in Pabbo IDP camp have received very limited forms of socio – economic support. They lack income-generating activities and resort to transactional sex bartering as a means of income generation and survival.

4. Constraints that impede reporting: Survivors are perceived as being “losers”, deserving of abuse, fear stigmatization, lack of confidentiality in the handling of cases, distrust of authorities, community is ignorant of the procedures, low number of law enforcement personnel, high costs involved.”(Gulu District Sub-working group on SGBV, 15 June 2005)

“The incidence of transactional sex is considered to have increased to serious levels as a response to food insecurity and deprivation. This is particularly worrying among girls and child headed households who are reported to be engaging increasingly in transactional sex as a means of survival. Reports also indicate a significant increase in the organised commercial sex trade in IDP camps and urban areas of northern Uganda, a trade that is increasingly victimising displaced children and orphans.” (CSOPNU, 10 December 2004, p. 9):

“Physical and economic insecurity means that women and girls are also vulnerable to sexual exploitation in return for favours, food, security or money. Forty-one percent of night commuting children in Gulu report that they know someone who has been offered money for sex. Soldiers and local defence units (LDU) take “temporary wives” and girlfriends when stationed near IDP camps. These women are often abandoned when soldiers are re-assigned. Unmarried mothers face social stigma and exclusion and are at risk of falling into a downward spiral of further sexual exploitation.”(OCHA, 11 November 2004, pp.33-34)

### **Insufficient internal security in IDP camps**

- Only three permanent police officers in camp hosting 68,000 IDPs
- Local police are not capable of maintaining order within the camps

"Internal camp security is theoretically maintained by the district police, who handle cases of petty theft, assault, drunkenness, etc. In total, however, Uganda’s entire police force numbers only 13,000 personnel – far too few to serve as more than a token presence. In the northern districts, the number of police is barely adequate to provide security in the urban centers, much less in the far flung and remote camps. In the Pabbo camp, with 68,000 residents, there are only three permanent police officers. IDPs in all camps visited acknowledged that local police are not capable of maintaining order within the camps, with most of the work falling to the camp leadership committees or vigilante justice.”(IOM, 31 May 2005)

### **IDPs massacred in camps (May 2004)**

- At least 170 people, including 55 civilians, 108 rebels and six government soldiers were killed in May 2004
- In Kitgum in northern Uganda, 20 people were abducted and two vehicles set ablaze in three separate attacks
- LRA rebels for the first time launched an attack in Apala village in Lira district where at least 18 people were killed
- In Soroti, rebels killed 14 people in an attack on an IDP camp

"At least 170 people, including 55 civilians, 108 rebels and six government soldiers were killed in May during battles with Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in northern Uganda, the army said on Tuesday.

"We lost six soldiers and nine injured during the same month, while at least 55 civilians were killed by the rebels in different parts of the region. Our forces killed 105 rebels," Lieutenant Paddy Ankunda told AFP from Gulu, quoting the army's monthly report.

He particularly cited the attack on Pagaka displaced persons' camp, where 23 civilians were killed on May 17, and 26 at another raid on Lokodi on May 20, all in Gulu district, although aid agencies put the death toll in Lokodi at 42.

During operations in the region, 144 abductees, mainly children, were rescued, while 51 rebels, including 11 commanders, surrendered to the army." (AFP, 1 June 2004).

"The killing of civilians together with LRA rebels and UPDF forces continues in the north. On 29th October, UPDF reportedly killed the deputy to Joseph Kony, Brigadier Charles Tabuley. The battles took place in Teso region in northeastern Uganda. Many other LRA rebels were as well killed. [...]

Five days after one of the LRA leader, Brigadier Tabukey was killed, the army reportedly killed 19 LRA rebels in Kalai in northern Uganda. The army also reported to have rescued 15 rebel captives in Kalaki in a separate battle.

In another incident, heavily armed Karamajong warriors of the Dodoth ethnic group on 30th October attacked and killed about 50 Local Defence Units (LDUs) and UPDF soldiers in a fierce fight at Kaloto, about 15 kilometers west of Kabong, Kotido district in northeastern Uganda. Following the attack, about 20 soldiers had returned but without their guns or any injuries. The army is therefore investigating whether some of the LDUs connived with their fellow Karamajong to kill the soldiers. The soldiers killed are said to be part of a group of 74 LDUs and soldiers who had been dispatched to Kaloto to arrest 20 others who had deserted the army with guns.

The population in the north continues to be targeted by the rebels. In Kitgum in northern Uganda, 20 people were abducted and two vehicles set ablaze in three separate attacks by suspected rebels of the LRA. The abductions took place in Westwad Kitgum town council, Adye village, Layamo subcounty and Chua county, 38 kilometers east of Kitgum town.

On 31st October, LRA rebels for the first time launched an attack in Apala village in Lira district where at least 18 people were killed and many more abducted. An army unit has since been deployed to the scene to investigate the actual number of deaths. And in Soroti, rebels killed 14 people in an attack on an IDP camp. The attack took place in Anyara subcounty in Kabermaido district. In another incident, three people including a UPDF soldier were killed when a landmine hit their pick-up truck in Kuju Sub County in Katakwi district. UPDF 3rd division spokesman said the rebels who planted the landmine were part of the group terrorizing residents in Katakwi and Kabermaido district." (UN OCHA, 5 November 2003)

### **Unrecognised camps easy targets for rebels (May 2004)**

- Few, if any UPDF soldiers or local militia protecting the unrecognised camps
- Ongoing appeal among the humanitarian community to the GoU and the army to provide adequate security for both recognized and unrecognised camp

"An issue of growing concern is that of unrecognised camps in the conflict-affected districts, and particularly in the Acholi sub-region. Such camps have lately been easy targets for the LRA, as they have very few, if any UPDF soldiers or local militia protecting them. There is an ongoing appeal among the humanitarian community to the GoU and the army to provide adequate security for both recognized and unrecognised camps, as efforts continue to either remove the non-gazetted camps or to formally recognize them. Furthermore, some non-gazetted camps do not receive any humanitarian assistance and the residents are living extremely deprived lives. In Pader, for instance, there are eight non-gazetted camps with thousands of IDPs going without any form of humanitarian assistance. In Patongo (Pader), the IDP population without any assistance has risen from 8,000 to 84,000, according to Pader district authorities." (UNOCHA, 31 May 2004)

### **IDP exposed to extreme levels of violence(July 2005)**

- 40 percent of the IDPS have been abducted by the rebels
- 45 percent witnessed killing of a family member
- 23 percent physically mutilated
- The rebels have tended to view the camp populations as their enemies
- The rebels have left written demands that the IDPs must vacate the camps or face death

"The levels of exposure to violence in Northern Uganda are extremely high. The people of Northern Uganda have been exposed to an extremely high level of violence. Of the 2,585 respondents, 40 percent had been abducted by the LRA, 45 percent had witnessed the killing of a family member, and 23 percent had been physically mutilated at some point during the conflict. The extent and nature of the violence will require a variety of mechanisms to be implemented as part of a transitional justice strategy for Northern Uganda. For example, a majority of respondents (81 percent) said they wanted to speak publicly about what had happened to them, and many supported reparations measures for victims."(ICTJ, 26 July 2005)

"Although the camps were initially created to protect civilians from rebel attacks, they have now become just as much of a target for these attacks as the villages once were. As the Acholi people have been forced to crowd together in the camp, so the LRA, in their search for food and slaves, have followed them.

The Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) said recently that a major aspect of the LRA military strategy seemed to be to force IDPs out of the camps protected by the UPDF. 'According to some rumours circulating, the LRA has intention to [sic] dismantle the camps by force,' URCS said in its June situation report.

While the UPDF has attempted to protect the camps by stationing small detachments in their midst, they have found protecting such a massive displaced population spread over such a large area to be extremely difficult.

Delivering humanitarian assistance to the widely dispersed camps has also become a treacherous business. Aid convoys themselves have come under regular attack, and a number of aid workers have lost their lives in rebel ambushes. At present, only WFP has been able to establish regular aid deliveries, and it relies on a heavy UPDF military escort to provide security.

In addition, the rebels have tended to view the camp populations as their enemies, and as supporters of the government. As a result, they have, during raids, left behind written demands

that the IDPs must vacate the camps or face death. As IDPs know, however, they are just as likely to face death outside the camps as inside them.

In a recent report on the crisis in the north, the US-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) quoted a former abductee as saying the LRA did not hesitate to kill IDPs as a warning of what would happen to those who did not follow instructions.

'At one time, we went to a displaced persons camp and immediately killed three people. This was done to warn people not to stay in the camps but to move back to their villages. I don't know why these three were selected. We later abducted many children from that camp,' HRW quoted the former abductee as saying in the report, entitled: 'Abducted and Abused: Renewed Conflict in Northern Uganda.' ( UN OCHA, 15 September 2003)

### **Most LRA attacks are often after food distribution by WFP (May 2004)**

- WFP cannot stop distribution because the IDPs are dependant on this food aid
- The Pagak camp attack occurred 3 days after WFP food distribution, while the Odek attack was only days after food was distributed in Awere camp
- There is a likelihood of more attacks on IDP camps, as the grass grows taller, and scarcity for food increases

"Military deployment continues to be inadequate for most IDP camps, making the camps extremely vulnerable to constant LRA attacks. The issue of protection of IDPs in camps remains paramount in the agenda of the District.

• The assessment team witnessed massive movement of the IDPs away from Pagak camp, towards Awer camp, Alokolum camp, Keyo camp and Gulu municipality. This is evidence of fear of further LRA attacks. Guruguru and Kaladima camps have only relocated to Pagak camp hardly two years ago, as a result of LRA attacks-this memory is still fresh, and many of them would not wish to remain in an insecure camp. A family of 5 people, which was recently relocated from Lacor hospital, were all killed in this attack.

\_\_\_ The team also anticipates that many IDPs in other camps may relocate to camps they feel safer in, following these persistent LRA attacks on camps.

• The following trends are observed in the camps:

-Most LRA attacks are often after food distribution by WFP. WFP cannot stop distribution because the IDPS are dependant on this food aid. The military, basing on this knowledge and experience, should be on higher security alert after every food aid distribution. The Pagak camp attack occurred 3 days after WFP food distribution, while the Odek attack was only days after food was distributed in Awere camp where the IDPs collect their food rations.

-LRA attacks of late occur between 6.00pm- 6.30pm. The military could become more proactive during this period. The attacks on Odek, Barlonyo, and now Pagak camps are cases in point. The LRA prefers to attack at this time because the UPDF restricts movements of IDPs by around 7.30pm, therefore any movement (by LRA) after that time would raise suspicion.

• There is a likelihood of more attacks on IDP camps, as the grass grows taller, and scarcity for food increases.

• The 'Dwog Paco' programme on Radio Mega FM is said to be antagonising the IDPs/camps with the LRA since the returnees are made to mention sensitive information like names of people and locations on the radio. This programme is said to be a Government

(ISO/CMI) supported programme aimed at sensitising LRA on the need to surrender and peace." (UNOCHA, 19 May 2004)

### **Most common human rights violations (February 2004)**

- Abductions: About 22,000 people have been abducted by the LRA
- Displacement: Internal displacement has equally more than doubled over the period of Operation Iron Fist
- Child "night commuters": Furthermore, a new phenomenon of night displacement for children has since developed
- Attacks on humanitarian convoys, civilian vehicles and IDP camps
- Human rights abuses by the government

"Human rights violations are common as a result of nearly two decades of devastating conflict. The following are the most pronounced and disturbing aspects of violations in the sub-region.

a) Abductions: About 22,000 people have been abducted by the LRA and many have not been accounted for to date. They are either dead or are still in captivity. The situation grew worse from mid-2002 to date with the launch of "Operation Iron Fist," (OIF), a military operation which was intended to wipe out the LRA. In the first year of the operation abductions skyrocketed. More than 10,000 children have been abducted from June 2002 through the end of 2003 in an operation initially meant to rescue abducted children. This figure accounts for 45% of the total abductions of children in the conflict.

b) Displacement: Internal displacement has equally more than doubled over the period of Operation Iron Fist, from 450,000 displaced people in early 2002 to now close to 1,200,000. Of this number, 920,000 are in 62 camps in the Acholi region. People in the camps have no access to their land so they do not have any possibilities for increased economic and nutritional self-reliance. Other displaced persons outside the Acholi region in Lira and Soroti stay in public buildings and open spaces, which, like camps, are quite inhuman and unhygienic. Displaced people are suffering from severe lack of basic care and their lives are characterized by fear, despondency, despair and deprivation.

c) Child "night commuters": Furthermore, a new phenomenon of night displacement for children has since developed and increased dramatically since mid-2002. Fearing abduction, large numbers of children who live near urban centres move unaccompanied to seek shelter overnight in churches, hospital compounds and shop verandas. It is estimated that up to 20,000 children fall in this category.

d) Attacks on humanitarian convoys, civilian vehicles and IDP camps: Access to IDP's in Pader and Katakwi has become almost impossible. Road travel in northern Uganda is intolerably risky and attacks on humanitarian vehicles and civilian convoys take place regularly. Non-governmental organisations have suffered tragic losses of colleagues in the line of duty. The conflict also has spread to the eastern part of the country. The protection of civilians and the assurance of safe access to humanitarian aid are immediate priorities.

e) Human rights abuses by the government have been reported in the conflict areas and cited in the local press. In a report by the UN Secretary General to the Security Council on children and armed conflict, the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) is mentioned as one of the forces which recruit and use children contrary to international instruments ratified by Uganda. Gender-based violence especially against women has been documented.[6] Civil society leaders who

have attempted to promote peaceful dialogue have been labeled collaborators, and some have been subject to arbitrary detention and treason charges. The government has also interfered with freedom of expression, including the media's ability to report accurately on the conflict." (Kacoke Maudit, 11 february 2004)

### **The army claiming that IDP camp harbours rebel collaborators (February 2004)**

- The IDPs accusing the army of starting a fire which destroyed much of the camp
- The army announced that it had recovered 800 rounds of ammunition and some uniforms
- Claims that the army had found ammunition were a lie intended to divert attention
- The fire started on Sunday at 05:00 GMT, when soldiers started moving in zones F and D and ordering all male adults out of their huts, according to local observer
- The army denies the accusation

"A row has broken out between the army and residents of Uganda's biggest Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) settlement, Pabbo camp, in the northern Gulu District, with the army claiming that the camp harbours rebel collaborators and the IDPs accusing the army of starting a fire which destroyed much of the camp during an operation to arrest suspects.

Pabbo houses over 62,000 people fleeing Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operations in northern Uganda. They are part of at least 1.2 million Ugandans who have been forced to take refuge in camps for fear of being attacked or abducted by the rebels.

The army announced that it had recovered 800 rounds of ammunition and some uniforms after a raid on the camp mounted in the early hours of Monday morning.

"We aren't actually going to arrest them - they are IDPs, where should we put them? But there is clear evidence of support for the rebels in that camp - 800 rounds of ammunition is a lot," the army spokesman, Maj Shaban Bantariza, told IRIN.

But residents told the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) - a prominent local advocacy group based in Gulu town - that the claims that the army had found ammunition were a lie intended to divert attention from a fire that soldiers had started in the camp during a roundup of 6,000 people whom the army "suspects" of being collaborators.

"The fire started on Sunday at 05:00 GMT, when soldiers started moving in zones F and D and ordering all male adults out of their huts," Father Carlos Rodriguez of the ARLPI told IRIN. "By midday, thousands of men were being kept in Pabbo market. That is when smoke rose as huts began to burn. The detainees asked the army to allow them to go and save their belongings, but the soldiers refused. Some men then began running away and soldiers threw stones at them," he said.

The army denies the accusation. "For all we know, the fire could be a smokescreen for these rebel collaborators to distract attention from their own clear support for the rebels," he said.

The war in northern Uganda between the army and the LRA has lasted 18 years. The rebels, a brutal, shadowy group, claim they want to topple the government of President Yoweri Museveni

and replace it with one based on the Biblical Ten Commandments. Museveni has asked the Intentional Criminal Court to investigate the rebels." (IRIN, 3 February 2004)

### **Children forced to commit atrocities on fellow abductees and siblings, 1997-2004**

- Minors make up almost 90% of the LRA's soldiers
- Since the rebellion began in the 1980s, some 30,000 children have been abducted
- Those who attempt to escape are killed
- Women's commission urges the Ugandese army to distinguish between "hostage and fighter"

"The 18-year old rebellion of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) against the government has forced over 1.6 million Ugandans - half of them children - to flee to squalid and overcrowded camps in order to escape wanton attacks and killings. [...]

The most disturbing aspect of this humanitarian crisis is the fact that this is a war fought by children on children - minors make up almost 90% of the LRA's soldiers. Some recruits are as young as eight and are inducted through raids on villages. They are brutalized and forced to commit atrocities on fellow abductees and even siblings. Those who attempt to escape are killed. For those living in a state of constant fear, violence becomes a way of life and the psychological trauma is incalculable. Fearing abduction, streams of children, often with mothers in tow, leave their homes every night and walk for hours from surrounding villages to reach the relative safety of major towns, only to trek their way home in the first light. Some 40,000 "night commuters" sleep under verandas, in schools, hospital courtyards or bus parking places to evade the snare of the LRA.

Since the rebellion began in the 1980s, some 30,000 children have been abducted to work as child soldiers and porters, or to serve as "wives" of rebels and bear their children. These numbers have soared, with 10,000 children abducted in the past 18 months alone."(UNICEF, 23 December 2004)

"Thousands of parents in northern Uganda are desperately trying to find out what has happened to their children who have been abducted by the rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and taken into southern Sudan. Ten weeks into a Ugandan military operation in southern Sudan to root out the LRA, "Operation Iron Fist" has yielded no results.

Parents are concerned that their children have been sacrificed in a war that does not distinguish between hostage and fighter," said Allison A. Pillsbury, program manager of the Children and Adolescents Project of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children." (WCRWC 13 June 2002)

"Uganda had made clear that its military campaign in Eastern Equatoria, southern Sudan, was designed to destroy the LRA while also securing the release of thousands of abducted children, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) stated earlier this month, in expressing grave concern over the fate of children caught up in the fighting.

[...]

According to the Abducted Child Registration and Information System (ACRIS) set up by UNICEF and the government of Uganda, some 9,818 children under the age of 18 have been abducted since the LRA war began, or about one third of the total of 28,217 recorded abductions." (IRIN 18 April 2002)

"While UNICEF has expressed grave concerns over the fate of children caught up in the fighting and urged all parties to regard those caught in the conflict "as children", Bantariza said it would be difficult for the UPDF to guarantee their safety, because most of them had become highly militarised and were combatants." (IRIN 5 April 2002)

"The current conflict in the north is characterised by extreme forms of brutality and terror. Terror campaigns against the population in local communities are among the worst of its kind: children are abducted, separated from their families and kept in captivity where they are taught to terrorise and kill other children and adults. 8,866 children, some of them as young as six years old, have been abducted by LRA in Apac, Gulu, Kitgum and Lira districts in the north. They were forcefully brought to camps in Sudan where they were trained as soldiers and sent to the battlefields in Sudan and Uganda. Girls are often used as sex slaves and are "married" off to senior adult rebels." (UN November 2001, pp. 47-48)

"The registration of abducted persons in Uganda started in 1997.

[...]

An 'abducted person' as defined for this registration exercise, is a person who has been forcibly taken away by armed persons operating in northern and southwestern Uganda. Even people who were in captivity for a short time (a day) have been registered.

[...]

A total of 30,839 children and adults are registered as having been abducted between 1986 [sic!] and 2001. Of these, 28,903 abductees were from northern Uganda, while 2,036 were from southwestern Uganda. Kitgum/Pader and Gulu Districts account for 41 and 38 percent of the total number of abductees respectively. These are the districts where the LRA has been most active over the past ten years

Most abductions took place in the rural areas where people are most exposed to rebel attacks. The most vulnerable persons are in rural homes where the rebels often strike at night. The majority of the people (73.1 percent) were abducted from homes, while 9 percent were abducted from roads. Other places of abductions include: the field (5.3 percent), school (3.6 percent), market (1.2 percent) and other (i.e. water sources and IDP camps). There was no indication of place of abduction for 2.6 percent of the abductees.

[...]

A total of 17,228 persons are recorded as "returned from captivity". Of these, 303 people (149 of them children) returned through Entebbe airport with the help of the Government of the Sudan, IOM, UNICEF and other international agencies. The rest, 13,611 persons, are recorded as "not returned from captivity". Of these, 5,923 were abducted as children and 7,327 were adults. The age for 361 abductees could not be deducted." (UNICEF November 2001)

"While adolescents [in "protected villages" for IDPs in Gulu] said that the security situation has somewhat improved during the past year, many revealed that they continue to sleep in the bush for fear of abduction.

[...]

Adolescents who have managed to escape their captors depicted compelling scenarios of their abduction – some lasting six to 10 years. These mostly involve raids by small LRA bands, where children are rounded up in schools, at home or elsewhere and forced to carry heavy loads between 50 and 100 miles to southern Sudan, receiving little food along the way. En route to Sudan, many are forced to commit acts of violence and thievery, including against other children. They are warned that refusal to obey will result in their own deaths. Once in Sudan, they are trained as fighters in LRA encampments and, after training and indoctrination, they are often forced to return to Uganda to commit atrocities against their own communities and the UPDF. Some young people are even forced to kill members of their own families and communities. As a result, many believe they can never return home because of the terrible acts they have committed. The leaders of the LRA have created a virtual human shield in the form of a young



army of forced recruits. Anyone seeking to fight back against the LRA does so knowing that they are fighting against a troop of abducted adolescents.

Abducted girls reported being raped, sexually enslaved and forced into domestic servitude, as described further below, while smaller numbers are forced into armed combat. While most victims are Ugandan, Sudanese refugee adolescents living in settlements in northern Uganda have not been spared LRA attack and abduction.

[...]

While recorded numbers of abducted children and adolescents are estimated at over 11,000, actual numbers may be much higher, as many young people were abducted for shorter periods of a few weeks and made it home without further report. In a group interview with 21 randomly identified adolescent orphaned girls in the Padibe IDP camp in Kitgum, the Women's Commission asked for a show of hands of those who had been abducted. Every hand but one went up.

The principal characteristic of these short-term abductions is forced labor. The girls in Padibe, for example, told stories of being forced to carry loads and do other chores for the rebels before being let go. This labor, along with money and supplies looted by the LRA, help to sustain the LRA's survival and campaign of terror." (WCRWC July 2001, pp.12, 14, 17)

"Consideration is overdue to the fact that the focus on LRA abductees and returnees has, for some time, diverted attention from the extreme needs of the children who live in the affected districts of northern Uganda as a whole. The 99.8% of the child population left behind experience a daily catalogue of major forms of abuse. Most are in constant fear of abduction due to a lack of adequate protection from the government. A majority of them live in 'protected villages' where parenting and socialisation practices are severely disrupted. From there some are forcibly recruited into the government's own Home Guard - the Local Defence Units (LDUs) deployed to other conflict zones such as the DRC." (ACCORD 2002, "Which children count?")

***For more details on the government's anti-LRA campaign's impact on abductions, see IRIN special report of the 18 April 2002***

## SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

### Food

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#### Acute food access shortfall likely in Karamoja in early 2007 (November 2006)

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg 22-23:**

“An estimated 88.3% of the population [in Karamoja] consumes less than 2,200 Kilocalorie per person per day [...] and over 18% of the population is considered food insecure with 46% highly vulnerable to food insecurity.[...] A recent WFP mission to the region investigated the agricultural droughts [...] suffered in April and July 2006. The April shock has led to stunting of a large proportion of the crop in the eastern pastoral and parts of the middle transition zones, while the July shock affected grain formation. Rains have since improved but may not lead to a substantial recovery of the crop. The Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook for the region predicts normal to below normal, with rains receding in September and ceasing in October 2006. This implies minimum recovery of the crop and, as such, in the early part of 2007 it is likely that there will be a particularly acute food access shortfall.”

#### Improvement in food security in IDPs in camps (November 2006)

- Low rates of malnutrition in most camps in 2006
- Household food access for IDP families improves
- Diets poor in terms of quality and diversity for large sections of IDP population
- Continued need for targeted assistance for most vulnerable
- Support to re-establish production and farming system for returnees need
- WFP supports vulnerable groups, implements Food for Health programme

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 12:**

“The key constraints to food security for camp populations include restricted access to land and low productivity of land. Access to markets for sale of produce varies according to the location, as does availability of income earning opportunities. Continued availability of food aid at 50% of the standard food ration coupled with widespread seed distributions have undoubtedly been major factors explaining the continued low rates of malnutrition seen in most of the camps in 2006.

Recent rapid food security surveys indicate that despite the reduction of food aid from 74 to 60% of Recommended Daily Kilocalorie Allowance in Kitgum, Pader and Gulu, household food access among IDP families appears to have improved [...]. This improvement appears to be due to modest production increases coupled with some increases in on and off-farm income earning opportunities. However, rates of unemployment and under-employment remain very high and purchasing power very low. In addition, available information indicates that for large sections of the IDP populations, diets are poor in terms of quality and diversity.

The improved security can also be expected to have a positive effect on opportunities for market access and diversification of income sources. At the same time, there will be a proportion of households (including 8-10% i.e. extremely vulnerable households) in camps, which will be

unable or unwilling to move to home areas, thus pointing to a continued need for targeted food assistance and agricultural action for this group in 2007.

Returning populations will need support to re-establish production and farming systems. These are unlikely to be the same systems as those before the conflict, due to the high rates of population growth coupled with huge reductions in livestock numbers.[...] Although land tenure disputes are expected, access to land is not likely to be the only constraint for most returnees; the productivity of that land will be another key issue. Constraints include shortage of planting materials and seeds, shortage of livestock, poor market infrastructure, weak or absent extension support and the threat of cassava virus. In these circumstances, resettlement food aid packages, combined with intensive agricultural and livestock support will be important to assure food security for returnees during 2007."

#### **WFP, March 2006:**

"Carefully targeted programmes are central to WFP's approach in Uganda. Davies stresses that "WFP is always very careful not to distribute too much food. This is why, after in depth needs assessments, WFP now provides between 40-60 percent of the minimum daily food needs of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North, with the remainder being sourced by the IDPs themselves through own production or market purchases. In 2005, 70 percent of WFP resources were for relief food distributions for IDPs, refugees and drought- affected people in Karamoja and West Nile regions. However, as we scale up our recovery activities for IDPs, 56 percent of WFP resources in Uganda will be for relief activities, with the remainder to scale up the Food for Assets, Food for Education, Food for Health and Nutrition programmes."

WFP is a major player in promoting the self-reliance and food security of both IDPs and refugees in Uganda. In 2005, the Food for Assets programme was expanded to cover communities recovering from conflict in Gulu and the West Nile region to develop human resources and community assets. WFP worked with communities in Arua, Yumbe and Koboko districts to establish 90 large community fishponds for better livelihoods; and with schools in Moyo and Adjumani to construct more than 190 teachers' houses. In agro-forestry, WFP's Gulu office provided over 300,000 tree seedlings to help primary schools plant large woodlots and have access to firewood to conserve the environment around IDP camps."

#### **Food security continues to improve (May 2006)**

- Greater access to land, diversification of income, greater variety of foodstuffs available in local markets all contribute to improved nutritional status
- In January 2006 food rations cut back by 50-60%, while complete food rations are maintained for vulnerable groups

#### **UNOCHA, 4 May 2006:**

"The "Emergency Food Security Assessment" conducted by WFP in 2005 showed a quality improvement in the nutritional status of the majority of the displaced populations in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Lira. Greater access to land, if not fully effective utilisation, gradually diversification of income sources for many households, greater variety of foodstuffs available in local markets and the cumulative impact of mass food aid are some of the main factors explaining the improvement in the overall nutritional status among IDP families. Assessment results led to a review of total numbers of beneficiaries in all conflict-affected districts and the reduction to 50-60% of the standard food ration started Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Lira in January 2006. Complete food rations are being distributed to highly vulnerable people including the elderly, orphans, HIV/AIDS

patients, and single-headed households. The table below shows the total estimated number of beneficiaries of food aid and agricultural emergency/recovery programmes for 2006.”

### **Food rations cut back – IDP self-sustainability slightly improves (September 2005)**

- Number of IDP households with access to land has increased
- Noticeable improvement in food acquisition and income strategies
- Implementation of the reduction in rations to 50 percent for able-bodied households in Acholi districts will be implemented in December 2005 after October rains and following harvest

"Since the previous EFSA exercise conducted in March/April 2004, the well being of the IDPs appears to have improved. The number of households with access to land has increased from 65 to 85 percent in Gulu and from 37 to 51 percent in Pader, while household access to land has remained relatively stationary in Kitgum. Apart from improvement in the number of households that had access to land, the amount of land accessed has also improved from 0.5 to 2.52 acres per household in Gulu and from 0.71 to 0.74 and 1.77

acres per household in Kitgum and Pader respectively. Consequent improvements have also been established for households with stored food at the time of the assessment having increased from 62 to 88 percent in Gulu and 58 to 82 and 83 percent in Kitgum and Pader respectively. Average period of provisioning of stored stocks had also improved three-fold in Gulu; two fold in Kitgum and 2.5-fold in Pader. Please note that similar conclusions cannot be made for Lira given the lack of a comparative study.

There is a noticeable improvement in food acquisition and income strategies. Comparative analysis indicates that the number of IDP households' dependant on one income source declined from 28 to 5 percent in Gulu. A similar trend is observed in Pader and Kitgum where the number dependant on one source declined from 25 percent to 13 percent and 14 percent in Kitgum and Pader respectively. The number of households depending on only two sources of income has also declined from 33 to 19 percent in Gulu, but remained stationary in Pader and Kitgum at 42 and 43 percent respectively. Consequently, the number of households with more than three income sources had increased from 39 to 76 percent in Gulu, from 30 to 43 percent in Kitgum and from 30 to 44 percent in Pader. There is also visible improvement in food acquisition with the number of households relying on over three sources having increased from 75 to 97 percent in Gulu and from 50 to 74 percent in Kitgum and 70 percent in Pader respectively.

The improvement in access to land, food sources (including food aid) and income strategies has increased consumption at the household level. From a 33-38 percent access food gap in March 2004, average consumption is above the Recommended Minimum Daily Kilocalorie Allowance by about 15 percent in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts. It is only in Lira that an access food gap of 13 percent of RDA was established. Even for households where food gaps were established, the magnitude of the access food gap has declined from 47 to 23 percent in the three districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, and about 30 percent in Lira. All the improvements above have occurred under conditions of declining levels of malnutrition in children less than five years since October 2003.

For the last year (March 2004 to August 2005), food aid has been targeted at 74 percent of the minimum recommended RDA for able-bodied households in the three Acholi districts. From the information gathered, most IDPs currently access more than double the equivalent amount of land required to meet the minimum recommended allowance from own production. However land utilization is low and established at about 50 percent of the land accessed. For able-bodied households, limiting land access to as low as 0.325 acres per family of six would be sufficient to

allow the households to access as much as 50 percent of minimum recommended requirement from own production. Average camp size is about 17,000 persons in Lira, 15,000 persons in Kitgum, 11,000 persons in Pader and less than 10,000 persons in Gulu. Within a radius of 3.0 to 4.0 km around the camp, most of the IDPs would be able to access sufficient land to meet about 50 percent of the minimum RDA from own production and market purchase.

Additional food aid resources are provided to the IDPs through school feeding and food-for-asset (FFA) activities. School feeding, presuming two children per household are in primary school, provides about 10 percent of the family food requirements for a family of six on an annual basis. Taking the General Food Distribution (GFD) ration into consideration, it implies that an average IDP family will receive about 60 percent of RDA through GFD and school feeding. Invoking the 'decision framework for implementation of selective feeding programmes', the current Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates (1.9 percent in Lira, 4.5 percent in Gulu, 7.7 percent in Pader and 11.8 percent in Kitgum) imply the need, in addition to General Food Distribution, to strengthen targeted Supplementary Feeding Programmes especially in Kitgum. Implementation of the Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) activities is expected to begin in January 2006. Following discussions within the Country Office and with the various stakeholders in the IDP affected districts, it was agreed that implementation of the reduction in rations to 50 percent of RDA for able-bodied households in the three Acholi districts will be best implemented in December 2005 after the anticipated second rains harvest that begins in October 2005.

Increasing access to land due to the on-going decongestion of the camps provides an opportunity for additional investment in agriculture. This opportunity should be seized given its possible impetus in speeding up the process of recovery. Alternative and sustainable income generating activities that are not degrading to the natural resource base should also be explored and encouraged" (WFP, September 2005).

### **Hunger reported in Karamajong induced camps (June 2005)**

- Only 22 per cent lived on 2 meals a day
- 56 per cent were living on one meal while the remaining 22% sacrificed for children to have 2 meals
- Small fish popularly known as "Omena" is the major source of animal protein
- To afford a kilo of meat one needed to sacrifice 2.5 days in another person's garden.

#### **" 4.0. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SECTOR**

##### **4.1. Food situation in the camps [in Karamajong affected areas]**

The study revealed a general state of hunger in the Karamojong induced IDP camps. Only 22% of the HH [Heads of household]visited lived on 2 meals a day. A greater majority (56%) were living on one meal while the remaining 22% sacrificed for children to have 2 meals as the adults take only supper. Granaries the symbol of food wealth in Teso are no more largely because of food shortage but also for security reasons. The Karamojong warriors loot any livestock, food and HH items they come across. The main sources of food were the market and food aid but fruits especially mangoes and shear nut fruits when available, and green vegetables are also gathered for consumption. The only affordable source of animal protein by the majority of HHs was the small fish popularly known as "Omena." To afford a kilo of meat one needed to sacrifice 2.5 days in another person's garden. Own food stocks from the previous season were extremely scarce. Over 90% of the cassava and sorghum flour this team of surveyors saw had been given by LWF 3 weeks before the assessment. Otherwise no food aid had been provided since January 2005 (5 months before the assessment). Most respondents estimated that the food stocks they had, would only last 1 to 2 more weeks and yet the next harvest would be expected in mid-July (3-4

weeks later) for only few cases while the majority would harvest in August. Most of the camps visited indicated need for some food to help them into the next harvest. This would supplement what LWF had provided. Therefore agencies with the ability to take quick reaction to the need should closely link up with LWF. Otherwise some of the target camps are listed in table 1 below.

Table 1: Some of the Karamojong induced camps that require urgent attention with food

Sub county	Camp
Magoro	Kanapa, Kajamaka
Ongongoja	Ongongoja, Aketa, Milimil
Omodoi	Amusia, Abule, Atirir,
Usuk	Adacar, Ameritele
Ngariam	Okuso, Ocwuin, Opeuru aodot, Acanga, Obulejet, Palam

#### 4.2. Copying mechanisms

Most families reported that they consume one meal per day as a method of preserving their little food stocks to take longer. Some times families relied on mangoes (when available) for lunch and had one meal for supper to provide energy for the next day's work. In some cases as explained earlier, the parents sacrifice for children to have two meals especially when had food aid while at critical times parents would only consume green vegetables without accompanying food."(GoU, 15 June 2005)

#### **Insufficient access to food not the only reason for malnutrition (February 2004)**

- Controversy over the possible lack of consistency between the Emergency Food Needs Assessment (EFNA) findings and the simultaneous Nutrition Survey
- The EFNA suggests that access to food had improved for the IDPs since the August/September 2003 harvest
- The Nutrition Survey results confirm alarmingly high levels of malnutrition in most IDP camps
- WFP intentionally conducted the EFNA and the Nutrition Surveys at the same time
- UNICEF framework of Underlying Causes of Malnutrition suggests three main pillars: 1) Insufficient Access to Food; 2) Inadequate Maternal and Child Caring Practices; and 3) Poor water/sanitation and inadequate Health Services

"Some controversy has arisen in recent days over the possible lack of consistency between the Emergency Food Needs Assessment (EFNA) findings of September/October 2003 and the simultaneous Nutrition Survey results for Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. Whereas the EFNA suggests that access to food had improved for the IDPs since the August/September 2003 harvest, with net food gaps ranging from 50 to 65 percent among displaced populations in the three northern Uganda districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, the Nutrition Survey results confirm alarmingly high levels of malnutrition in most IDP camps assessed. Subsequent to the EFNA findings, WFP adjusted the general food distribution rations to meet the net food gap. This has triggered concern among some NGOs and donors due to the conflictingly high malnutrition results.

§ WFP intentionally conducted the EFNA and the Nutrition Surveys at the same time, in order to overlay the findings and highlight underlying factors of malnutrition. While we are still reviewing the nutrition survey reports for Kitgum and Pader, WFP endorses the nutrition survey findings for Gulu district, that correlate with the EFNA findings. It is useful to refer to the UNICEF framework of Underlying Causes of Malnutrition that suggests three main pillars: 1) Insufficient Access to Food; 2) Inadequate Maternal and Child Caring Practices; and 3) Poor water/sanitation

and inadequate Health Services. There is a tendency among aid workers to focus on/ emphasize pillar 1 with little reference to the other pillars.

§ WFP is consistently monitoring the food security situation in the IDP camps as well as the situation of basic social services (see report from WFP Kitgum, August 2003). From the monitoring findings and field observations, it is clear that basic social services are seriously lacking in most IDP camps. Access to water and sanitation is very poor, health services are inadequate, living conditions are favorable for the spread of diseases and information flow is poor.

§ It is also clear that the camp setting has had adverse effects on social support networks. Children are left alone and unattended to, or at best attended to by older siblings, drunkenness and abuse of children's rights is common, and trauma is evident, due to the gruesome attacks and abductions of children by the rebels. A Study on the Underlying Causes of Malnutrition among Sudanese Refugees in Adjumani and Moyo in 2002 suggested that out the 20 strongest causal links between a given factor and child malnutrition, social caring practices accounted for 14. This finding was in an environment more conducive to a good quality of life than in the IDP camps." (WFP, 1 February 2004)

### **Hunger gap most common in the months of May, June, and July (November 2003)**

- Ninety-four percent of all the respondents[in food security assessment] indicated that they do experience a hunger gap
- June was indicated to be the most difficult month to access sufficient food
- The most common coping strategies during the hunger gap are eating less food making less food, and changing food

"Ninety-four percent of all the respondents[in food security assessment] indicated that they do experience a hunger gap due to the cultivation calendar. The same percentage also claimed to experience a hunger gap in the villages, though the duration has increased. The reasons for this are various, but primarily due to less crop production hence less food in storage. The municipality/village TFC caretakers were asked if they had the hunger gap before June 2002. Prior to that date only 40% of the respondents admitted to experiencing a hunger gap; after 90% claimed to experience one. The hunger gap is centered in May, June, and July. June was indicated to be the most difficult month to access sufficient food; this was also true in the villages and prior to June 2002 (for municipality/villages). Since moving to the camps (and after June 2002), the hunger gap has extended into other months –August and beyond. Although, the percentage of respondents claiming to experience a hunger gap at those times is still lower than in other month. The most common coping strategies during the hunger gap are eating less food, making less food, and changing food. The IDP respondents also claimed to eat wild foods. These wild foods –wilds greens, cassava leaves, and yams are not normally consumed and only during the hunger gap." (Action Against Hunger, November 2003)

## **Health**

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### **Health situation serious - high morbidity and mortality rates in IDP camps (November 2006)**

- High mortality rates

- Limited access to healthcare, nutrition and HIV/AIDS services
- Virtual lack of mental health services
- Health facilities in need of rehabilitation and equipping and
- Rural health units managed by unqualified staff

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 28-29:**

“Poverty, congested living conditions in the IDP camps, difficulty in retaining of health personnel, and a breakdown of social and community structures leading to increased SGBV and HIV/AIDS transmission, are the major factors contributing to high morbidity and mortality. A mortality survey [...] carried out in the Acholi sub-region in July 2005 showed a Crude Mortality Rate (CMR) of 1.54 and an under-five mortality rate of 3.18/10,000/day. The mortality rate in Karamoja region is 178/1,000 live births and 750/100,000 for maternal mortality rate. The figures in Kitgum, Karamoja and Pader were double the emergency threshold for both CMR and under-five mortality rate. However, the marked improvement in security has enabled improved access to most of the camps contributing to lower the mortality rate indicators. The leading causes of morbidity in the region still remain: malaria (40-50% of the patients attending health facilities have been infected); respiratory tract infection; diarrhoea; intestinal worm; skin infection.[...] According to the recent HIV sero-prevalence survey of 2005, the northern region had a prevalence rate of 8.2% compared to the national average of 6.4%. Further testing of positive samples with incidence assay demonstrated that Acholiland has an HIV incidence (new infections) rate about three times higher than the national average.

The coverage of key health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS activities remains low according to the Service Availability Mapping (SAM) survey[...]. For example: (i) only 33% of the health centres IV and none of the health centres III were providing HIV/AIDS Counselling and Testing and PMTCT services; (ii) 64% of the health facilities did not provide condoms; (iii) 12 to 28% of the health facilities did not provide vaccination services; (iv) no basic EMoC at any of the health centres IV, III and II; (v) 30 to 67% of the health centres II did not provide functional Family Planning (FP) services; (vi) less than 40% of the health centres III had laboratory services, and the regional blood bank in Gulu was operating at less than 50% capacity. Generally, access to HIV/AIDS services at lower level units remains low. SAM survey showed that 23% of the health facilities in Gulu did not provide routine vaccination services and of those that did 28% recorded measles vaccine stock outs. About 60% of the health centres II provides Ante Natal Care (ANC) and FP services. 90% of the health centres III offers delivery services.

This lack of services is partly due to inadequate human resources in the conflict affected districts. The SAM revealed that only 50%, 9% and 21% of the health centres II in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts respectively had the required Health Sector Support Plan (HSSP) staffing norms.[...] None of the health centres III and IV met the HSSP staffing norms. The ratio of CORPS to camp population size was one CORP to 312, 2735, and 483 in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts respectively. While doctor population ratio was one doctor to 11,318, 21,519 and 53,291 respectively in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts (national level 1:18,600). Most of the trained staff was concentrated at district headquarters, leaving the rural lower health units under the management of unqualified staff. The few staff posted to the rural health units commute from the district headquarters or work for less than eight hours a day, three days a week.

A joint UN assessment was conducted in Lira and showed that most of the health facilities required rehabilitation and equipping. Less than 40% of the health centres III have laboratory services. There is need to rehabilitate, equip and construct new health facilities in order to improve the geographical access to the recommended 5km radius. None of all the health centres IV and only 22% of health centres III in Pader offer mental health services.”



## **Cholera outbreak affects northern Uganda (June 2006)**

- Cholera outbreak in Pader and Kitgum
- Factors which contribute to the spread of the disease are overcrowding, poor sanitation and hygiene, lack of access to safe water, and high risk/unsafe cultural and traditional practices.
- Cholera treatment centres set up in camps
- Generally, IDP camps in northern Uganda have limited access to basic health care. Recent data showed that 58% of health facilities in Lira, 43% in Gulu and 25% in Kitgum districts are non-functional.

### **UNOCHA, June 2006:**

“The number of cholera cases and deaths in Kitgum and Pader districts increased from end of May, despite concerted efforts led by DDHS to combat the disease. By 18 June, the number of cases in Kitgum district had risen to 779 and 11 deaths in 13 displacement camps in 11 sub counties (from 617 cases and 8 deaths in ten displacement camps in ten sub counties). Kitgum Town Council is most affected, recording an alarming increase in the epidemic. In a report to the Ministry of Health, the DDHS observed that the risk factors for the spread of cholera continue to be overcrowding, poor sanitation and hygiene, inadequate access to safe water, public gatherings such as funerals and high risk/unsafe cultural and traditional practices. In addition, although standard Cholera Treatment Centres (CTCs) have been set up in 11 of the 13 affected displacement camps, the report states that the capacity to respond through case management is compromised by inadequate clinical staff and if the outbreak continues to spread, the existing human resource will not be in position to respond effectively without compromising on going routine activities. Therefore, the DDHS made the following recommendations to the Ministry of Health:

- Immediately consider making a press release regarding cholera outbreak in Kitgum district as it is no longer a local issue but a national one which has so far spread to Pader, and the possibility of spread to Gulu is high.
- Urgently send more cholera management guidelines and other related IEC materials.
- Consider providing extra financial resources to enable the district carry out effective response particularly in supporting staff re-deployment to CTCs.
- Support construction of make shift latrines to achieve standard coverage.
- Increase the number of safe water sources by digging and motorising more boreholes.

Other measures taken by the district to arrest the continued spread of the disease include the suspension of food vending, the school feeding program, banning of serving food at funerals and monthly auctions. In Pader district, the number of cases rose to 14 from four at the end of May. The district received supplies of cholera kits and has heightened case management and prevention activities, including surveillance, contact tracing and documentation and construction of CTCs in Acholi-Bur, Atanga and Pajule displacement camps.

Kalongo hospital also received supplies for case management.

Gulu district remains on high alert. One case from Kamdini in Apac district, close to Gulu district, was confirmed and treated in Lacor hospital. Three other suspected cases from the Municipality were also investigated in Lacor hospital. As part of the district preparedness plan, 29 health workers from across the district were trained in Epidemic Preparedness.”

### **UNOCHA, 4 May 2006:**

"IDP camps in northern Uganda have limited access to basic health care, water and sanitation, and education services. Recent data showed that 58% of health facilities in Lira, 43% in Gulu and 25% in Kitgum districts are non-functional. In addition, insecurity, widespread lack of qualified health staff, poor salaries, and inadequate working conditions pose a challenge to delivery of services especially in the return areas.

The congestion in IDP camps coupled with inadequate provision of clean and safe water, hygiene and sanitation services are underlying factors for increased morbidity and mortality in the conflict affected districts. Outbreaks of epidemic meningitis have occurred in north and north-eastern Uganda since December 2005 as a result of which 651 cases and 36 deaths were reported by end of March 2006.

With the onset of the rains, the risk of cholera outbreak increases. Cholera outbreaks have already been reported in south Sudan and the west Nile region of Uganda and the chances of it spreading to the northern region are high. Furthermore, with the current global threat and continued spread of Avian influenza, national and humanitarian agencies pandemic preparedness plans should be implemented with situation-specific considerations for the vulnerable populations of northern Uganda.

Furthermore, malaria is the number one priority disease and health problem in IDP camps. The coverage of malaria initiatives remains low. For example, a survey of insecticide treated bed nets (ITN) coverage conducted in September-October 2005 by MOH with support of UNICEF found that on average only 25% of pregnant women had slept under an ITN. Although this is higher than the national average of 14%, it is not adequate to prevent malaria in these congested camps. Inadequate access to HIV/AIDS prevention services and psychosocial support for those infected and affected in the conflict-affected districts of northern Uganda remains a major concern. HIV prevalence among adult women in the conflict-affected districts stands at 9%, compared to 2-4% in neighbouring regions and 7.3% national prevalence rates. Mother-to-child transmission risks could be dramatically reduced if all pregnant women in every camp had access to testing and counselling services and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) drug Nevapine. Additionally, positive mothers who give birth to HIV-negative children and choose not to breastfeed need access to formula milk and clean water. At present, less than 3% of HIV-positive women complete proper counselling, testing, and accepting PMTCT. In this context, a mass expansion of service delivery and human resource is required if the objective of increasing the number of women in each camp accessing PMTCT services over the next months is to be met. The Government of Uganda has announced that IDPs in Lango and Teso regions will return to their original homes/areas during 2006. This resettlement calls for adequate health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS response. For example, plans need to be put in place to procure return package, which includes ITNs and home treatment kits.

Overall, the coordination mechanisms to ensure predictable and effective humanitarian emergency and recovery response in health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS are weak especially at the district level. The strengthening coordination through the IASC cluster approach will be crucial in achieving: 1) improved coordination of partner response; 2) operational planning and strategy development, including assessment of gaps and mapping of services by camp 3) harmonisation and application of standards 4) monitoring, reporting and evaluation; and 5) capacity building for effective and timely response. While the cluster approach is being applied at all levels in Uganda, it is still at its infancy. The health and nutrition cluster is in the process of writing its strategic document and terms of reference. For a smooth application of this approach, there is a need for better understanding of the principles, benefits and how to successfully implement the approach, which can be achieved through:

- Cascade training of key staff of agencies on the cluster mechanism is important;
- Provision of reference materials, toolkits and adequate information about the cluster approach to all cluster members;

- More involvement and education of the various government counterpart about the approach is necessary”

### **Mortality rate in Uganda more than double that of Darfur (July 2005)**

- Almost 1,000 deaths occur per week in northern Uganda
- Malaria/fever top self-reported causes of death
- Violence was the third most frequent cause of death

**"Both CMR and U5MR were well above respective emergency thresholds** (1 per 10 000 per day and 2 per 10 000 per day) in all four surveyed populations, and were four times higher than non-crisis levels in Kitgum and Pader Districts (Table 1).

-There was no obvious monthly trend in CMR.

-Malaria/fever and AIDS were the top self-reported death causes (Table 1); among children under 5, top causes were malaria/fever and *two lango*, a local illness concept encompassing oral thrush, malnutrition and diarrhoea.

-Less than half of all deaths (Table 1), and 54.2% among children under 5, occurred in a health facility.

**-A total excess mortality of 25 694** (of which 10 054 children under 5) can be projected for the entire Acholi region between January and July 2005, namely almost **1000 excess deaths per week** (Table 1).

-Violence was the third most frequent cause of death (9.4%), occurring mostly outside of camps (68.8%) and health facilities (93.5%). Persons killed were mostly adult males (70.1%), but 16.9% were children under 15.

-We estimate that 3971 persons were killed in the study population between January and July 2005 (Table 1).

-Age/sex population pyramids in Gulu District, Kitgum District and Pader District display an apparent deficit in males 20 to 30 years old."

"Throughout the four surveys, a total of 817 deaths due to all ages and causes were reported by respondents over 5 218 288 person-days of exposure (Table 4). Corresponding crude mortality rates

(CMRs) were uniformly above the emergency threshold of 1 death per 10 000 persons per day, even

when the lower bound of the 95% confidence intervals (95% CIs) was considered. They ranged from a

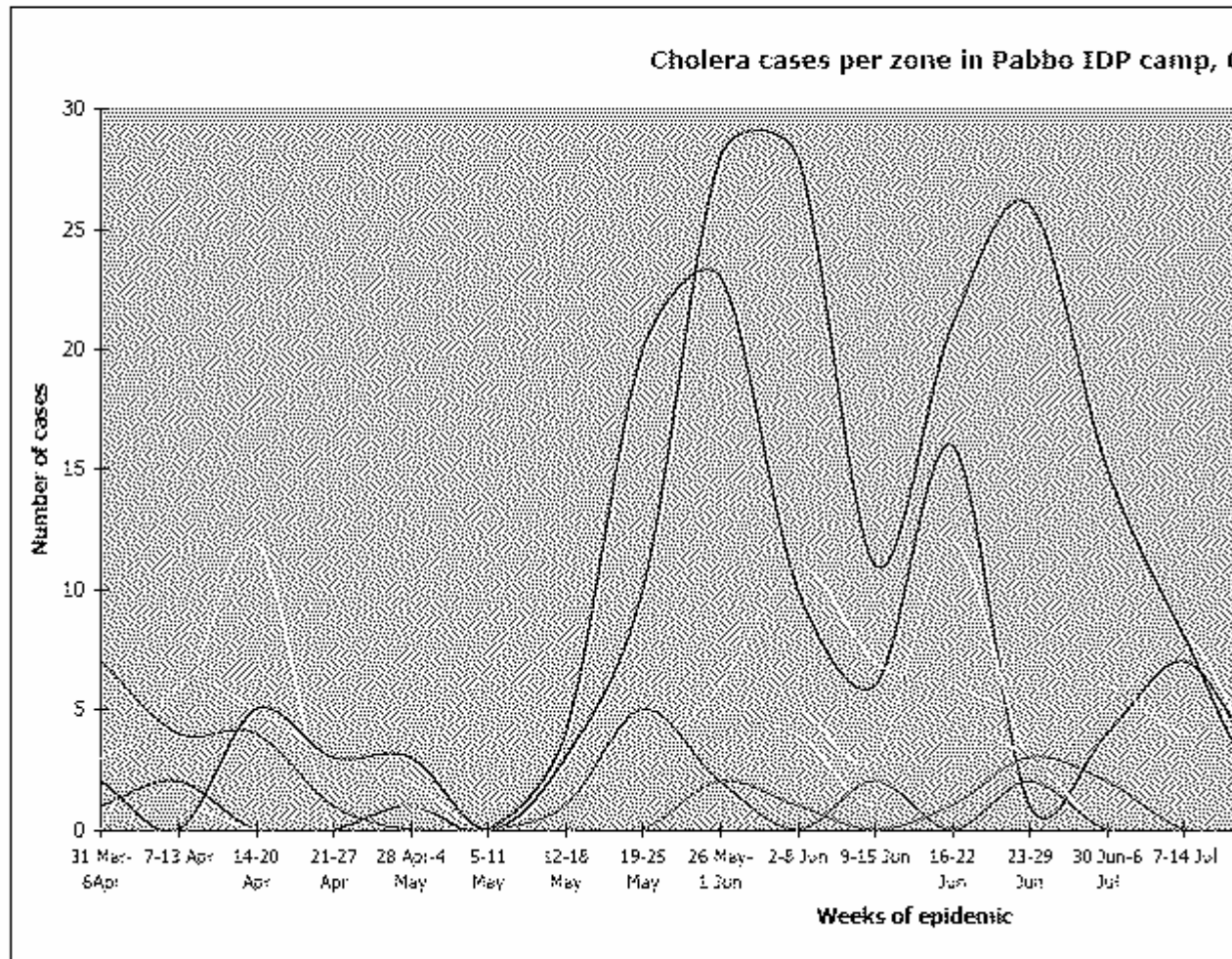
minimum of 1.22 per 10 000 per day in Gulu District to a maximum of 1.91 in Kitgum District, with a

weighted average of 1.54 considering the four surveyed populations combined (Table 4), i.e. three to

four times higher than the expected non-crisis CMR (0.44 per 10 000 per day).<sup>4</sup>

Observed cluster design effects ranged from 0.70 in Gulu Municipality to 1.80 in Kitgum District, i.e. less than the 2.0 effect assumed during sample size calculation." (Ugandan Ministry of Health, July 2005)

### **Cases of Cholera in Pabbo IDP Camp, Gulu District**



### HIV/AIDS rates are soaring in the IDP camps (June 2005)

- Displacement forces women to engage in unprotected “survival sex,” exchanging sex for food, soap or money
- Night commuters exchange sex to pay for school fees
- Sexual bondage as a weapon by the LRA further increases area prevalence rates

"Preliminary findings from the 2004-2005 Uganda HIV/AIDS Sero-Behavioural Survey (UHSBS) show that the war-affected districts in the north-central region have a prevalence rate of 9%, compared to the neighbouring regions with 4.2%, 2.5%, and 7% at national level. Conflict areas have difficulty implementing the district HIV/AIDS coordination structures, and the District

Development plans insufficiently reflect HIV/AIDS emergency issues because of limited capacity and the lack of prioritisation of HIV/AIDS activities. Service delivery, including Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), treatment, condoms, and reproductive health, is concentrated in towns and specific accessible camps, limiting access to appropriate and comprehensive services for IDPs in rural camps. Weak coordination between service providers further contributes to limited access of HIV/AIDS services by IDPs.

The national condom shortage was aggravated in the conflict districts by a weak distribution system. Additional needs such as nutrition and water and sanitation, which are especially important for the well being of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA), are insufficiently met. Dangerous coping methods and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence increase vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. Some of the more dangerous coping methods IDPs resort to include parents giving away their daughters for food and wives involved in survival sex. Community orientation and participation is low. Likewise, there is no meaningful involvement of PLHAs, who are addressed only as recipients of services." (UNOCHA, 22 June 2005)

"With as much as 80 per cent of the population in the war-affected areas displaced, HIV/AIDS rates are soaring. Displacement, poverty, lack of health care, and the high prevalence of rape as a weapon of war all contribute to the high rates. Poverty, as a result of displacement, has forced many women to engage in unprotected "survival sex," exchanging sex for food, soap or money. Similarly, many young girls who "night commute" to the towns for safety are raped: "I'm not lazy. I can run. I have been beaten. I have been taken to discos and raped. I am not scared any more." Poverty and the lack of parental controls forces other young female 'night commuters' to exchange sex in order to pay for their school fees. The circumstances of war increase risky behaviours that directly lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The use of sexual bondage as a weapon of choice by the LRA, as discussed in Section II, further increases area prevalence rates. Fear of AIDS among LRA commanders has meant that many girls are released, rather than being re-assigned as a "wife" to another commander. If these girls make it back from the bush, they are sometimes rejected and abandoned by their families for a variety of reasons, including family bitterness around forced atrocities committed against them, perceptions of defilement, and the intense poverty due to war and displacement. As a result, some resort to survival sex, engaging in high-risk behaviours that increase the spread of the disease.

The virtual collapse of a comprehensive health care system, due to historical underdevelopment, attacks on infrastructure, and the flight of many health workers, has meant that the population is unable to get information about HIV/AIDS prevention, or voluntary counselling and testing, nor are they able to receive adequate treatment unless they have the financial means to do so. All of these factors contribute to the war-affected areas having rates double that of the national average."(World Vision, 25 September 2004, p.28)

### **Health indicators improving slowly in Pader IDP camps (March 2005)**

- Most common illnesses were fever/malaria which and diarrhoea
- Morbidity significantly associated with age group
- Crude Mortality Rate and Under 5 Mortality Rate in Kalongo have both decreased since the last surveys of February and July last year

"Morbidity rates using a two week recall, found similar results in Kalongo (42%) to Wol (42%), Paimol (43%) and Omiya Pacwa (44%).

- These rates in Kalongo are lower than those recorded in July 2004 (75%). However they are twice as high as those recorded in February 2004 (24%).
- The most common illnesses reported were fever/malaria which accounted for 42.9% of total morbidity in Kalongo and 34.4% of total morbidity in the 3 IDP camps; and diarrhoea (without blood) which accounted for 25.4% of total morbidity in Kalongo and 38.9% of total morbidity in the 3 camps.
- In all areas surveyed, morbidity was found to be significantly associated ( $p < 0.00$ ) with age group, with those in younger age groups more vulnerable to illness.

## 1.2 Mortality

	CMR deaths/10,000/day	U5MR deaths/10,000/day
Kalongo	0.7	1.7
Wol	0.8	1.3
Omiya Pacwa	0.6	0.9
Paimol	0.6	1.7
Combined results (Wol,OP,Paimol)	0.7	1.3

- Crude Mortality Rate (CMR) and Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) in Kalongo have both decreased since the last surveys of February and July last year.
- The mortality rates in the IDP camps outside Kalongo are also at similarly low levels.
- The principle cause of under-five mortality from all areas surveyed is fever/malaria (38.1% in Kalongo; 40% in Wol, Paimol and Omiya Pacwa combined).
- The main causes of over-five mortality in Kalongo were cough/RTI (26.7%) and conflict and unknown (both 20%) in Wol, Paimol and Omiya Pacwa combined.

## 1.3 Vaccination status

- The number of children in the Kalongo sample with health cards showing complete vaccination is 41.3%. This is a clear improvement from the previous survey where only 17.3% were fully vaccinated, confirmed with a card. Combined with those whose immunisations were confirmed by mother/carer brings coverage to 80%.
- The number of children in Wol, Omiya Pacwa and Paimol who are fully vaccinated, confirmed with a card, is lower than that of Kalongo, perhaps because all the samples are IDPs and do not have cards. A higher proportion of these samples reported a history of vaccination.

## 1.6 Maternal health

- In the Kalongo sample the proportion of women between 15-45 years who had received two doses of tetanus was 23.8%, which is very low. In the outside camps combined, only 18.1% of the same aged women had received two doses of tetanus.
- 84% of women who have given birth in Kalongo in the last 6 months gave birth in a clinic or hospital, compared to 62% in the three outside camps."(UNOCHA, 31 March, pp. 38-39)

## Poor health situation for IDPs in Karamajong affected areas (June 2005)

- From 6 to 15 people in huts of 4 square meters
- High mortality rates in some camps
- More than 8 km between some camps and Health Centres
- Child immunization coverage was good
- Poor or non-existing latrine facilities

## " 7.0. HEALTH SECTOR

The health situation of the people living in these camps was generally poor. The households in the camps were congested: 6 – 15 people in a 4 square meter area. Mortality in some camps was high. For instance in Amaseniko camp, 9 deaths (6 children and 3 adults) had occurred over a period of 4 months. Although there was no technical/medical examination to confirm the cause of deaths, the community believed that most of the deaths were due to malaria, followed by HIV/AIDS and diarrhoeal diseases.

Malaria burden increases during rainy seasons i.e. May to September. The other common diseases were skin diseases. Cases of abortions/miscarriages in some camp especially Amaseniko and Angica camps were cited. This could possibly be due to malaria in pregnancy.

There were also some reported cases of mothers dying during labour. The figures could not be ascertained but the long distance ( More than 8 Km) between some camps and Health Centres which had better facilities to manage antenatal complications indicated that this problem needed to be seriously addressed.

Where the camps were within easy reach of health facilities (Health Centre) the services offered were limited. Few other camps like Palam and Angica, hardly had health services within their reach (beyond 8 Kms from the nearest facility). The health units that would be within easy reach were not functioning at all. However, child immunization coverage was good, with even the camps that had no health units within reach. They accessed the services through outreach from the nearest health facilities.

The sanitation and hygiene situation in the camps was very wanting. Children's bodies bore signs of not bathing for several days. Many children (mostly in Acowa camp) had serious skin fungal infections and wounds. Human faeces were dropped and scattered everywhere, including near water sources. The few toilets available were not used at all. It was reported that the situation worsens during rainy seasons.

### 7.1. Nutrition

Nutritional status of the people in the camps visited was poor. This was mainly evident in children below five years. Foods was lacking in most of the camps. According to the simple sampling done, 3 out of 10 children were moderately malnourished and 1 out of 10 severely malnourished (with Protein Energy Malnutrition, Kwashiorkor and anaemia). The major cause of malnutrition was lack of adequate food, reinforced by diarrhoea diseases.

### .2. HIV AIDS

Awareness raising on HIV/AIDS had been done by staff of the health centres, peer educators, CCF, LWF, Health Need Uganda, PHI, Ministry of Health, Pentecostal Churches and Concern Worldwide, Red Cross, TASO. The IDPs were aware of modes of protection including condom use, abstinence, sharing sharp objects and faithfulness. Some said condoms were available at the health centre free of charge while others said there were no condoms. Others said the condoms were sold at the shops and yet other said the peer educators distributed them. Use of

condoms was also a challenge because either men refused to use them, or the women feared to use them in case they got stuck in their reproductive systems, while other did not know how to use them. They also said some women could not negotiate condom use. Besides that, people asked did not know how HIV/Aids is transmitted from mother to child.

Issues of increased vulnerability included: partners staying apart for a long time (like men who go to town to work for long periods, leaving their wives behind), having many sexual partners including single youth having sex with married partners alcoholism/drunkenness, poverty and close proximity of sexually active people in camps. There was still a lot of stigma and fear towards testing for HIV/AIDS. The testing services can be accessed by some of the camps through outreaches offered by partners and health units like Katakwi and Soroti hospital. At these units VCT, PMTCT, treatment of opportunistic infections and ARVS services can be got. There was no camp that had an on-going distribution of condoms. And the general challenge was that some men did not want to use condoms.

### 7.3. Reproductive Health

Generally reproductive health services were available at the health centre and it was free of charge. However, when the health centre lacked syringes and needles, the patient had to pay 200 shillings for it. Some said the 200 shillings was charged for injections every time. Other charges included transport to the health centre since some were very far and this costs about 7,000 shillings. The IDPs in Katakwi sometimes went as far as Matany Hospital, which is in Karamoja. There was also a private missionary run health centre/hospital where the charges were reported to range between 10,000 to 30,000 shillings, excluding transport. Women in Dadas camp said they paid between 1,500 and 2,000 at the hospital but it was not clear which hospital it was. It was not clear whether most deliveries were at the health centre or with the help of traditional birth attendants (TBAs), however, women said some deliveries were supervised by TBAs at home. TBA charges varied e.g. 1,000 shillings and a bar of soap, sugar; soap, chicken, 3,000-5,000 shillings, etc. otherwise, the TBAs offer free services.

### 7.4. Family planning.

Services were available but used by very few. The reasons given for non-use were ignorance because some women think it could have negative side effects; some wanted to use but their spouses stopped them (men want many children); and some women feared trying because they did not know how their spouses would react.

Menstruation is managed using rags by both women and girls. Some said sanitary pads were bought from the local market but not all could afford. Lack of material for management of menstruation made older girls miss school at this time of the month.

Girls learnt about menstruation from school, from the Senior woman teacher, mothers or other elderly women they lived with or in the neighbourhood and from peers. According to the women, girls learnt a lot from the school and the just supplement the information.

### 7.5. Child Health

According to the IDPs, the most common illnesses affecting children were malaria, measles, diarrhoea, skin diseases, measles, epilepsy, eye infections, cough, vomiting, TB (specific to Adachar), Pneumonia (specific to Acowa). In some of the camps such as Acowa they noted that HOMAPACK and having trained CORPS in the camps had been very helpful. They however, noted that because of the high population, the medicine was inadequate and the CORPS sometimes were unable to cover all the areas in the camp. They indicated the need to train more



CORPS and provide them with more medicines because some of the Community Owned Resource Persons initially trained had left.

In most of the health centres there are no payments made except where there is a shortage of syringes, the patients have to buy one at 200 shillings. The most common costs are transport related. However, there are isolated cases of charges related to appreciation of services of midwives after delivery, though not mandatory."(GoU, 15 June 2005)

Access to health services in the Teso region;

"Overall, in the three districts, [Soroti, Katakwi, Kaberamaido]the IDP camps assessed in the three districts were within 2 km of reach from a health centre, except in Apeuru Aodot camp in Katakwi district where the nearest Health Unit, Ngariam is over 10 km. Outreach services to this camp are infrequent and do not offer services according to the needs of the IDPs.

In most of the rural camps assessed, there were no health units in the Parish; in the case of Okude, the next health unit is located in Orungo which is about 10 kms away.

In both areas, there is need for ambulance services to ferry the sick to hospital in case of emergency. More especially for complicated deliveries.

Health centres III are relatively nearer to the IDP camps. Main problem cited in all the health units assessed was inadequate medical supplies including drugs and low staffing. This was a concern by the communities as well as the health workers. In rural camps, health units are within 2 kms while the urban camps had the health facilities within the camps. (Not clear, Edward clarify)

Immunization outreach services in Kasilo Corner are said to be infrequent.

Constant lack of drugs in the rural health units such as Kasilo Corner and Atirir. In Amen health unit, depleted stocks and non-availability are a common occurrence.

Even basic supplies like needles and syringes are sometimes not available in Amen, while patients are told to buy from pharmacy shops.

Shortage of health staff in the units.

Maternity services are generally inadequate. In Amen, Orungo and Ngaiam Health Centres III have no adequate staff and equipment to offer Antenatal services. The maternity unit in Orungo camp do not have facilities, no beds and mattresses, no table for midwives, no communication to call for the ambulance services

In Atirir Health Centre IV, mosquito nets distributed to pregnant women during ANC are likely to attract more. In Atirir health unit, ANC attendance and health unit deliveries are said to have increased probably because of the ITN supply through ANC.

But mostMost of the women prefer to deliver at home with a help of TBAs even if the health unit is within the camp.

The maternity unit in Orungo camp do not have facilities, no beds and mattresses, no table for midwives, no communication to call for the ambulance services.

Mental illnesses are seen to be common in all the three districts but there are no drugs. Patients are sometimes referred to Soroti main hospital for treatment.

Immunization outreach services in Kasilo Corner are said to be infrequent. This was also said in the camps visited in Katakwi district. Child days were only observed in Kaberamaido district.

Mortality and morbidity

Although there are no reports on mortality rates, but it was revealed that the main cause of death is malaria especially among children under 5 years.

The top six causes of illnesses in the camps are malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, URTI, HIV/AIDS, skin and eye infections.

Relatively fewer deaths were reported within the last six months.

People claimed re-occurrence of measles among children under 5 years.

#### Nutrition status

Food supplies is inadequate due to insecurity. As a result of the insecurity, IDPs are unable to reach their farms and work for longer hours.

No visible malnutrition was observed.

Vitamin A deficiency and anaemia are not major public health concern."(GoU, 28 February 2005)

### **Health service delivery remains fragmented in IDP camps (February 2005)**

- There are functional district health management teams in the northern districts
- High morbidity and mortality rates in IDP camps
- Crude mortality rate of 2.79/10,000/day for Lira and Pader districts
- In all but the biggest camps, civilians are dependent upon the hospitals and clinics of the urban areas to treat serious cases
- Women have no choice but to deliver in an over-crowded and unhygienic setting of the camps
- Global acute malnutrition ranges between 7 to 21 % whereas 10 % signifies a nutritional emergency

"Health service delivery remains fragmented and opportunistic in many parts of northern Uganda, mirroring health service delivery in the early 1980s in central Uganda. The main difference between the early 2000's in northern Uganda and the early 1980s in central Uganda is the fact that government health services are operating within a national framework and there are functional district health management teams in the northern districts, even though outlying health centres may have little or no staff working in them. Further stress is placed on the system by the large numbers of permanent and temporary internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Northern Uganda, whose numbers have grown in the last year."(DFID, 28 February 2005)

"The third most serious threat reported by interviewed civilians was 'sickness', which many IDPs and night-commuters felt threatened their lives, and the lives of their children in particular. Specific threats related to upper respiratory tract infections, malaria and diarrhoea, all of which find their causes in the fact that displacement has left civilians living in cramped and unsanitary living conditions with little access to water, sanitation, shelter and non-food items which could mitigate the threats of disease. In addition, many IDPs indicated that they were threatened by what they termed "funny diseases" which are killing people on a regular basis. Elaboration showed that these diseases probably relate to pneumonia, tuberculosis, oral-anal thrush and candidiasis, all of which are likely to be HIV/AIDS related. It was clear from discussions that IDPs considered these diseases to have emerged as a direct function of their displacement and their overcrowded living conditions.

Morbidity and mortality rates in IDP camps in particular are high, though little work has been undertaken to establish accurate rates at this time. In spite of this however, some indicative figures were reported by ACF-USA in May 2003, who identified critical mortality rates both among the under-5s (5.67 per 10,000 per day) and the whole IDP population (2.33 per 10,000 per day);

and in December 2003 a nutrition survey released by IMC illustrated the more general situation, highlighting the following

§ Retrospective under-five mortality rate estimated at 12.2/10,000/day, with 26.8% of children dying from fever or suspected malaria, 11.52% from bloody diarrhoea, 10.95% from measles and 6.63% from ARI. For the remaining 31.12% the cause of death was unknown. Crude mortality rate was estimated at 4.8/10,000 per day.

§ Child morbidity as percentage of children falling sick during the two weeks preceding the survey was extremely high. 69.2% of children suffered from fever or suspected malaria, 58.6% had simple diarrhoea and 57.5% suffered ARI.

In November 2004, MSF Holland also reported a crude mortality rate of 2.79/10,000/day for Lira and Pader, with an under 5's mortality rate of 5.4/10,000/day; and in Agweng in particular they reported the shocking under 5's mortality rate of 10.46/10,000/day. The main cause of morbidity was reported to be malaria at 47% of the total, followed by respiratory disease at 28%, and diarrhoeal disease at 21%.

Health care in the majority of IDP camps has also by and large collapsed, with many District health workers often unwilling or unable to remain in the health centres and clinics to provide regular and effective medical care. Thus, in all but the biggest camps, civilians are dependent upon the hospitals and clinics of the urban areas to treat serious cases. In many cases, civilians are just not able to reach these services under current conditions, either due to insecurity along roads, or due to the lack of funds for transport. As such, the conflict threatens the lives of civilians doubly, through the creation of unsanitary living conditions that foster the spread of infection, and through the denial of access to health care."(CSOPNU, 10 December 2004, pp. 74-75)

"Uganda's infant and under-five mortality rates are estimated at 88 and 152 per 1,000 live births, respectively. Malnutrition is an underlying factor in more than half of all under-five deaths annually. Morbidity and mortality rates from other common childhood illnesses are equally high, malaria, diarrhoea, measles and pneumonia being among the top of the list. The IDP population has more than tripled to 1.6 million. Malnutrition rates and morbidity/mortality from common childhood illnesses are reportedly higher in the affected districts than elsewhere in Uganda. In Kitgum GAM rates range between 7.4 and 18.3% of children under five, significantly higher than the 10% that signifies a nutrition emergency (Sphere standards), with severe malnutrition rates between 5% and 10%. Assessments done in these districts presume high morbidity from common illnesses during the preceding two weeks (69% of children under five in Pader and 46% in Kitgum had malaria, 59% in Pader and 31% in Kitgum had diarrhoea, while 58% in Pader and 40% in Kitgum suffered pneumonia). There has been a breakdown of traditional, cultural and support structures and systems as a result of the displacement of populations into camps and exposure to various degrees of psychosocial trauma. The number of child- and women- heads of households has most certainly increased. Lack of parental guidance, limited access to information and services has made children and young people increasingly vulnerable to HIV transmission, threatening to erode the progress made in HIV/AIDS control and prevention in Uganda. HIV prevalence is higher in northern Uganda than in the other parts of the country, with up to 11.9% of pregnant women in Lacor hospital affected, as compared to a national average of 6.2%. Less than half of the population in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader has access to basic health services within five kilometres walking distance. With the escalating conflict, more health units have closed down or are only partly functional. In Kitgum, the doctor/population ratio is 1:33,000 (at the national level it is 1:18,600) while the nurse/population ratio is 1:6,800 and the midwife/population ratio is 1:7,443. Nearly a million IDPs are estimated to have little or no access to basic health services. Pregnant women in particular do not have adequate access to basic maternal health services including ante-natal and emergency obstetric care services. Insecurity

hampers access to referral facilities including TFCs, which are usually located in the trading centres and towns. Furthermore, the length of stay in these referral centres makes it difficult if not impossible for caregivers to accept to accompany referred children to these centres, leaving the rest of the family members unattended. Subsequently, TFC coverage is low (less than 10%) and attrition rates are high. Children are often brought in at a very late stage, contributing to the high mortality rates that have been recorded in the TFCs (10% on average).

The priority needs of the health sector are providing basic preventive services including HIV initiatives to the population, especially women and children, living in the IDP camps; improving access to prompt and appropriate treatment including referral services; improving disease surveillance at community level; and ensuring adequate supplies and commodities. To effectively fulfil these needs, the human resource gaps at district and community levels should be addressed. Non-implementation of suggested initiatives will result in increased suffering and death of the disadvantaged populations living in the IDP camps.

With the huge health gaps in the IDP camps, the approach to solve health problems has to be an integrated one because of the lack of human resources to undertake the needed initiatives. Therefore, provision should be made for a minimum package of initiatives, which will take into account the human resource gaps at the various levels of the health system. The package should include: child health, reproductive health, preventive measures including immunisation and surveillance, as well as basic medical supplies and sanitation schemes. During 2004, UNICEF took the initiative to prepare a comprehensive response plan looking at overall needs (excluding food) for the 1.6 million IDPs. The plan looked at requirements to meet primary education, early childhood development, health and nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation, water and environmental sanitation (WES) and NFI requirements. The total requirements for health and nutrition were estimated at US\$ 242 million."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, pp, 24-25)

"Before the increased insurgency in June 2002, only 50% of the population in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader had access to basic health services. Since then, more health units have closed down and those that are operational are under-staffed as health workers migrated to safer areas. In Gulu and Kitgum only 50% of health centres are functioning with about 60% of health workers present 13. As a consequence, nearly a million IDPs to date are estimated to have no access to basic health services and women have no choice but to deliver in an over-crowded and unhygienic setting of the camps. Global acute malnutrition ranges between 7 to 21 % whereas 10 % signifies a nutritional emergency. Nutrition surveys conducted in Gulu<sup>14</sup>, Kitgum and Pader<sup>15</sup> estimated severe malnutrition at 5-10 %. The same nutrition surveys indicated high levels of morbidity due to malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea among children.

Situations of emergency and conflict fuel HIV/AIDS because of their effect on the basic infrastructure for service delivery, as well as social systems and programmes that facilitate care, support and prevention. HIV prevalence data are reported higher in the north compared to national averages. The Lacor Hospital sentinel site reported 12% HIV prevalence among pregnant women compared to the 5% median for the other 20 sites, with prevalence rising from 10 % among young women (20-24 years) to 21% among women age 30 -- 34 years." (UNOCHA, 15 June 2004)

### **Cholera in IDP camps (June 2005)**

- Case mortality running at 2.5 per cent in Gulu
- In Lira, reports indicate that severe malnutrition cases are increasing
- The Kitgum District HIV/AIDS prevalence rate stands at 7.9 per cent

"In Gulu, cases of cholera in Pabbo, Jengari and Amuru are not decreasing and it is a serious concern. By the end of May the cumulative case load stood at 201 cases. Case mortality was running at 2.5%, which is high. A child died on 31 May. The cholera catastrophe raises the problematic issue of getting Pabbo camp re-planned. Living conditions are still dire and favour cholera becoming a chronic disease in the Pabbo area. The school at the satellite site of Otong is still not ready; the district water office faces challenges at the school water point; there is still insufficient bamboo at Otong for hut construction and WFP have not started separate distributions to the Jengari and Otong. All this is evidence that the infrastructure and services in place are still too inadequate to attract people from Pabbo. Cholera is mainly concentrated in zones FA and FB in the camp - zones with a history of camp fires. Thus congestion remains at the heart of these public health problems.

In Lira, reports indicate that severe malnutrition cases are increasing in the TFCs. Lango College TFC has 184 children, including some from Apac, from about 130 the previous month. During the month, UNICEF conducted support supervision to the three TFCs in the district to streamline reporting and coordination of nutritional activities in the district. The report is being compiled.

ACF-USA completed a nutrition and anthropometric survey in Minakulu, Ngai and Otwal subcounties in Apac. The preliminary report shows that global acute malnutrition is within acceptable levels (4.4%). Camps in Apac do not receive regular food aid.

Reports from Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira and Soroti indicate that the second round of Sub National Immunization Days (SNIDs) for Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) on 7-9 May 2005 were successfully completed with humanitarian actors supporting the District Department of Health Services (DDHS).

#### HIV/AIDS

The Kitgum District HIV/AIDS prevalence rate stands at 7.9%, derived from St. Joseph and Government Hospitals. Information dissemination remains inadequate and government has provided ARVs to cater for at least 100 clients, which falls far short of the needs. To bolster the fight against HIV/AIDS, five NGOs will join the district technical team in drawing a five-year strategic plan for the district with funding from the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC). In addition, the office of the DDHS is to establish a sub-county AIDS task force that will bring services closer to the IDPs.

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate for mothers attending PMTCT services at Kalongo Hospital in Pader district stands at 5.2%. The total number of clients provided with ARVs in the district amounts to 75."(UNOCHA, 27 June 2005)

## **Water and sanitation**

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### **Karamoja experiences lowest safe water coverage and limited access to sanitation (November 2006)**

- Safe water coverage ranges from 17% to 31% in Karamoja-districts, including Kotido and Nakapiripirit
- Low functionality of boerholes
- Villages lack sanitation facilities

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 35:**

“...The Uganda Bureau of Statistics survey 2005 and subsequent analysis by the Economic Policy Research Centre (2006) indicated that the safe water coverage is lowest in Karamoja region and ranges between 17% in Kotido to 31% in Nakapiripirit. The Water and Sanitation Sector Performance Report 2006 (MWE) puts the safe water access in the new Kaabong district at 9%, and sanitation access in Kaabong and Kotido at just 2%. *Manyattas* are generally overcrowded and completely lacking any sanitation facilities. Boreholes that do exist have very low functionality and water sources are routinely shared with animals without proper separation of drainage provisions. Lack of water is one of the major contributory factors to the continuous migration of the Karamojong.”

**Lack of adequate access to water and sanitation causes diseases (November 2006)**

- Water supply systems in return areas in need of repair
- Access to safe water supplies below Sphere standards
- Water and sanitation problems major cause of disease
- Large variation in access to sanitation in IDP camps, but generally below Sphere standards

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg 35:**

“Prior to the displacement of people in the late 80s and early 90s, the water supply systems consisted mainly of open traditional wells, and some few protected springs and hand pump equipped boreholes. All the protected water systems in these return areas are now in a state of disrepair as a result of vandalism or due to old age.

The safe water supply systems in the IDP camps in the Acholi and Lango regions consist mainly of motorised water systems and boreholes equipped with hand pumps. Access to safe water supply in these camps varies from approximately 3.5 l/p/d in Apac/Oyam to 12 l/p/d in Kitgum/Pader against the sphere standards of 15 l/p/d. The main challenge is maintaining functionality, particularly for powered water systems, through setting up of effective operations and maintenance systems with a clear indication of the sources of funding for related costs. In the return areas the safe water access is as low as 37% in Apac and 39% in Pader districts

The lack of access to clean and safe drinking water places a heavy burden on women and children who bear the primary responsibility for collecting water in the majority of households in the North. The most prevalent diseases afflicting the population have direct links to poor water supply and environmental sanitation. For example, the recurring cholera epidemic in the region is as a result of unsafe drinking water and poor sanitation.

Access to sanitation in the IDP camps stands approximately at 40 persons per latrine stance to, against the Sphere standards of 20 persons per stance. The regional household latrine coverage is estimated at 33%, compared to a national average of 48%.[...] There is, however, a wide variation of coverage from district to district (as low as 4% in Karamoja sub-region and over 46% in districts in the north-west). In most of the return areas sanitation facilities have virtually all collapsed over the period of displacement. Coverage of public latrines is also very low (19%),

with most of these latrines located in schools, markets and health units. Poor sanitation in schools reflects negatively on retention, especially of female children, exacerbating high school drop-out rates.

...The Uganda Bureau of Statistics survey 2005 and subsequent analysis by the Economic Policy Research Centre (2006) indicated that the safe water coverage is lowest in Karamoja region and ranges between 17% in Kotido to 31% in Nakapiripirit. The Water and Sanitation Sector Performance Report 2006 (MWE) puts the safe water access in the new Kaabong district at 9%, and sanitation access in Kaabong and Kotido at just 2%. *Manyattas* are generally overcrowded and completely lacking any sanitation facilities. Boreholes that do exist have very low functionality and water sources are routinely shared with animals without proper separation of drainage provisions. Lack of water is one of the major contributory factors to the continuous migration of the Karamojong.”

### **IDP Population affected by drought spells; access to water linked to protection issues and rights abuses (May 2006)**

- IDP population affected by drought spells, UNICEF estimates 6.2 litres per person per day, far below Sphere standards.
- Need better coordination to ensure access to water in camps created as a result of decongestion.
- Often military controls water points which causes protection issues
- NGOS often use local contractors to install water points/boreholes, raising concern regarding the quality of boreholes and their frequent breakdown

#### **UNOCHA, 4 May 2006:**

”Although the sector strategies defined in the 2006 CHAP/CAP remain valid, there is a need to strengthen efforts to expand access to water and sanitation facilities in all displacement camps and in areas where populations will be returning. These efforts will require significant additional resources particularly where access to water involves walking considerable distance or water tables are low. Furthermore, specific plans and strategies must be put in place to ensure adequate preparedness for return and reintegration in the Lango and Teso regions. To ensure sustainability, various technological options and supply chain will be considered as the service delivery expands.

In the past six months, the internally displaced population in northern Uganda and the Karamoja region have been affected by drought spells, further limiting the already poor access levels to clean and safe water. Recent estimates by United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reconfirmed the average of about 6.2 litres per person per day amongst the displaced families in northern Uganda in December 2005. This is far below the SPHERE standard of 15 l/p/day. The high costs of construction and drilling of water facilities in areas where groundwater levels are very low is further worsening the situation. This is the case in large areas of Kitgum, and parts of Lira districts, as well as Karamoja region.

The Government has now declared a policy of decongestion of IDPs in the Acholi sub-region and of immediate return and resettlement of IDPs in the Lango and Teso regions. This development provides a major challenge in the provision of water and sanitation services. There is an urgent need for better coordination of partners and of additional resources to meet these challenges.”

#### **InterAction, January 2006:**

A major protection issue associated with poor water supply and poor sanitation in IDP camps involves the risk of abduction, sexual violence, beatings and other abuses, committed primarily

against women and girls. This is often the case when people are forced to leave the camp to get water because the supply inside is inadequate due to overcrowding, commandeering of water by the UPDF, poor water pressure or broken water pumps or spigots.

A second major concern involves the adequacy of water supply for each family and the possibility of water-borne diseases, especially cholera. There have already been several cholera outbreaks in the IDP camps in Northern Uganda.

Thirdly, poor water supplies in the camps results in children being sent for water outside, or to locations away from their homes within the camps, which places them at risk of abduction by the LRA and sexual assault. They also miss school time. Fourthly, a poor water supply can negatively affect human dignity. In the IDP camps in Northern Uganda, water is used first for drinking, then for cooking and cleaning dishes, and often last for bathing and washing clothes. It is an indignity to be forced to go without bathing or clean clothing due to a lack of water. The Ministry of Health study cited above revealed that water availability in Gulu, Pader and Kitgum districts fell below the 15 litres per person per day recommended in the *Sphere Minimum Guidelines for Disaster Assistance*, and collection times were high [...].

In targeting camps, humanitarian agencies should include consideration of protection concerns, such as attacks and abductions that occur as a result of water shortages or the location of water supplies, as well as health matters. The widespread use of contractors has raised questions for some NGOs about the quality of work (leading to frequent repairs or sub-standard completion of jobs leading to non-operability), as well as the level of awareness of protection issues. Contractors may not routinely report on problems with the population's access to water, abuses at water points etc.

One suggestion involves the development of a one-page checklist that water engineers, laborers and contractors are trained to fill out on each visit to a water site for a predetermined period of time, in order to obtain a baseline of the problems in a particular area. Eventually, it is held, water engineers/workers will understand the connections between water and protection and may pick up additional information. They will also come to understand the importance of their work beyond the provision of clean water, and see that water problems require urgent solutions.

Whatever the particular response in different camps to address different situations, it is clearly time for a concerted effort on the part of NGOs, working in partnership with IDPs and district officials, to concentrate on water and sanitation as a primary protection concern. The specific protection consequences related to water and poor sanitation are detailed below.

#### **4.2.1 Water and Sanitation Problems Relating to Protection**

##### *Insufficient water supply*

During the third quarter of 2005, UNICEF estimated that the water availability in camps in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts was 4-8 litres per person per day. That is far short of the 15 litres per person per day recommended in the Sphere guidelines. A USAID team visiting the North noted waits of up to six hours for water at hand pump collection sites, a situation that is forcing families to use water from unsafe surface sources, increasing the risk of disease [...]. "The issue of water is very serious," the camp manager reported in Awer Camp, Gulu District. "There are eight boreholes but two are not working. There are two shallow wells but one is not working. If one were to divide the camp into zones, some zones have no water. There are eight protected springs, but three are not working." "We don't have enough water. If you come in the morning you can wait [a very long time] for water at the water point in the camp", women leaders at Atanga Camp in Kitgum Sub-District said.



"There are seven boreholes in the camp but only two have good pressure. There is a stream behind here, about 1½ miles away; people fear going there but they go there anyway. The rebels use that stream also. The stream is about it. A month back a man went to cut firewood with his son near that stream but the UPDF killed him and arrested the son.... The UPDF said they did this because they didn't want anyone moving along the stream." [...].

During the mission for this report, long lines for water were observed at Bala Stock Camp in Lira, where arguments broke out over water, and at Atanga Camp in Kitgum.

#### *Deliberate denial of access to water*

Commandeering of water points by UPDF soldiers was reported in Kitgum. Several NGOs have intervened when the military took over water points and, in some cases, were successful in regaining access for IDPs. There have been reports of girls and women having to engage in sex to secure access to water points."

### **Access to Water remains serious problem (October 2005)**

- Most IDPs collect water from unprotected sources
- A sizeable minority lived on less than 5L per person per day
- IDP households needed a mean of 2.7 hours to collect water, Sphere standards say queuing at water sources should not exceed 15 minutes

"Clean water shortfalls are most acute in camps whose populations exceed 10,000, as requirements surpass the production capacity of available point sources. Moderate supplies (of 10-15 litres per person per day) are available in the smaller, older camps. Most displaced families use unsafe water sources. Against the Sphere Standards of 1 latrine stance for 20 persons, and the Ugandan school standard of 1 stance for 40 pupils, current coverage for sanitation facilities coverage ranges from 15 percent in Kitgum, to 19 percent in the "night commuter" shelter sites in Gulu and to 43 percent in the camps in Gulu (64 percent in schools).

Access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services remains critical including for the prevention of cholera and other water-borne diseases in the IDP camps. UNICEF has supported the construction of 200 five-stance latrines and 25 water systems, repairs to 120 boreholes and drilling of 20 boreholes. The construction of motorised pumps has benefited approximately 50,000 IDPs" (UNICEF, October 2005).

#### "3.7.1 Source of drinking water

Ten households in Gulu District, 10 in Gulu Municipality, 4 in Kitgum District and 5 in Pader District

collected no water on the day before the survey.

Of the remainder, 87.6% (3329/3830, 95% CI 84.0% to 91.2%) throughout Acholi region reported that

they collected most of the previous day's drinking water from a protected source, mostly consisting of boreholes, with a consistent pattern throughout surveyed populations (Table 14).

Table 14. Source of drinking water among households who collected water on the day before the survey, by surveyed population. Northern Uganda IDP camps, 2005.

	Gulu District <sup>§</sup>		Gulu Municipality <sup>†</sup>		Kitgum District		Pader District <sup>‡</sup>	
<b>Protected sources</b>	833	88.5%	847	89.4%	828	86.7%	821	86.2%
(95% CI)	(82.6%-94.5%)		(82.5%-96.2%)		(80.6%-92.8%)		(78.6%-93.7%)	
protected tap	55	5.8%	355	37.5%	116	12.2%	66	6.9%
protected spring	83	8.8%	166	17.5%	0	0.0%	6	0.6%
protected borehole	695	73.9%	326	34.4%	712	74.6%	749	78.6%
<b>Unprotected sources</b>	108	11.5%	101	10.6%	127	13.3%	132	13.8%
(95% CI)	(5.5%-17.4%)		(3.8%-17.5%)		(7.2%-19.4%)		(6.3%-21.4%)	
unprotected well	84	8.9%	64	6.8%	37	3.9%	95	10.0%
stream or river	23	2.4%	14	1.5%	90	9.4%	36	3.8%
water seller	0	0.0%	23	2.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
other/unclear	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total households</b>	<b>941</b>		<b>948</b>		<b>955</b>		<b>953</b>	

<sup>§</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>†</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>‡</sup> Information missing for 1 household.

### 3.7.2 Quantity of water collected

Overall, the entire Acholi region IDP population collected a mean of 10.3 L (95% CI 9.9 to 10.7) of water per person on the day before the survey. In each survey population, less than one third of households collected 15 L per person or more, considered the minimum acceptable standard in an emergency (Table 15).<sup>4</sup> A sizeable minority (5.9% in Gulu Municipality to 18.4% in Pader District) lived on less than 5 L per person per day.

Table 15. Quantity of water per person collected on the day before the survey, by surveyed population. Northern Uganda IDP camps, 2005.

	Gulu District <sup>5</sup>		Gulu Municipality <sup>7</sup>		Kitgum District		Pader District <sup>8</sup>	
less than 5 L	103	10.8%	56	5.9%	166	17.3%	176	18.4%
5 to 9 L	344	36.2%	274	28.6%	398	41.5%	440	45.9%
10 to 14 L	298	31.4%	324	33.8%	245	25.6%	233	24.3%
15 L or above	205	21.6%	304	31.7%	150	15.6%	109	11.4%
<b>mean L/person/day</b>	<b>11.0</b>		<b>12.8</b>		<b>9.7</b>		<b>8.8</b>	
(95% CI)	(10.2-11.7)		(12.1-13.5)		(9.0-10.5)		(8.3-9.3)	

<sup>5</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>7</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>8</sup> Information missing for 1 household.

### 3.7.3 Waiting time for water collection

Considering the entirety of Acholi region, households needed a mean of 2.7 hours (95% CI 2.5 to 2.9) to collect water on the day before the survey (i.e. time elapsed between bringing of water containers to source and returning to household with filled containers). Only a minority of households took less than one hour to collect their water (Table 16), and, in Kitgum and Pader Districts, around half needed four or more hours for this activity, with peaks of 12 hours. Time for water collection was also high (mean 2.0, 95% CI 1.6 to 2.4), though slightly lower than the overall mean, among households who used protected taps for their drinking water. Sphere Standards currently specify that queuing time at water sources should not exceed 15 minutes.<sup>4</sup> In this survey, only 139/3795 (2.7%) of households collected their water in less than 15 minutes.

Table 16. Time (in hours) taken by the household to collect water on the day before the survey, by surveyed population, Northern Uganda IDP camps, 2005.

	Gulu District <sup>4</sup>		Gulu Municipality <sup>1</sup>		Kitgum District		Pader District <sup>2</sup>	
less than 1 hour	271	28.9%	409	43.1%	67	7.0%	45	4.7%
1 to 2 hours	178	19.0%	275	29.0%	98	10.3%	117	12.3%
2 to 3 hours	194	20.7%	158	16.7%	155	16.2%	176	18.5%
3 to 4 hours	131	14.0%	63	6.7%	154	16.1%	189	19.8%
4 or more hours	165	17.6%	43	4.5%	481	50.4%	426	44.7%
mean time (hours)	2.0		1.3		3.6		3.5	
(95% CI)	(1.8-2.3)		(1.2-1.4)		(3.2-4.0)		(3.2-3.7)	

<sup>1</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>2</sup> Information missing for 2 households. <sup>3</sup> Information missing for 1 household.

" (MoH, September 2005).

### Water sector requires flexible budget rules to adapt to situation in the North (September 2005)

"Water and Sanitation services in the North

The situation in the Northern districts of Uganda especially with its rapidly changing dynamics should be addressed urgently. Necessary data on the IDPs and their future plans to return to their homes and; strengthen of districts and LGs capacities are just as important as flexibility on budget rules taking into account special conflict and post conflict situations" (GoU, September 2005).

### The vast majority of IDP camps face a water crisis (July 2005)

- The number of water points available in all camps is woefully inadequate
- In almost every camp women must move in groups to try and fetch water from unprotected sources
- Curfews placed by the UPDF in the IDP camps adds to difficulties of fetching water
- Over crowding, limited water supply and poor sanitation have contributed to disease outbreaks
- Conservative estimates in Gulu district put usage at 6 litres per person per day
- Deforestation, lowering water tables and the rapid filling up of deep pits

For a detailed account of water and sanitation coverage in Gulu and Lira, see; [Action contre la Faim](#).

"A lack of water in war-ravaged northern Uganda has caused an increase in water-borne diseases, the medical charity, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)-Holland, said on Monday.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in camps in the northern district of Lira were living on less than three litres of water per person per day, MSF said in a statement.

"The internationally acceptable standards are 15 litres per person per day," Peter Muller, head of mission for MSF in the capital, Kampala, told IRIN while on a visit to the northern district of Kitgum.

MSF said morbidity data from its clinics in Lira district showed that diarrhoea, at 12 percent of cases, was the second most common ailment after malaria, while 6 percent of patients had worms, another water-related ailment.

Despite the recent rise in Lira's IDP population from 120,000 to 170,000 after people moved from camps near the main town of Lira to rural camps closer to their villages, district authorities have made no major improvements to water supply.

The MSF statement said IDPs were limited to two means of accessing the inadequate water supply: they could either queue for more than three hours at one of the water points in the camps, or venture outside, where they risked being attacked by the notoriously brutal rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

"As a result, people collect contaminated water from the streets when it is raining, and from rivers and springs that surround the camps, leading to an increase of water-related illnesses," the agency noted.

Government officials said since the beginning of June, at least 38 people had died from cholera in four areas across the country, including Kampala.

"The death toll in Arua district [northwestern Uganda] has gone up to 24 by today [Monday], with 204 cases reported," said Alfred Driwale, medical officer of the government intervention and coordination effort in Arua.

Three people had died in the capital and four in the northwestern district of Nebbi, while seven more, including two government soldiers, had died in the northern district of Gulu, where 690 cases have been reported, mainly in the IDP camps.

According to MSF, the displaced population in the north faced major sanitation problems: almost a quarter had no access to a latrine, and those who did had to share it with at least 60 other people. "Waste management is virtually nonexistent and the burning of waste poses serious fire hazards to the grass-roofed huts in the dry season."

The agency said it had started improving the water and sanitation situation by drilling 28 boreholes, repairing hand pumps and rehabilitating springs to increase the amount of safe drinking water, while constructing waste pumps and building more than 3,000 latrines to establish hygienic sanitary facilities in Lira district." (IRIN, 12 July 2005)

"Since November 2004 there has been an increase in the amount of water available for IDPs. The shortfalls are worse where camp populations exceed 10,000 persons, as the water

requirements easily outstrip the potential production from the limited number of point sources available. Only in the older smaller camps, which host about a quarter of the IDP population in Gulu and Kitgum, are moderate supplies available (10-15 litres/person/day). Most IDPs use unsafe sources, and the provision of sanitary facilities remains poor. Against the Sphere Standards of one latrine stance for 20 persons and the Ugandan school standard of one for 40 pupils, coverage ranges from 15% in Kitgum, 19% in the night commuter centres in Gulu, to 43% in the registered camps in Gulu (and 64% in schools there). Presently there is a looming humanitarian crisis in the Karamoja region owing to cyclical droughts, and therefore the need for the Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) sector to clearly assess the situation and response required."(UNOCHA, 22 June 2005)

*Kitgum* - In response to fears of looming epidemics as a result of appalling sanitation and inadequate water supply amongst IDPs in Orom and a number of satellite camps in its periphery, UNICEF distributed 230 cartons (5,750 bars) of laundry soap and 5,642 pieces of jerry cans to IDPs in Orom Trading Center on 13 November. Concurrently, ICRC distributed jerry cans to some 450 households, chlorinated water sources and supported the local Red Cross to carryout hygiene education in Akilok, a satellite camp about 12 kilometers north of Orom, which witnessed an outbreak of cholera early November. Chicken Pox, diarrhoea and malaria remain prevalent amongst the IDPs in the region but the district health officials say the outbreak of cholera in Akilok has been contained.

*Teso* – In Katakwi access to water in sub-county camps is less than 5 litres per person per day and requires urgent attention. Deep well boreholes are required, as the increasing number of latrines will almost certainly contaminate shallow wells. Motorised options should be considered where large numbers of people live. In Soroti, with the decreased number of IDPs living in town compared to the beginning of 2004, access to water for those remaining has improved. However, the threat of water being disconnected by NWSC remains due to unsettled water bills accrued in IDP camps. However, according to the Assistant Commissioner for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, both NWSC Headquarters and OPM have agreed that water shall not be turned off from IDP camps inspite of the delays in settling the water bills. In Kaberamaido, the limited number of people living in IDP camps has resulted in reasonable water supply to the main camps. However, the district water coverage seems to be inadequate and people have to walk long distances to collect water in many areas.

Sanitation in all camps in the region continues to be an area of concern. Hygiene campaigns should be complemented with support with tools (for digging pit) and making slabs.

In Lira, IRC and ACF drilled a number of boreholes and rehabilitated others in various locations. The District Water department confirmed they would continue to work in return areas as the NGOs are covering the camps."(OCHA, 29 December 2004)

### **Water and sanitation sector in Karamajong affected areas generally worse than in Acholiland (June 2005)**

- Poor latrine ratio in camps
- Hard underground rock makes it difficult to dig
- Bathing shelters of grass
- Some IDP camps have no pit latrines at all
-

## "WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

### 8.1. Latrine facilities.

All the 12 camps visited [Inter-agency assessment of camps in Ngariam, Kapujan, Omodoi, Obalanga, Acowa, Usuk, Ongongoja, Magoro, Toroma, Ngariam and Kapelebyong Sub Counties.] had very few latrines compared to their populations. Latrines were communally owned. For example, 5 families use one latrine stance. In other camps, slabs were given to block committees based on their populations. Concern WW distributed a number of slabs in most LRA induced camps using this criterion. In Acowa camp, construction of latrines was hampered by the nature of soils (collapsing soil formation). A team of technical people talked to recommended the construction of Ecosan pit latrines which they said were fairly expensive to construct compared to ordinary pits. Because of poor hygiene practices, pressure on the existing pits, which were filling up, the use of bushes was a common practice in most camps visited.

The other hindrance to the construction of latrines was the presence of very hard laterite (underground rock) which made sinking of pits very difficult. This was evidenced in Akoboi and Kapelebyong camps. This demoralised the IDPs enthusiasm to dig pit latrines. Lack of excavation tools (pick axes, spades, hoes, etc) also accounted for the small number of pit latrines most especially in Usuk camps (olilim, Akoboi, Oongora, Aketa and palam). In Obalanga it was observed that Mobilets were built at the main camp where a bigger population had now reduced as IDPs returned to their homes. For example people moved into small camps like Angica, Amootom, Aeket, leaving these facilities at the main camp where they could not access them.

### 8.2. Bathing shelters.

These were generally few in all 12 camps visited. Most LRA induced camps had modern bathing shelters built out of iron sheets, cemented floors and had partitions for men and women. In Karamojong induced camps, the few bathing shelters were built using grass with very unhygienic conditions.

### 8.3. Water, Sanitation and hygiene.

The water and sanitation situation was poor in most camps. Aketa camp at the time of the assessment had 2 boreholes serving a population of 7,800. Some camps had a number of boreholes broken down. For example Orungo Corner had 4 boreholes but only one was functioning and serving a population of 2,195 IDPs at the time of the assessment. Use of swamp water and shallow wells was very common in the camps visited. The environment around the water sources was always dirty. Animals like cattle, pigs, goats, e.t.c drunk and played in the pool of water at the end of drain channels. This causes contamination to the source and broken aprons. The bath shelter was usually grass thatched without proper privacy being used by both sexes. There was no sign of hand washing facilities.

The number of pit latrines was far below the Sphere standards, for example Olilim Camp which had a population of 3,558 had 4 pit latrines which were being dug, Oongora camp had a population of 2,877 with 7 pit latrines and 2 borehole, and therefore the ration was 1:411 for latrine usage. At the time of the assessment, some camps had no pit latrines e.g. Akoboi (343 IDPs) and Angica (815 IDPs) which were newly created by IDPs to enable them access their own land.

## Recommendations

1. Constructing and rehabilitating boreholes in areas of need
2. Recruit, train and equip at least one pump mechanic for camps in need. The trained persons must be living in the camps
3. Provide a set of digging tools [e.g. pick axe, spade] to each camp and probably slab to raise sanitation [latrine] coverage which stands below 12% in all camps

4. Test the quality of water used in camps to curb water borne diseases e.g. diarrhoea, typhoid, dysentery.
5. Encourage and conduct sanitation and hygiene promotion campaigns in all camps."(GoU, 15 June 2005)

#### **Average number of 2698 persons per water source in Gulu camps (January 2004)**

- 69% of households collecting less than eighty litres of water per day
- 37% of people live further than 500m from the nearest water source
- Over 70% of women are responsible for the collection of daily water needs
- 88% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of water available
- 67% of total respondents continue to remember the training they received in the promotion of good hygiene practices
- 73% of respondents report no cultural beliefs on excreta disposal
- 34% of respondents report shortage of space as an obstacle to latrine construction

"All agencies currently working on water and sanitation interventions in Gulu District are providing services that are having a positive impact on improving quality of life in the camps despite the numerous challenges faced in terms of security, accessibility and coordination. But more needs to be done.

- Water coverage is poor in the camps, with an average number of 2698 persons per water source.
- 69% of households collecting less than eighty litres of water per day. In other words, rather than the Sphere recommendation of twenty litres per person per day, each person has eleven litres per day. In addition, 37% of people live further than 500m from the nearest water source.
- All respondents have access to adequate and separate water collection and storage containers.
- Over 70% of women are responsible for the collection of daily water needs.
- 88% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of water available.
- The level of water and sanitation services provided in the camp schools is far from sufficient. Amuru, among others for example, with 438 school children has only four latrine stances, providing coverage of over 109 persons per latrine. However, Paicho with 1070 children with 40 latrines has a coverage that almost meets the standards set out with coverage of 26 persons per latrine, as does Purongo at 20 persons.
- 60% of respondents are not happy with care provided by existing health facilities.
- 67% of total respondents continue to remember the training they received in the promotion of good hygiene practices, this is probably an indication of the effectiveness of the training provided and the organizations that provided that training. However, there are variances between camps.
- Health institutions blame fouling of water sources for over 59% of water-related diseases. Poor household hygiene is also at fault, with institutions attributing 32% of diseases to this.
- 73% of respondents report no cultural beliefs on excreta disposal.
- 85% of respondents do not have access to public latrines.
- 34% of respondents report shortage of space as an obstacle to latrine construction.
- 50% of households practice controlled dumping with 37% of IDPs practicing open dumping. 45% of respondents feel that controlled dumping to be easiest and most accessible, although only 10% consider it to be hygienic.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Coordination must be improved.
- Pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the environment must be reflected and recognised in the design and implementation of any interventions.
- Local capacities must be used and built upon. To have a more sustainable impact, supply/transfer of skills should also be an essential element.
- Agencies should look at ways of making water user fees work for the communities.”  
(CRS, 31 January 2004)

## Shelter and non-food items

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### Wave of fires striking congested IDPs camps (February 2005)

- 30,000 IDPs left homeless following a wave of fires in congested camps
- An estimated 4,050 grass-thatched huts were burnt down in one camp
- Children in are sleeping in the school

"In northern Uganda, overcrowded conditions in camps for people forced to flee their homes because of armed conflict are proving fatal for some residents. Because huts are built in extremely close proximity to one another and sanitary conditions are poor, fire and disease can spread rapidly - with deadly effect.

In total, approximately 1.4 million people who have been forced from their homes by the 19-year-long armed conflict are living in more than 200 camps. Since mid-December 2004, 10 fires have broken out in camps in Gulu District. The fires have all been attributed to cramped living conditions, exacerbated by the current dry season. Even the smallest accidental spark can ignite a blaze.

In late January 2005, fires in the Acet camp, in southwest Gulu, killed two children and one adult. More than 4,000 huts were burned, causing a massive loss of personal property. Latrine blocks were destroyed, and displaced people were forced out of their homes yet again; children had to sleep in temporary learning centres in the camp.

UNICEF and partners have been responding to the outbreaks of fire with immediate provision of blankets, tarpaulins, cooking utensils and other emergency shelter and household items. A team is also advocating with local district governments for measures to help prevent the outbreak of fires in the camps.

One reason for the crowding of huts in camps is simple fear: residents prefer to build their huts in those areas of the camp where government troops can provide better protection against attacks by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). UNICEF is calling on the government to provide more protection for people living in the areas which spill over the camps' original boundaries.

Crowding has other harmful effects as well. Congested conditions were the key reason behind a spate of cholera cases in Pabbo, the largest camp in Gulu, last October and November. The disease spread easily because of poor water and sanitation conditions. Although the outbreak was contained, overall concerns remain about the possibility of additional cases."(UNICEF, 10 February 2005)

"The conflict in northern Uganda has devastated the livelihoods of the population as the LRA continues to attack civilians, abduct children, loot household belongings, and burn huts. This is further aggravated by the fact that the IDP camps have experienced several serious fires in which thousands of huts have been gutted down in more than half of the total IDPs camps in Gulu for example. In response to these fires, support in terms of non-food items (NFI) was provided to the affected households."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, pp, 20-21)

The complex and unpredictable security situation has forced people to continued encampment with limited access to essential household and shelter items through regular humanitarian assistance. In the affected districts as many as 90% of the population live in IDP camps. In recent months, some camps were established which were not recognised by the authorities and hence had no protection or any basic infrastructure. It is estimated that in Gulu district 85,000 to 100,000 persons live in such camps and do not receive regular humanitarian assistance, including NFIs. This should change with the government's decision to recognise all camps. The situation requires effective, strategic and regular support beyond the current emergency interventions. Even if peace were to return, it is expected that the displaced populations' needs for non-food items will be significant and IDPs will remain dependent on humanitarian assistance during the resettlement and recovery phase.

"Three people have been killed and 30,000 left homeless following a wave of fires that struck a number of camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Uganda, relief workers said on Monday.

'Three people, two of them children, were killed in the fires,' Eliane Duthoit, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Uganda, told IRIN.

The most devastating fire hit Acet IDP camp, 44 km east of the regional capital, Gulu. An estimated 4,050 grass-thatched huts were burnt down, destroying all property and food stored in them.

'Six out of seven zones in the [Acet] camp were completely destroyed. We are asking the people and the government to put in place some fire-breaks because we cannot go on like this,' Duthoit added.

Earlier reports from local leaders suggested that at least nine people, eight of them children, were killed when the fire swept through the camp on Saturday, but relief workers could only confirm three deaths.

Another fire destroyed 1,548 huts in Lira on Friday. According to relief workers, other fires were reported in Keyo and Cope camps in Gulu, where 200 and 50 huts were destroyed respectively. Gulu is 380 km north of the Ugandan capital, Kampala.

Andrew Timpson, head of OCHA in Gulu, told IRIN: "The destruction has been extensive. The people have lost everything including food and non-food items. Children in Acet are sleeping in the school." (IRIN, 24 January 2005).

### **More assistance to LRA than Karamajong induced camps (June 2005)**

- Most households lacked blankets, mosquito nets, clothes, saucepans, plates, cups, jerry cans, basins and sanitary pads

- Coverage of household NFIs had been targeting mainly LRA induced camps but not Karamojong affected camps

#### "9.1. Shelter

Shelter in all camps was inadequate in terms of floor space area. Families exceeding 6 persons had a maximum of two huts, built out of mud blocks, poles, grass and very weak doors. Huts were shared with property and poultry for few households who own them. Grass, mud blocks and poles were available and easily accessible. The existing gap was materials for making of reinforced doors

#### 9.2 Household non food items.

All the 89 households visited in Karamojong induced camps did not have even the very basic household NFIs (Blankets, Mosquito nets, clothes, Saucepans, plates, cups, jerry cans, basins, sanitary pads, etc). It was noticed that about 6 to 8 children shared one blanket/bed sheet. Most adults could afford only a pair of clothes, children put on rags that were stinking because their parents were unable to raise money for buying soap, most families had a maximum of two cups and plates, sometimes families ate in shifts and serving of bread (atap/Kalo) on leaves to become the order of the day for example in Olilim. Coverage of household NFIs had been targeting mainly LRA induced camps but not Karamojong affected camps. In Angica (LRA induced camp), it was observed that each household received a kit of NFIs from Uganda Red Cross Society with a composition of 2 cooking pots, 2 jerry cans, 3 blankets, 5 aluminium cups, 5 aluminium plates and 7.2 kgs of soap between April and May,2005. The same kits were distributed in Angedaiteng, Osukunya, Amootom, Aeket, Opuko, Agulia, Morungatung and Olwa camps. Concern, CCF, Unicef and Medair equally provided lot of NFIs (jerry cans, mosquito nets, basins and saucepans) in a number of LRA induced camps. This means that over 90% of humanitarian aid given by agencies in Katakwi camps from the year 2003 was/is channelled to LRA induced camps."

#### **IDPs in urgent need for shelter in Lira district (March 2004)**

- The majority of the shelters are made of card boards, polythene papers or tarpaulins
- Other camp in- mates like in Apala, Abia reside and sleep under trees or structures without roofs
- Most of the people fled without beddings and even clothes and squat under tents on bare muram floors

"Urgent need for shelter: The camp residents live in temporary shelters but the quality and the protection usefulness of these shelters are highly questionable. Except for the camp at Olaka, where reasonable stable materials have been used to construct shelters, the majority of the shelters are made of card boards, polythene papers or tarpaulins for the lucky ones. Other camp in- mates like in Apala, Abia reside and sleep under trees or structures without roofs. It is still dry season in Lira but the rains are about to fall and when it does the shelter needs of these people will be very acute.

Most of the people fled without beddings and even clothes and squat under tents on bare muram floors. We saw many vulnerable people particularly the elderly and children who complained of lack of beddings and clothes. We could not convince ourselves that there was an institutional system in the camps to address the specific needs of such vulnerable people. With the return of rains one cannot rule out the on set of disease of epidemic proportions in some of the camps which are over crowded." (Uganda Human Rights Commission, 31 March 2004)

# ACCESS TO EDUCATION

## General

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### Access to education generally hindered, especially in Karamoja (November 2006)

- Effective and efficient education service delivery in IDP camps still hampered
- Particularly grave situation in Karamoja
- Uneven distribution of education and resources
- Resource mobilization for education still a challenge

#### UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 27:

“Despite the progress made, effective and efficient education service delivery in the IDP camps is still hampered by a host of factors. Access to ECD centres amongst children three to five years remains low, largely attributable to low community awareness and capacity to initiate and sustain ECD centres in spite of the high appreciation of their contribution to children’s development where they have been established. Kitgum, Pader and Gulu Districts are still grappling with poor service delivery indicators. For example, Kitgum District is characterised by a pupil/class room ratio Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) of 91:1, a pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) of 100:1, pupil/stance ratio (PSR) of 110:1, and only 26% of qualified teachers are female.[...] In Gulu District, the average PCR is still as high as 175:1 while the estimated PSR is 90:1. While the average PTR for Gulu District is estimated at 67:1, some learning centres still have extremely high ratios (Wii-Anono 253:1, Omee 175:1, and Wi-Anoka 150:1) [...]. Lack of instructional materials and high teacher absenteeism,[...] reflecting poor supervisory and management practices, is characteristic of the schools in the conflict affected districts and greatly contributes to the poor quality of the teaching learning process and outcomes. Over half of the 23% of Ugandan children who have never been to school is found in the northern districts, while school dropout rates are reported to be as high as 70% especially amongst girls in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts. Return areas are also faced with similar problems. For example, schools in Otuboi sub-county of Kaberamaido district were estimated to have PTR of 142:1 and PCR of 116:1.

In the case of the Karamoja, one must turn to key indicators such as completion and net intake rates to fully appreciate the extent of the problem. None of the districts in Karamoja come anywhere near the 48% completion and 58% net intake rates nationally (Kotido has the highest in the sub-region at 35% and 20% respectively). While in general, girls are not much worse of than boys in terms of the net intake rate, in all the districts for which sex disaggregated data is available indicate that the former are consistently disadvantaged (Kaboong: 9% boys vs.3% girls; Kotido: 26% boys vs.14% girls; Moroto: 14% boys vs. 6% girls; Nakapiripirit: 11% boys vs. 4% girls).

The partnership mapping undertaken under the leadership of the Emergency Education Coordination Group reveals uneven distribution of education partners and resources with the Karamoja sub-region and Pader district in the north, and remote areas in all districts being the least served. It also draws attention to the modest scale of activities (e.g. non-formal education/accelerated learning) even in places where relatively many partners are present, such as Gulu. Resource mobilisation for education continues to be a challenge as evidenced by the funding gaps for projects identified in the CAP.”

## **Access to education in Karamoja worse than in other parts of the country (November 2006)**

### **UN, 30 November 2006, Pg 27:**

"In the case of the Karamoja, one must turn to key indicators such as completion and net intake rates to fully appreciate the extent of the problem. None of the districts in Karamoja come anywhere near the 48% completion and 58% net intake rates nationally (Kotido has the highest in the sub-region at 35% and 20% respectively). While in general, girls are not much worse of than boys in terms of the net intake rate, in all the districts for which sex disaggregated data is available indicate that the former are consistently disadvantaged (Kaboong: 9% boys vs.3% girls; Kotido: 26% boys vs.14% girls; Moroto: 14% boys vs. 6% girls; Nakapiripirit: 11% boys vs. 4% girls)."

## **Access to education remains critical (May 2006)**

- 60 percent of primary schools in northern Uganda remained displaced due to insecurity
- FAFO reports that education system is functioning in IDP camps

### **UNOCHA, 4 May 2006, pg 12:**

"The closure of many schools in the northern and north-eastern regions of Uganda has led to the exclusion of at least 23% of school-age children from primary schooling. Primary school completion rates are extremely low (1.3% on average) in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Apac, Lira, Moroto, Kotido and Nakapiripirit compared to the national average of 22%. The levels of trauma and depression in children and their teachers have negative effects on the retention and achievement of all children and overall, girls' participation in education is lower than that of boys. In the districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit in the Karamoja region, only 21%, 19% and 17%, respectively, of 6-12 year-olds attend school - the lowest attendance rates in the country [...].

Girls are often removed from school due to socio-economic, cultural or security reasons, including early marriage, the need to perform domestic or other chores and lack of money to pay related costs. For the children who miss out, there is a shortage of alternative or non-formal educational facilities and materials both in Karamoja and across the northern region."

### **UNICEF, October 2005:**

"On average nationally, only 2 percent of children aged 3-5 have access to ECD sites, with services constrained by low capacity of communities to initiate and sustain the sites. An estimated 25 percent of children of primary school going age are out of school in the north. 60 percent of the approximately 1,200 primary schools in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira and Apac districts have been displaced due to insecurity".

### **FAFO, September 2005:**

"It is difficult to point to any positive aspects of the camp experience. However, one of the very few, may be the education system that has been established in the camps. The government deserves credit for this. All camps have a school, although some of them are still not officially recognised and are therefore referred to as 'bush-schools'. These are schools established by a former teacher or another camp inhabitants with some level of higher education.

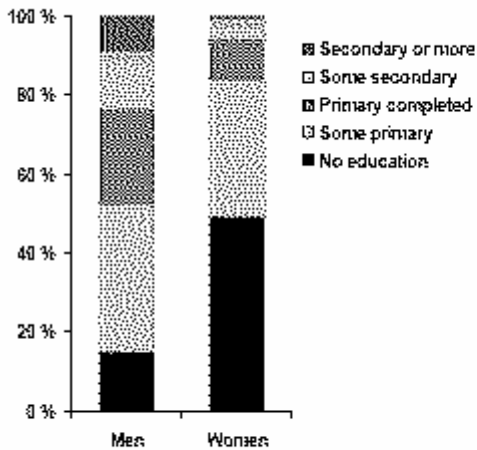


Figure 8 Educational level in the adult population by gender (15 years of age and older)

As Figure 8 shows, the educational level in the adult population in the camps is low, and clearly lower among the women compared to the men. Eighty-four percent of the women, 15 years of age and above, have not finished primary school, or have never attended school – only one percent has finished secondary school. The educational level among men in the same age group is somewhat higher, but even among them; only nine percent have finished secondary school".

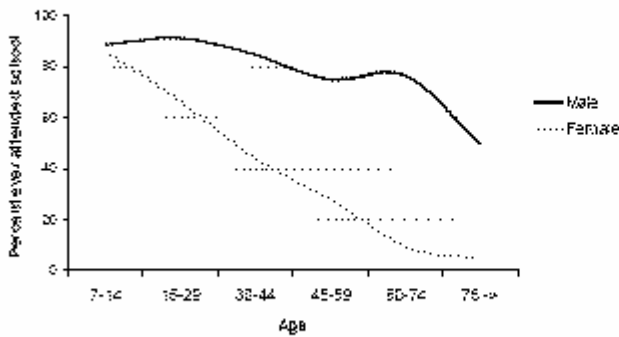


Figure 9 Ever-attended schools by gender and age. Percent of population above 7 years

However, there is currently also a working school system in the camps attended both by boys and girls. It may be the case that by living close to the school, life in the camps allows more girls to attend school than previously. Among the total population above six years of age, 75 percent of the camp population report having ever attended school. However, as shown by Figure 9 there is a huge difference in school attendance both between age groups and gender. For the children in school age (7-14 years of age), there are no differences in school attendance. However, this has not always been the case, as the figure shows: men have traditionally had a much higher school attendance than women.

### **Primary schools have been targets for the LRA because they are isolated outside of the town centers (February 2005)**

- Most of the schools in Kitgum and Gulu have been closed due to attack
- Learning centers were created in IDP camps
- Learning centers can be freestanding or linked to an existing school in the area

"Since the beginning of the conflict, primary schools have been targets for the LRA because they are isolated outside of the town centers. Most of the schools in Kitgum and Gulu have been closed due to attack; teachers were being targeted for killing, children were stepping on landmines or being abducted at or on the way to and from schools so parents stopped sending them to school. These difficulties were some of the reasons people left their villages for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. When the population moved to IDP camps, learning centers were created. Learning centers were grouped by sub-counties near the camps; they are physical classroom structures or designated areas for learning (beneath trees). They can be freestanding or can be linked to an existing school in the area. Over 140 of the primary schools in Kitgum (serving 106,000 children) have been displaced into 34 learning are mainly private and have not been either displaced or had displaced schools. The other 30 hold the entire population of students of the other 140+ schools. The DEO in [District Education Officer]Kitgum stated, "If this did not happen, education would just stop.""(Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, February 2005

### **Education policy adapted to IDP situation failed (March 2005)**

- Violence had forced entire school communities to chaotically relocate
- As a response the local government instructed the displaced schools to operate as learning centers, not as individual schools
- These centres failed mainly because of lack of accountability
- The government has ordered headmasters to reassemble their schools and operate as individual schools from the first term of 2005

"With LRA hostility reaching emergency levels in 2003/2004, entire school communities chaotically relocated to learning centers in both the municipality and sub county IDP camps. According to the March 2004 inter-agency assessment, 63 percent (204) of the [Lira]district's primary schools and 58 percent (24) of the secondary schools were totally abandoned.

At the time, the local government instructed the displaced schools to operate as learning centers, not as individual schools, and the teachers were to report to the nearest and most convenient learning center, regardless of where their headmasters and pupils were. However, leadership, administration and organizational structures of the learning centres were not properly planned and therefore they were haphazardly run, with much rivalry and competition among the displaced schools and the host schools. It was noted by the District and the humanitarian partners that the system was deficient and led to further confusion, lack of control, and contributed further to the breakdown in the education sector and accountability systems among headmasters and teachers. Due to the lack of proper monitoring, numerous teachers operated independently from the school's administration, while others completely abandoned their designated duties, but, however, continued to receive their salaries. The situation was worse in the rural areas, where volunteer teachers took over where there were no teachers.

Changes in 2005

In order to rectify the situation, Lira District Education Department, through the office of the CAO, issued a statement instructing all head teachers to reassemble their schools (pupils and teachers) and operate as individual schools with effective from the first term of 2005 (1st Term). Accordingly, each headmaster is supposed to take responsibility for the administration of his school as before the displacement, although within in the learning centre situation. In areas of relative calm, the schools were encouraged to return to their original sites. The objective of this approach was to hold headmasters directly accountable for administration of their schools, which was not possible under the collaborated learning centre approach. It also aimed at relieving the unpaid volunteer teachers and getting the absentee registered teachers back to their duties. This approach would also facilitate the implementation of the new Ministry of Education policy of contract employment for teachers, in which each head teacher/teacher is to be appraised on individual performance in the assigned school.

If these instructions were complied with, then most of the learning centers in the municipality were expected to be abandoned (or the population reduced to schools from sub counties that are still insecure) as headmasters and their teachers moved back to their original schools in the sub counties. The headmasters and teachers were informed that they would not receive their salaries unless they performed their duties within the context of their original schools and as instructed."(GoU, 25 March 2005)

### **Absence of teachers main problem in Lira (March 2005)**

- Survey in 63 schools in Lira found that:
- Facilitated teaching and learning is chaotic
- There is a serious lack of monitoring and accountability
- Only 134 of the 462 registered teachers show up for work

"The team [Inter-agency mission to Lira in March 2005]visited 63 schools in 8 learning centres. Despite the new policies, the main problem in the education sector continues to be the absence of teachers. The March 2005 assessment established that the new [education]policy has not been implemented and education situation has not improved in all the schools visited. In some locations it has even declined with the New Year. Only nine of the sixty-three (9/63) schools were found to be operating as individual schools. There are still no administrative systems/organizational structures and leadership in the schools. Facilitated teaching and learning is chaotic, as most of the headmasters and many teachers do not show up for work on a regular basis. On the other hand, insecurity in some areas and displacement of the schools create an extremely challenging situation for the sector. It was found that existing resources (classrooms, desks, text books, teachers houses sanitary facilities etc), although severely lacking, were underutilized. Several reasons are responsible for the ineffectiveness of the system.

#### **Leadership and Organization**

There is a serious lack of effective monitoring, accountability, and organization, which permeates the entire leadership ladder in the education sector. Only 9 of the 63 headmasters were seen at the schools (14%). According to interviewed teachers and attendance records, in the absence of the headmasters, only 134 of the 462 registered teachers show up for work in a somewhat consistent manner. In the 63 schools visited, only 17 of the 462 registered teachers were found teaching (4% of the schools' registered teachers).

When the schools were questioned about outside monitoring, it became evident that there was minimal effective supervision from the sub county and district level. There was verbal and documented evidence that the District's inspector of schools team had visited Apala and Okwang



learning centers in 2005. At the remaining 46 schools (73%) those interviewed, as well as visitor books affirmed that inspectors had not visited the schools in 2005.

Most parent/teacher associations (PTAs) and school management committees (SMCs) were found to be non-functional. Okwang was the only Learning Centre or school, useable classroom... basically implies that there is a roof, at least half-walls, decent classroom partitions, and a fairly level floor space.

There was no documented evidence of their activities such as minutes of meeting etc.

The teachers interviewed still claim that most of their colleagues have not returned because of conflicting statements issued by the district politicians contrary to the statement from the office of the CAO. However, this is not a valid excuse because both the district administration and the political wing have held several meetings with the head teachers and rectified this."(GoU, 25 March 2005)

### **Education sector in Karamajong affected areas (June 2005)**

- High rate of absenteeism
- The attendance rate declines after Karamojong attack
- Children alternate between schools in camps and schools closer to home
- Early marriages causes high drop out rates
- School feeding programmes increase attendance significantly

#### 5.0. EDUCATION SECTOR

##### 5.1. Enrolment in the schools

The number of children enrolled in Primary schools was quite manageable by the established government standard of one teacher to 52 children for 2005 financial year. For example Adacar P/S had enrolment of 362 and 10 teachers giving a ratio of 1:36. However, the rate of absenteeism was rather unbelievable. Girls' attendance was noticed to be even more irregular than that of boys because they attend to house chores. For example Angica Primary school which had a population of 517 children had attendance of 156 children, Adacar Primary school with 362 children had 121 children in attendance on the days of assessment. The only school which had a fair attendance was Olilim Primary School which had enrolment of 376 with attendance of 325. This was attributed to the existence of school feeding programme in the school.

##### Reasons for discrepancy enrolments against actual attendance

§ Insecurity. For instance when the Karamojong attack, the attendance declines for the next two or three weeks and increases when there is relatively no threats. Some children who come from distant locations start school late and leave earlier because they have to wait for information about safety of the roads before they can walk to school.

§ Lack of feeding programmes at schools resulted in low attendance e.g. some pupils transferred from Aakum primary school where there is no school feeding to Olilim Primary school where there is school feeding programme.

§ High IDP movement. Children whose parents took refuge in the camps near these schools were oscillating between their former schools and the schools near the camps. This is because some parents during rainy seasons moved to camps near their homes to access land for agriculture and when there is a security threat, they returned to the former camp.

§ Participation in agriculture. Due to food insecurity in the households, most parents during rainy season retained their children at home to help them in agriculture and looking after

livestock. Children also stayed home to do domestic chores while parents were working on other survival mechanisms.

§ Some children had deserted school to marry. Early marriages /pregnancies were quite common in camps. This contributed to high drop out rates as well.

#### 5.2. Staffing in the schools

In reference to the established government education guidelines of 1 teacher to 52 children for 2005 financial year, the school records indicated that the number of teachers posted in the 12 Primary schools visited were generally considered to be fairly proportionate to the number of children who have been enrolled. For example in Okwamor P/S which has 429 pupils with 10 teachers (according to the records though all the ten were not at school by the time of assessment) giving a ratio of 1:42. However, consistency in school attendance and the quality of some of these teachers is questionable. For example in Dadas Primary School, out of the six teachers, only two teachers were qualified while others were not properly trained." (GoU, 15 June 2005)

#### **Secondary schools less exposed to LRA attacks (February 2005)**

- Most of the secondary schools in Kitgum (20) and Gulu (35) are located within the town proper, making them less vulnerable to attack by armed groups
- In Kitgum, four schools have been displaced
- There is a shortage of secondary teachers in both Kitgum and Gulu due to a government ban on recruitment for the past five years

"Most of the secondary schools in Kitgum (20) and Gulu (35) are located within the town proper, making them less vulnerable to attack by armed groups and more secure for both teachers and students. The one secondary school in Gulu outside of Gulu town is close to the Unyama IDP camp; in Kitgum, four schools have been displaced. (About 50 percent of secondary schools in each district are public, about 50 percent are private. In Kitgum, approximately 2,000 young people move from primary to secondary/vocationaltechnical school annually, each secondary school can take about 100 new students. Of this total, an average of 35 percent are girls and 65 percent are boys. The government provides sponsorship to some of the young people from IDP camps in Gulu; however, this in only to attend government schools. It was reported that in Gulu, the dropout rate for girls was higher than that for boys, but numbers were not given. There is a shortage of secondary teachers in both Kitgum and Gulu due to a government ban on recruitment for the past five years. If the government opens a new school, teachers can be recruited, but not otherwise. The government pays teacher salaries; however, PTAs collect money from families of students to enhance teachers' often-meager wages."(Women's Commission, February 2005)

#### **At least 25 per cent of Primary School children in camps are not attending classes (June 2005)**

- Main problems prevail;
- congestion in classrooms and learning centres
- absentee teachers in Lira
- too many untrained teachers
- lack of teachers' houses

- poor sanitation in schools
- high drop-out rate among girls and shortage of female teachers

"On average, only 2% of children aged between three and five have access to Early Learning Centres (ECD), as services are being constrained by the low capacity of communities to initiate and sustain ECD sites. Of the primary school age children, it is estimated that at least 25% are out of school. Of the 1,229 primary schools in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira and Apac, 60% are still displaced. Weak leadership, accountability, and monitoring of the education sector, combined with understaffing and high teacher absenteeism Data from Lira indicate that less than 30% of registered teachers consistently report to duty each school day. contribute to the poor quality of education. Other factors include overcrowded classrooms, and lack of basic teaching /learning materials and basic facilities such as water and sanitation. While gender disparities are significant at enrolment, girls almost disappear from the education system on the upper primary level. For example, in Gulu, 90% of the girls who drop out of school do so between Primary 5 and Primary 7. Furthermore, female teachers are conspicuously absent from most learning centres.

The March 2005 Lira assessment Inter-Agency Humanitarian Assessment of Rural IDP Camps in Lira District, 21–24 March 2005, involving GoU, OPM, UN agencies and NGOs. revealed that pupils' attendance rates are very low. The absence of teachers in the learning centres/schools is the main challenge in the sector. The instruction issued that all teachers from relatively safe areas should return to their schools/learning centres has not taken effect. The assessment, for example, established that only nine of 63 schools were operating individually, and of the 462 teachers expected to be in the 63 schools, only 134 were reporting in a somewhat consistent manner. In addition, only 17 of the 134 teachers were actually found on site (not necessarily teaching) and only nine of the 63 head teachers were present in the schools. Facilitated teaching and learning is often poor, and existing resources - although severely inadequate - are under-utilised. Furthermore, there is no proper structure of management and administration of the learning centres/schools."

"The sector still faces the problems of congestion in classrooms and learning centres, absentee teachers (Lira), too many untrained teachers, lack of teachers' houses, sanitation (latrine coverage) in schools, high drop-out rate among girls and shortage of female teachers. Unfortunately, most of the above issues do not have short-term solutions and the camp situation exacerbates them. Untrained teachers need training; the school drop-out rate in Gulu, for example, is partly attributed to over reliance on English and minimal use of Luo. A national circular has come out from the Ministry of Education recommending that pupils in Primary one, two and three must be taught in their local languages. District language boards are needed to oversee these changes.

In Teso region return areas, the WFP programmes of school feeding, school gardens and food for assets have increased school enrolment where implemented. The reverse is true in areas where these programmes are nonexistent, such as in most parts of Usuk County in Katakwi. Education agencies are advocating for an Alternative Education System for the Teso Karimojong-affected areas, because due to the insecurity, children start school at 10:00 a.m. and close before 4:00 p.m."(UNOCHA, 27 June 2005)

"Provision of education services has continued to be undermined by ongoing conflict in the northern and eastern parts of Uganda, substantially eroding the gains of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme. In a comprehensive assessment study on education conducted in conflict-affected areas of northern Uganda in August 2004, it was found that at least 694 of the 1,229 primary schools in the five insurgency-affected districts (Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira and Apac) are still displaced. These have an estimated 290,000 children of school age. In Pader,

90% of the primary schools are displaced into learning centres, which are located in IDPs camps. The displacement of the population and schools has excluded large numbers of children from learning. Of the 620,000 school-age children (aged 6-12), an estimated 143,702 (23%) are not in school. Primary school completion rates in the eight war-affected districts - five in the north and Kaberamaido, Katakwi and Soroti in the east - are as low as 1.3%, as compared to a national average of 22.5%. Girls' education has been greatly affected, mainly due to real and perceived fear of sexual abuse which is compounded by night commuting, girls' hygiene not being addressed at home, lack of sanitary facilities for menstruation, and household poverty which forces parents to marry girls off in exchange for bride wealth, their being taken on as sex slaves by the rebels, and their spending time foraging for food instead of attending school. Their situation renders them vulnerable to continuous abuse, thereby increasing their exposure to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI).

During 2004 UNICEF has supported the establishment of Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in IDP camps to create a learning environment for young children. These centres are operational only in ten camps at present, and need to be expanded to cover the needs of 1-5 year-old children. In collaboration with WFP it is also planned to provide lunch for children attending the ECD centres. Under the circumstances, children's rights to quality education, curriculum and teachers are not being realised. Specific concerns that have emerged in the conflict-affected areas include:

- the lack of appropriate care and stimulation for young children (0-5 years) and its effect on their learning potential, overall ability to adapt to school life, tendency to drop out and academic achievement;
- looting and displacement of schools and the emergence of learning centres in various IDP camps. Several schools affiliate to nucleus learning centres, creating overcrowded conditions, management problems and pressure on facilities including access to water and sanitation, and sufficient space for play;
- insufficient number of teachers and scholastic materials: teacher-pupil ratios range from 1:150 in Kitgum district to 1:300 in Pader district, as compared to the national standard of 1:50. In Pader and Lira districts, the pupil-textbook ratio is 10:1 and 15:1, respectively. The national ratio is 3:1."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, p. 19)

"The displacement of the population and schools has excluded large numbers of children from learning. Out of 620,000 school age children (6-12 year olds), an estimated 143,702 or 23% are not in school. More than 50% of the 1,200 primary schools in 5 districts are displaced. Displacement and destruction of school facilities has led to overcrowding and poor health and sanitation. The classroom to pupil ratio ranges from 1:150 to well over 1:200. About 80% of Pader children study under trees. The quality of education continues to be adversely affected and children cannot achieve optimum education. The teacher - pupil's ratio is on average 1:200 and as high as 1:300 in Pader district, compared to the national average of 1:55. The pupil to textbook ratio is on average 1:15 in the 5 affected districts, compared to the national target of 1:312. In the context of education, but also in other vital sectors as health and water/sanitation, the HC and the UN system in Uganda has advocated and continue to advocate for more flexibility in the utilisation of the Poverty Action Fund, i.e. that funds that were to be used for development projects are not returned to the Treasury but are used for emergency activities in the concerned district.

A policy for disadvantaged children including those in conflict is in place. 1) Plans for flexible funding arrangements for school facilities grants and capitation grants are being developed to support children in displaced schools; 2) Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) was introduced in IDP camps early this year and ten sites established in Lira and 161 IECD care givers were trained in Kitgum; 3) Supported increase access to basic education for children

through identification of suitable spaces and construction of temporary learning centres for children in Gulu, Lira, Pader and Teso Region; 4) Teachers and pupils kits were distributed to at least 60 IDP schools in 5 districts of the North. In order to support the participation of children traumatised by the conflict, at least 800 teachers in the 8 affected districts were trained to provide psycho-social counseling and therapeutic classroom practices; 5) Improvement of the school environment in IDP camps included at least 150 five-stance latrines constructed and 950 crest (mobile) latrines installed in Lira, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader and at least 20 water tanks were installed. In addition, sanitation pads were supplied to schools to improve attendance of girls in school." (UNOCHA, 15 June 2004)

"Poor performance of students in the past has been blamed on insecurity and the non-conducive learning environment in the region. In response, the Ministry of Education plans to put up more temporary learning centres in IDP camps in an effort to reduce on crowding in the host schools. UNICEF has also stepped up its support for the education sector by committing funds for the additional learning centres. WFP also plans to continue with the school-feeding programme in primary schools, although it has not taken off in any of the districts in Teso sub-region. Other planned interventions by various agencies include sponsorship, training teachers in psychosocial support and children's rights.

Besides congestion of learning centres, another major challenge facing the sector is the unwillingness of teachers to report to their posts in the rural areas even in Lira, Soroti and Katakwi districts where security has improved. The education sector working groups in the various districts are studying the issue with a view of finding ways of encouraging teachers to resume work." (UNOCHA, 31 May 2004)

# ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

## Public participation

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### Voting in Uganda lacks transparency, government arrests opposition (February 2006)

- Government selectively interprets election laws, arrests opposition, uses violence to harass opposition candidates and disrupts their campaigning.

#### **HRW, February 2006, pg. 2:**

“On February 23, 2006, the Ugandan people will elect a president and members of parliament. Local council elections will be held on February 28 and March 6 and 9. These elections are the first since Ugandans voted for the return to a multiparty system in the referendum of July 28, 2005. As the presidential and parliamentary election day nears, the playing field for the candidates and their parties is not level. The conditions for a free and fair election have not been met. Ugandans are gripped alternately by excitement with multiparty elections and fear that the government is not committed to upholding fundamental human rights. The Ugandan constitution charges the Ugandan Electoral Commission with “ensuring regular, free and fair elections.” The principles of a free and fair election are derived from the fundamental human rights protected by the Constitution and international and African human rights conventions, as well as by the procedural provisions of the Presidential Elections and Parliamentary Elections Acts of 2005. Further, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to which Uganda has applied for membership, has issued Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, which include full participation of citizens in the political process, freedom of association, political tolerance, equal opportunity for all political parties to access the state media, independence of the judiciary, independence of the media, impartiality of the electoral institutions, and voter education [...]. In the campaign so far only two of these principles have fully been met: the judiciary and the Electoral Commission have maintained their independence and impartiality. But in all other areas, the electoral process in Uganda is lacking. There is considerable uncertainty in Uganda as to whether incumbent President Yoweri Museveni and his ruling party, the National Resistance Movement Organisation (NRM-O), will respect the will of the people. He hinted during an address to a January 8 rally in the Kasese district, which was widely reported, that a vote against him might not be respected, saying, “You don't just tell the freedom fighter to go like you are chasing a chicken thief out of the house”[...]. He also reportedly appeared to suggest, at a rally in Entebbe on January 14, that only the NRM-O government could control the army: “All the past governments collapsed because they failed to control the army. . . . [W]e have managed to tame it”[...]. Claims that the current government has “tamed” the military, when many active military officers have been appointed to senior civilian positions and the army routinely commits unlawful arrests, torture and other serious abuses, can only intimidate opposition supporters.

The government is selectively interpreting and applying the laws of sedition, libel, and incitement to violence to harass opposition candidates and disrupt their campaigning. Police are summoning opposition politicians and requiring them to report to police stations on a regular basis. Other opposition politicians are being tried on apparently politically motivated charges, sometimes in inappropriate tribunals, while yet others have been detained illegally.

The Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party is the leading challenger to the NRM-O. The most prominent of the apparently politically motivated criminal cases are against three senior FDC members: the main opposition presidential candidate, Dr. Kizza Besigye, who has been charged with treason, terrorism and rape, and his wife Winnie Byanyima and FDC treasurer Jack Sabiiti,

charged with criminal libel. All are currently on trial, and their election campaigning is impeded while they attend court hearings in Kampala.

By its own admission, the Electoral Commission is inadequately prepared. Voters have complained of inaccuracies and deficiencies in the voter register, missing voter cards and poor voter education. The Electoral Commission told Human Rights Watch that it does not yet have sufficient police to guard polling stations and is in the middle of a crash recruitment campaign. To boost numbers it is even training members of a pro-government militia known as the Arrow Boys as “special constables” to assist with the elections. Aside from the fact that the Arrow Boys have previously been accused of abusive behavior towards civilians, this is a serious conflict of interest as the Arrow Boys are commanded by a candidate for office, the State Minister for Health, Mike Mukula, member of parliament.

State and private media do not accord equal coverage to all parties, despite statutory and constitutional obligations to do so. Freedom of the press is also under threat from new restrictions on foreign journalists and from government attempts to curb the freedom of local journalists through ministerial gagging orders, arrests, and prosecutions.

The “Movement” national political system still dominates Ugandan political institutions. The Movement Act of 1997, which has not been repealed, created a national political structure funded by parliament alongside the state. The NRM-O uses the same facilities and has practically the same personnel as the “Movement” national political system that preceded it. The amended constitution does not dismantle the Movement system or close its offices until after the elections on February 23, and currently these offices are used by the NRM-O. Thus, the ruling party enjoys privileged access to state resources for partisan purposes.

In the districts visited by Human Rights Watch, reports of intimidation and violence against the opposition are rife. The police Electoral Offences Squad is investigating cases of intimidation and assault in twenty-two (of sixty nine) districts.

This report focuses on human rights violations by the government and the ruling party, which have broad obligations under international human rights law. The majority of allegations about election-related violence and intimidation heard by Human Rights Watch were leveled against the ruling party and state officials. However, opposition supporters have also caused problems. Therefore, the opposition political parties must do their part to restrain their supporters and to promote a peaceful campaign. Opposition parties should denounce violence whenever it occurs and call on their members to act with restraint, and to make complaints through the appropriate channels.

Research was carried out for this report during three weeks in January 2006. Human Rights Watch researchers visited districts in the north, south, east and west of Uganda—Kampala, Mbarara, Rukungiri, Kanungu, Ntungamo, Soroti, Gulu, Adjumani, and Nebbi, and interviewed some 110 persons, including candidates from the ruling and opposition parties, diplomats, Uganda Peoples’ Defence Force (UPDF, Uganda’s army) soldiers, prison officers, police, Election Commission officials, international and local nongovernment organization (NGO) representatives, journalists, and many ordinary voters.”

### **Displacement hampers voting (May 2005)**

- Lack of information on IDP demographics and population movements obstacles to voting
- No records of each IDP’s place of origin
- Many IDPs could be disenfranchised if return process begins between close of registration and Election Day
- Some parliamentary constituencies are almost entirely depopulated, and others are swollen with IDPs

- "Planning for IDP voting is seriously hampered by a lack of information on IDP demographics and ongoing population movements. There is no centralized database of IDP locations and places of origin; some data (not electronic) is retained at the district level, and all the camps visited during the assessment maintain written records of the camp populations. In fact, the most accurate electronic database of demographics in the North is probably already in the possession of the EC in the form of the 2001 voters register, which is currently being updated. This data, however, does not contain records of each IDP's place of origin and the current registration update is not designed to capture this information unless the registrant selects the option of returning to their home community to vote. The dynamics of displacement remain fluid. Humanitarian agencies expressed a growing despondency that the recent (December – February) cease-fire has ended and attacks on IDPs are increasing. After a decline in January, the number of night-commuters (children who leave rural areas to sleep in urban safe zones) has begun to increase, an indication that the IDPs are feeling less secure. Continued fighting will only increase displacement, complicating the ability of election organizers to develop a comprehensive strategy for IDP participation.

There has been a movement to "decongest" some of the larger camps by moving IDPs to new camps closer to their homes. This process is underway in one of Uganda's largest IDP camps, Pabbo, which the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports will likely shrink from 60,000 to 30,000 persons as new camps are constructed. Additional camps are also slated for decongestion by the end of 2005, but humanitarian agencies doubt that the targets are achievable. The decongestion process will likely be ongoing throughout the election period, requiring that special mechanisms be in place to allow IDPs to transfer their voter registration details. Finally, in the unlikely event a genuine ceasefire is implemented, IDPs will likely return to their homes as fast as possible. If this movement begins between the close of registration and Election Day, many could be disenfranchised. Informal and limited surveys of IDPs suggest that many (if not the majority) are resident in the closest camp to their home and are thus likely to be within their original district and parliamentary constituency. This is particularly true in the more remote camps.

However, camps around the northern urban centers appear to be far more intermixed, with IDPs from multiple districts and constituencies. The MP for Lira municipality, for example, claimed to have voters from seven different districts currently registered in her constituency. As IDPs continue to move (either through decongestions, spontaneous returns, or an increase in fighting) their electoral participation will be further complicated.

Current planning calls for IDPs to be provided an option of where to vote. They can "transfer" their registration to their current place of residence, or they can indicate a preference for returning to their original village to cast a ballot. The obvious problem with the latter option is that it is extremely unlikely that security conditions will permit the establishment of polling stations in many remote areas of Northern Uganda. As a result, those that select the return option will likely be disenfranchised on Election Day. There is no provision for an absentee ballot mechanism. A related issue has to do with district apportionment. If the IDPs remain displaced on Election Day, there will be a severe imbalance in the number of electors to

representatives across the districts. Some parliamentary constituencies are almost entirely depopulated, and others are swollen with IDPs. The EC lacks the funds and capacity to engage in a comprehensive delimitation exercise, which would be pointless anyway given the continued population movements and prospect that many IDPs would return home if a genuine peace is established."(IOM, 31 May 2005, p. 22)

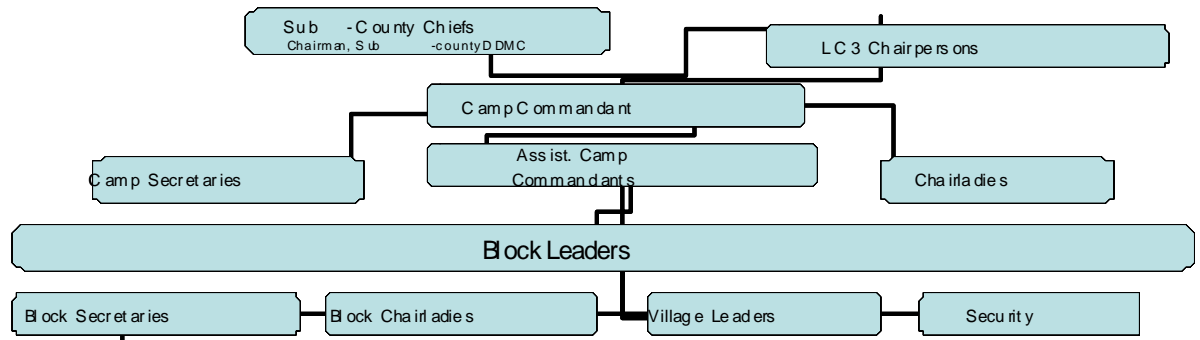
### **Camp management structure in Pader IDP camps (February 2005)**



- All IDP Camps in Pader have some sort of camp management structures in place
- Coordination of camps is weak for lack of resources

" 5.2: Camp Management:

All IDP Camps in Pader have some sort of camp management structures in place. This structure comprises the local district administration that includes the Sub-county Chief and LC system as well as the camp leadership team. Though vary in some camps in the district they seem to be better organized in previously gazetted camps than satellite camps. Below is an organogram of an ideal camp management structure.



Besides the Camp Management Team, each camp has an IDP leadership. This is headed by a Camp Commandant and includes all other officials on the organogram besides the LCs and Sub-County Chiefs. However, there are no clear terms of reference between the IDP leadership and the camp management team. As a result, the sub-county chief and the LCs significantly influence decisions that affect the IDPs and in some case are directly involved in running the day-to-day activities of the camp. In some camps, such as Lapul, where the LC-3 is the Vice Camp Commandant, the authority of the camp commandant is severely undermined.

In most camps, there are sector committees in place. The most common ones include water committee, committee on sanitation, food committee and health and hygiene promotion committee. Security committees are found in a few camps. Women and youth groups and other CBOs are also found in most camps in the district.

In spite of the existence of camp management structures, most of them are weak and lack capacities to ensure effective coordination of camps' activities and protection for IDPs. Camp leaders lack basic training in camp management and logistics such as stationery. The collection and management of basic data such as IDP figures and their disaggregation therefore seems to present major challenge for the camp leadership. For instance, in all camps in Pader, only a few such as Atanga could avail information on the number of children and the gender breakdown. Most of the camps also lack capacity to put in place and sustain social support system to help reduce vulnerability amongst IDPs. The survey in a few camps for instance shows that women and youth organizations are either non-existent or exist but are redundant or are engaged in subsistent activities. For instance a sample of women groups in six camps in the district shows that 68 percent of women groups are involved in subsistent farming, 10% in HIV/AIDS awareness and 22% in other activities such as tailoring, brick laying, handicraft and cultural activities. Similar disparity also applies to youth group. Most of the groups are seasonal and soon cease to exist when the periods of their activities elapse.

The gross gender imbalance in camp management system and corrupt camp leadership also remains issues of concern. Women participation at all levels of camp management is extremely low. For instance, there is only one woman out of the total number of 45 camps and vice camp commandant as well as block leaders in fourteen camps around and west of Pader Town Council. Such imbalance is also prevalent amongst local leaders such as sub-county chiefs, who are also directly involved in camp management. Camp leaders have also perpetuated themselves in power since the camps were established, making them to become corrupt."(UNOCHA, 19 February 2005)

## Self-reliance

### IDP Skills and Professions (September 2005)

- Generally IDP population scores relatively low on skills indicators
- Demand not large enough to sustain tailors and carpenters
- Two out of three adults say they went a month without income, in Pader 75% of IDPs report no cash income

"Skills and professions

The left hand side of Table 8 shows the activity pattern in a traditional rural agricultural society. Nearly all have been involved in cultivation, many also in herding, while fewer in the production of the services and goods in demand.

*Table 8 Level of activities ever carried out and last year. Percentage of the adult population, 18 years –*

	Ever been involved with			Last year's involvement with		
	Gulu	Pader	Kitgum	Gulu	Pader	Kitgum
Tailoring	5	2	2	2	1	1
Basket weaving	5	2	2	2	1	1
Car repairing	4	3	3	3	1	1
Blacksmithing	6	2	4	2	0	1
Carpentry	8	4	6	5	1	2
Crafting	8	4	7	4	2	2
Charcoal production	22	13	15	11	4	5
Petty trading	25	16	20	12	6	7
Brick production	34	25	28	19	7	10
Brewing	34	26	31	19	8	15
Herding animals	53	53	52	16	8	10
Cultivating land	93	91	90	52	33	40

In such a society, there is little need for extensive involvement in services like e.g. tailoring and carpentry. The demand is simply not big enough to sustain that many tailors and carpenters. The right hand side of the table shows a general reduction in all the activities, but the overall pattern remains the same. This is a consequence of war and the camp experience.

*Table 9 Level of activities ever carried out by age groups. In percentage*

	10-17 years	18-24 years	25 years or older
Tailoring	1	4	3
Basket weaving	1	3	5
Car repairing	1	3	4
Blacksmithing	1	3	5
Carpentry	2	6	7
Crafting	2	6	7
Charcoal production	5	14	21
Brick production	14	28	32
Brewing	9	27	34
Petty trading	10	18	24
Herding animals	27	42	57
Cultivating land	77	93	93

The young generation has, as Table 9 shows, less experience in the different activities than the older ones. Obviously the youngest ones have less experience than the older generation. The pattern of the young adults (18-25 years of age) is similar to the general pattern shown in Table 8, however the level for nearly all the activities is lower. This is a result of the effect we see on the right hand side of Table 8. There are less generally less activities in the camps, due to the restriction on movement, and the little money that the IDPs have to pay for goods and services. This also has implications for return scenarios; most importantly, the agencies responsible for the return must make certain that the decreasing level of skills does not continue. The overall pattern is probably suitable to the rural life the IDPs are supposed to return to, but one should target for a return to skills level shown in Table 9 for those 25 years or older. Apart from basic agricultural skills, the population scores relatively low on skills indicators. However, the level of professional experience is even lower.

*Table 10 Professional work experiences by age groups. In percentage*

	18-24 years	25 year and older
Nurse	0,7	0,6
Mid-wife	0,1	0,8
Driver	0,2	1,2
Member of LDU	0,3	2,3
Teacher	2,0	3,6
Civil servant	0,5	3,7
Traditional birth attendant	0,4	3,9
Social worker	1,3	5,3

Table 10 shows that the level of professional expertise is low, even if only the oldest age group is taken into consideration. This level can be seen as a minimum requirement for the population. It is therefore crucial that this knowledge is transferred to the younger generation. The lower level of professional work experience for the young adults (18-24 years of age) reflects both the lack of opportunities in the camps, and age in general.

#### Income and credits

The most striking fact with regard to the level of income is the lack of income. As Table 11 shows, two out of three adult persons did not have any income at all last month. In Pader the situation is the worst, with 75 percent reporting no cash income. Only six percent had an income of more than 18 US dollar last month.

*Table 11 Income last month in Ugandan Shilling. Percent of the population 18 years of age and above*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
0 UGS	58	67	75	64
<=5,000 UGS (3 USD)	17	16	14	16
5,000-10,000 UGS (3-6 USD)	8	5	5	7
10,000-30,000 UGS (6-18 USD)	10	7	4	8
above 30,000 UGS (18 USD)	7	6	2	6

As Table 12 shows, very few households in Acholiland have access to money in cash. Only 12 percent are able to raise 20,000 Ugandan Shillings within a week, and as the table shows, fewer in Pader than in Kitgum, and fewer in Kitgum than in Gulu. The same goes for the possibilities to raise a credit of about 60 USD: only one out of the households think they are able to get that amount of money, be it from banks, other credit institutions, family or friends. Quite frequently the response to this question from the households was that they never would have a need for such huge amount of money.

*Table 12 Possibilities of raising money and access to saving accounts by district. Percentage of households.*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Possible to raise 20,000 UGS <sup>1</sup>	15	9	6	12
Have a savings account	6	2	2	4
Access to credit 100,000 UGS <sup>1</sup>	13	9	8	11

<sup>1</sup> 1700 Ugandan Shilling = 1 USD, 20,000 UGS=12 USD; 100,000 UGS=60 USD

Another reason why households are so poor as they are is that very few of the IDPs have relatives outside of Northern Uganda. The Acholi diaspora is small and fragmented, and few household report about receiving remittances or other kind of support from relatives outside of Acholiland, as shown in Table 13.

*Table 13 Relatives outside the Acholiland, and remittances received. Percentage of households*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
No relatives outside district	87	85	87	86
Relatives outside, no remittances	10	11	12	10
Relatives outside, remittances received	4	4	2	3

" (FAFO, September 2005).

### **Most IDPs have little access to productive resources (April 2005)**

- IDPs were able to access more cultivable land after a relative lull in rebel activity
- Constrained access to land and minimal economic activity
- Environmental degradation in IDP camps
- IDPs continue to live in the camps while slowly resuming agricultural activities

"Humanitarian conditions in northern Uganda have not improved significantly, and civil insecurity continues to limit food access for a large proportion of the population of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader

districts still living as IDPs in camps. Recent assessments and studies by humanitarian and non government organizations indicate that although the IDPs' access to cultivable land is still limited, improvements have been observed. In some areas, IDPs were able to access more cultivable land, resulting in a reasonable harvest last season, although not enough to meet all their food needs. The improved access to land was attributed to a lull in rebel activity that enabled many IDPs to venture further out of designated "safe areas" around the camps. Similar conditions have been observed since the beginning of the year with many IDPs risking to go farther out from camp areas, mainly between mid morning and late afternoon, to access more land to cultivate. It is expected this will increase their food production this season, with a possibility of some being sold for income, despite the civil insecurity. The IDPs mainly acquire seed and tools through the market, their own stored seed from previous harvests, as well as distributions by non government organizations and FAO. Nonetheless, WFP continues to provide a major portion of the IDPs' food needs."(WFP, 21 April 2005)

"There is a high dependence on food aid in the camps due to insecurity, constrained access to land and minimal economic activity. More investment and creativity is required to increase economic activity and agricultural recovery. As an interim measure, more de-congestion planning is required to create smaller camps in people's home parishes, thus allowing greater access to land.[...]

Most [IDPs] have no access to productive resources and lack business and entrepreneurial skills. Extension services in the region are poor. High environmental degradation has occurred in IDP camps due to the high concentration of people and the poor farming methods that have been employed on the little land around the camps available for agriculture.

People in the camps are already helping themselves by engaging in a wide range of economic activities where security conditions and market access make this possible. Living conditions and the environment in and around the camps are below acceptable levels. Basic services such as education, health and sanitation urgently need improvement. A start has been made in the process of return from the camps in the Teso region. While agricultural activities in the villages are resuming, people continue to live in the camps, as they still fear that the rebels may return. Some progress has been made through the amnesty and other programmes to secure the disarmament and return of combatants and reporters, but much more needs to be done successfully to reintegrate them into civil life."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, pp. 13,17)

### **Main source of income for IDPs in the Karamajong affected areas is selling of labour (2005)**

- Some camps in Katakwi district have been in existence for more than 25 years
- Cultivation start late in the morning and end early in the afternoon for security reasons
- Business middle men exploit the IDPs
- Main sources of income is selling / hire out labour at 1,000 shillings per day
- Attacks on farmers reduce productivity

"The Karamojong induced camps have been in existence for a long period, for example some camps in Ngariam and Magoro have been in existence for more than 25 years. Most of the IDPs lived on far much below half \$ per day. The household population was between 3 and 15 people. The size of households could be considered in resource allocation at household levels. Because of low income the IDPs can't afford some basic needs and essentials for life. Most of the income was spent on buying food and medical care. At times they also buy beddings and clothing. They had limited sources of income due to factors like insecurity in this camps which constrained the

ability of the IDPs to produce adequate produce for both consumption and sale. In most of these camps, meaningful cultivation started late and they left gardens earlier because security personnel had to check if the routes are safe before people can move out of the camps. Some camps like Amaseniko, Angica, Palam, and Olilim are so remote that they did not have adequate exposure to benefit from other competitive economic survival mechanisms. There was limited access to markets. On average, markets were at least 5km far away from camps. During harvests, the business middle men exploit the IDPs by buying produce cheaply and sell at high prices in other bigger markets in town. Due to limited access they do not receive many visitors who could educate them on alternative means of livelihoods

The IDPs sadly reflected that they used to live independently in their homes and had their own food but now have to buy everything including greens. "We have been reduced to paupers without homes" says an elderly woman. They also said quarrelling and theft have become common. A challenge faced by women is the fact that they can no-longer own livestock. It was noted that women used to keep domestic birds that they could use for food and also sell in the normal family setting. This cannot be done now, because birds cannot survive in such a congested places like camps. In addition, it would be difficult considering the population. It should be noted here that traditionally, cattle and goats belong to men while women are allowed ownership of smaller livestock like domestic birds, and sometimes goats.

#### 3.2. The main sources of income and coping mechanisms in camps:

Selling / hire out of labour at shillings 1,000 per day to work for people who earn salary e.g. teachers, Sub County chiefs. The average expenditure per month was at most 30,000 Uganda shillings. This money was not enough to enable them meet the basic needs of the households given the burden of feeding and catering for more than five members of the household. At times IDPs traveled long distances of more than five kilometres to look for work for cash. The women also engaged in brewing alcohol in order to earn money to address household needs, selling of produce, burning charcoal are the main sources of income. Unfortunately some women were reported to be engaged in commercial sex as a means of survival "I rather accept money in exchange for sex than starve to death said one IDP woman in Obalanga – Angica camp.[...]

#### 4.3. Land access and production levels

Despite the camp situation all HHs had an attempt to produce some food but limited to the basic food security crops including sorghum, finger millet, cassava, groundnuts and sweet potatoes. The land for production was being accessed in the camp neighbourhood as well as own land depending on the distance from the camp. The furthest piece of land this study found was 5km away from the camp. Of course the farther one goes away from the camp the more he/she risks being abducted or killed by the warriors hiding in bushes, spying and waiting for the time to reach out to steal. Some times the IDPs had to go to the field in groups just to keep a better attention to where the attack would come from. Production of pure cash crops was no more and no HH reported to be selling any food implying that the level of production was limited to just but HH consumption. This was also evident in the size of acreages opened per HH which ranged from a quarter an acre to 4 acres per HH per season for all the crops in most cases. Most HH reported that under normal circumstances they could double these production levels. The size of land opened was largely limited by the shortage of oxen. However, there were also some other reasons as will be explained later." (GoU, 15 June 2005)

#### **Access to land in Teso IDP camps (February 2005)**

"All the IDPs in Kaberamaido reported having access to some land, followed by Katakwi (79%) and Soroti (58%). Those able to utilize the land for cultivation during the current season were as

follows: Kaberamaido, 100%; Katakwi, 86%; and Soroti, 62% (mostly in Atirir camp). The average land size and distance are shown in the table below:

District	Kaberamaido	Katakwi	Soroti
Average size (in acres)	11.2	7.5	4.7
Average distance (Kms)	4.8	5.6	23.8

"(GoU, 28 February 2005)

#### **IDPs have limited access to seeds and agricultural tools (June 2004)**

- Food security for IDPs in the North and Teso sub-region remains precarious
- A large portion of IDPs could not plant the first planting season starting in March 2004
- IDPs need assistance with tools and seeds including fast growing staple and vegetable seeds
- Cultivation is restricted to land at the periphery of the camps

"Progress in the agriculture support of the displaced populations remained limited due to little resources and constrained access to land due to insecurity. Food security for IDPs in the North and Teso sub-region remains precarious due to the unpredictable LRA attacks. IDPs have limited or no access to agricultural inputs; tools have been looted and seeds have not been saved from previous seasons. A large portion of IDPs could not plant the first planting season starting in March 2004 due to LRA attacks, posing a big challenge for the rest of the year on food availability. Making all conditions possible to allow a relatively positive second planting season starting in July/August 2004 is crucial and strategic for food security. More funding and the provision of minimum security conditions for farmers to cultivate would help considerably. IDPs need assistance with tools and seeds including fast growing staple and vegetable seeds. This exercise will require the intensive involvement and coordination of all stakeholders in this sector - humanitarian actors and donors, central and local government and the UPDF. Supporting this second planting season should lead to less reliance on food aid. In Karamoja, last season's harvest was satisfactory due to good rains. However, the situation remains fragile and will require consolidated assistance in agricultural rehabilitation activities." (UNOCHA, 15 June 2004)

"The significant reduction in accessibility of productive land outside the camps by the displaced population in the northern districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Lira remains the major limitation to household food security. Cultivation is restricted to land at the periphery of the camps due to heightened insecurity and the civilian population's fear of abduction or killing by LRA rebels. In Gulu district, over 50 percent of the IDPs sampled during monitoring visits were able to access their fields to harvest sorghum, sesame, pigeon peas and sweet potatoes. The displaced population depends on WFP relief food for 65 percent of their minimal daily food needs in Gulu district. In Kitgum district, WFP relief food met 65 percent of the minimum daily food requirements in the seven old camps and 50 percent in the nine new camps. In Pader district, IDPs are dependent on relief food for 50 percent of their daily minimum nutritional requirements. In Lira district, IDPs depend on WFP relief food for 50 percent of their daily minimum nutritional requirements. WFP introduced the family size distribution system among IDPs in Lira Municipality during the month of December." (WFP, 31 December 2003)

#### **IDPs tax exempted (April 2005)**

"Under the National Policy IDPs are exempt from paying graduated tax, except where it is proved after an assessment by a Tax Assessment Committee that an IDP has sufficient means of income to pay graduated tax. This will require close cooperation between the OPM-DDPR and relevant tax offices, and include the sensitisation of tax authorities and IDPs on the National IDP policy in regard to tax exemption" (GoU, 20 April 2005)

### **The government doesn't let IDPs farm their land (February 2004)**

- There is hunger, disease, insecurity, malnutrition
- "I used to eat fresh food from my gardens but now I am being fed like a child"
- "I am poor helpless and waiting to die"

"Not only are the camps inadequately protected, but also living conditions there are chronic. As a religious leader said, .The IDP camps are a death warrant to the people. There is hunger, disease, insecurity, malnutrition. According to the UN, global acute malnutrition rates for children

under the age of five have reached approximately 31% and 18% in two IDP camps in Gulu, Anaka and Pabbo. One woman in Kitgum town talked of how grateful she was not to be in a camp:

Myself I can say I am lucky. At least I don't stay in the camp, and at least I have some money. Women in the camp are the ones that suffer the most. They do not have food, and they have to risk going to the farms every day to look for food to feed the children. Women are raped by both rebels

and soldiers and sometimes by criminals. People are sick and hungry in the camps.. People are not safe in the camps. They are crowded and close together which makes it easy for the rebels to abduct them and steal food. When people were in their homes, they were far apart and could easily

hide. When rebels attack they surround the camps and make it hard to run away. The army is here but the soldiers cannot do anything.

"As a result, the majority of the displaced harbour considerable anger towards the government for having forced them out of their homes and then having been unable to protect and provide for them. In the words of one informant: .The government, if they find you farming your lands, they beat

you. But then they don't feed you. A woman living in Kitgum interpreted her predicament in this way: .I used to eat fresh food from my gardens but now I am being fed like a child. My husband and children are dead. I am poor helpless and waiting to die. No longer able to farm their land, displaced people are living in dire poverty and being forced to resort to the most horrific means of survival: .Prostitution is rife. Parents send their girl children to the lodges to be raped so that they get money to buy food. As a hospital worker said, .They have nothing in the camps, so they just disappear into the bush because it is easier there. Instead of struggling in the camps, you can just loot. The government should not be asking why people do this." (RLP, 29 February 2004)

### **Collapse of social fabric and pastoral economy in the North**

- Gulu and Kitgum cattle herds reduced from about 285,000 to an estimated 5,000 head between 1985 and 1997 collapsing pastoral economy and social fabric.



- Almost all the area's livestock was removed as Karamajong cattle raiders continued to harass livestock owners on Kitgum's far eastern border.
- Acholi farmers reported NRA (National Resistance Army) to collude in Karamajong cattle raids in the second half of the 1980s.

"Cattle has long been the main repository of Acholi wealth. By 1985, their nearly 300,000 cattle (and even more numerous goats, sheep and other livestock), represented not only their savings, but also their contingency reserve for sickness, drought, retirement, education and marriage dowry. In 1986 and much of 1987, farmers provided livestock to the UPDA, sometimes against promissory notes payable after the victory they expected. The UPDA used most of this livestock for food, but some might have been traded in Sudan for arms and ammunition, which were in short supply.

The NRA confiscated cattle as needed to support its operations. Fearing such confiscations, some Acholi preemptively liquidated parts of their herds. Local veterinary experts report that a small part of the herd was also lost to diseases like rinderpest and pleuro-pneumonia which they believe originated in southern Sudan. Karamajong cattle raiders continued, as they had throughout history, to harass livestock owners on Kitgum's far eastern border.

However, beginning in about August 1987, during the Alice Lakwena period, an event unique in Acholi history occurred: an overwhelming number of Karamajong cattle raiders swept through Kitgum and eastern Gulu and removed almost all the area's livestock. Those who resisted the rustlers were brutally attacked. In areas where both Karamajong and NRA soldiers were present, some farmers reported that the latter colluded in these activities, but in general Karamajong raiders were observed to be operating on their own. In western Gulu, it appears that at about the same time, a similar large-scale removal of livestock was conducted by NRA forces.

Data provided by veterinary officers indicated that the cattle population of Gulu and Kitgum in 1985 was about 285,000. The cattle raids removed almost the entire herd. In 1997 - ten years after the raids - the combined herd for both districts is estimated at 5,000 head, less than 2% the earlier number. Goats and other livestock have been similarly affected. The replacement cost of the plundered cattle herd alone is estimated at close to US\$25 million.

To put this loss in perspective, the Gulu branch of the Cooperative Bank - which serves principally a rural clientele and is one of only two banks in Gulu - observed that in times of insecurity, savings deposits tend to increase. Yet, on average for the years 1991 through 1996, it estimated its total deposits at about US\$1.5 million. [...]

The attitudes which had motivated the Acholi to launch or continue the armed anti-NRA struggle - pride, military humiliation, sense of betrayal and alien rule, loss of government power and its economic impact - were compounded by the loss of their livestock and the apparent loss of control over their environment, as well as the defeat of the Lakwena forces at the end of 1987. Six months later, the UPDA signed its peace agreement with the NRA. But perhaps in part because of bitterness over the cattle raids, not all the rebel forces abandoned the armed struggle.

The disappearance of the police Tracking Force which in the past had restricted Karamajong raiders to sporadic incidents along the eastern Kitgum border contributed to the lawless environment in which these raids occurred. The Acholi people, except its active insurgents, were disarmed. That there was no reported confrontation in Acholi between the cattle raiders and the police, military or other Government authorities led the local population to believe that they were tolerating the plundering, which later occurred in the same magnitude in other districts. The attitude of most Acholis ranges from deep suspicion to absolute conviction that lawlessness of

this magnitude could not have occurred if it had not been instigated - or at least approved - at the highest level of government.

Authoritative government sources acknowledge some of the NRA raids in western Gulu, which they attribute to corrupt elements in the military at that time. Efforts at restitution by the government have been made for a fraction of these thefts. Government sources also concede that the Karamojong raids were carried out with little armed Government opposition. They argue, however, that in 1987 the NRA's armed forces were relatively small and not yet consolidated. Nonetheless, in Acholi they were forced to confront both the UPDA and Lakwena forces at the same time. This allowed the NRA few resources to spare to combat the cattle raiders and hesitant to risk opening another major armed front against Karamoja.

The enduring political fact, nonetheless, is the widespread belief in Acholi that the Government instigated or at least approved the raids, a source of irreconcilable and continuing bitterness against the present administration." (Gersony, 1997, Section 1, "The cattle factor")

### **Displacement has changed traditional livelihood patterns**

- Subsistence agriculture as the main source of livelihood declined from 81% to 56% after displacement
- More people getting engaged in casual labor
- Returning IDPs demand sustainable support in the form of seeds and tools rather than food rations

"The situation in Southwestern Uganda can generally be summarised as very promising. With increased security and favourable weather during 2002, the region has experienced an increase in food production, increased individual and family income directly due to the fact the IDPs are returning/or have returned to their homes. The majority of the population in Bundibugyo, approximately 80 percent, were IDPs and currently depend on agricultural activities as their main source of food and income. This is a very big improvement from being almost wholly dependent on relief food, with hardly any source of income." (OCHA July/August 2002)

"Lack of access to income and potential sources of income is a significant problem faced by IDPs. Most people used to depend on selling crops as a source of income, but this was disrupted by displacement.

[...]

Subsistence agriculture was and still remains the main source of livelihood, however, tremendously declined from 81% to 56% after displacement. People's ability to sell crops as a source of livelihood has fallen 10 times after displacement. More people (23%) are currently engaged in casual labor as a form of survival during displacement compared to only 1% before. Others or nothing include those who depended on remittances from families and relatives before displacement and now depend on donations from humanitarian agencies after displacement. Those who entirely depend on others for survival have increased from 3% to 11% after displacement.

[...]

Despite the disruptions in livelihood and income sources, demands for money have increased due to displacement. Many people for example need cash to pay for food items they never paid for before, such as renting land where they have their shelters or for cultivation.

[...]

A change in perceived good living standards has led to an increase in demand for cash. This was reported to be due to mixing with well off families. Men were of the view that their wives have

adopted new demands and need more cash than before, seeking to join the well off class." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, pp. 9-10)

"On a more positive note, the south-western region has benefited from sufficient rains and a good harvest is expected; although on occasions the rain has fallen so heavily it has even destroyed crops and buildings/IDP shelters. IDPs continue to have access to gardens near the camps for minimal cultivation and the harvest will supplement WFP relief food (WFP continues to provide food aid, at half ration, to IDPs in camps). A lack of seeds has also posed a problem and will be sorely needed for the next planting season. IDP returnees frequently ask humanitarian agencies for support in the form of seeds and tools rather than relief food. Fortunately, the security situation has continued to improve over recent months, enabling IDPs, in particular, to carry out farming activities in relative security which bodes well for the future." (OCHA 31 September 2001, p.28)

### **Female-headed households limited access to relief distribution (2001)**

- Female Headed Households (FHH) compared to Male Headed Households (MHH) have limited capacity to ensure that they are registered for relief distribution.
- Appropriate to include active female leaders in the registration process
- "Fair" female representation on the camp committees not reflected by participation in the day-to-day decision making forums
- Women only holding junior positions in the administrative hierarchy of camps

"While women have been designated as the initial point of control for relief food distribution, 40% and 13% of FHH [Female Headed Households] and MHH respectively felt that the two groups (FHH and MHH) did not have equal registration opportunities. It was further discovered that almost twice as many FHH compared to MHH had all their resident members not registered. From these statistics, it is evident that within the current registration system, FHH compared to MHH have limited capacity to ensure that they are registered for relief distribution, thus should be considered as disadvantaged.

A number of reasons appear to be responsible for this trend of events. Male hegemony in the Acholi society coupled with high illiteracy rates among the female population gives the FHH a low status thus limiting their chances of making themselves heard. As argued by Britt (1993), implementing resettlement programmes through the existing power structures may not benefit the entire community especially the FHH. This calls for alternative mechanisms to be explored on a case-by-case basis. As observed by Mooney (1998), it would be appropriate to include active female leaders in the registration process, as this would especially deter women from having to trade sexual favours to have their names registered for relief supplies." (World Vision/Cranfield University December 2001, p. 51)

"At the local level, it was discovered that female participation is very limited in camp management and that the situation was not different before displacement. While all the three camps covered by the study had a fair female representation on the camp committees, it was evident that this was only by record in the books, and not by actual participation in the day-to-day decision making forums.

Where women were active, they still occupied junior positions in the administrative hierarchy of the camp, thus did not participate in actual decision-making. While meetings with camp committees had been scheduled for days that rebels forbid people from going to their gardens (Tuesdays and Fridays), there was still limited female participation in the meetings. In one camp, only one female leader attended a series of meetings [...], while in another; two educated female

leaders attended all the meetings. In the later case, it was obvious that the two were very vocal and represented women views extremely well.

The study learnt that male dominance and high illiteracy rates among the female population were responsible for blocking women from effectively participating in decision making forums." . (World Vision/Cranfield University December 2001 p. 37)

### **Dramatic diminishing of cattle herds due to cattle raids and increased demand for meat by army (1985-1997)**

- Gulu and Kitgum cattle herds reduced from about 285,000 to an estimated 5,000 head between 1985 and 1997 because of cattle raids
- Almost all the area's livestock was removed as Karamojong cattle raiders continued to harass livestock owners on Kitgum's far eastern border, with a peak of intensity in 1987

"Cattle has long been the main repository of Acholi wealth. By 1985, their nearly 300,000 cattle (and even more numerous goats, sheep and other livestock), represented not only their savings, but also their contingency reserve for sickness, drought, retirement, education and marriage dowry. In 1986 and much of 1987, farmers provided livestock to the UPDA, sometimes against promissory notes payable after the victory they expected. The UPDA used most of this livestock for food, but some might have been traded in Sudan for arms and ammunition, which were in short supply.

The NRA confiscated cattle as needed to support its operations. Fearing such confiscations, some Acholi preemptively liquidated parts of their herds. Local veterinary experts report that a small part of the herd was also lost to diseases like rinderpest and pleuro-pneumonia which they believe originated in southern Sudan. Karamojong cattle raiders continued, as they had throughout history, to harass livestock owners on Kitgum's far eastern border.

However, beginning in about August 1987, during the Alice Lakwena period, an event unique in Acholi history occurred: an overwhelming number of Karamojong cattle raiders swept through Kitgum and eastern Gulu and removed almost all the area's livestock. Those who resisted the rustlers were brutally attacked. In areas where both Karamojong and NRA soldiers were present, some farmers reported that the latter colluded in these activities, but in general Karamojong raiders were observed to be operating on their own. In western Gulu, it appears that at about the same time, a similar large-scale removal of livestock was conducted by NRA forces.

Data provided by veterinary officers indicated that the cattle population of Gulu and Kitgum in 1985 was about 285,000. The cattle raids removed almost the entire herd. In 1997 - ten years after the raids - the combined herd for both districts is estimated at 5,000 head, less than 2% the earlier number. Goats and other livestock have been similarly affected. The replacement cost of the plundered cattle herd alone is estimated at close to US\$25 million.

To put this loss in perspective, the Gulu branch of the Cooperative Bank - which serves principally a rural clientele and is one of only two banks in Gulu - observed that in times of insecurity, savings deposits tend to increase. Yet, on average for the years 1991 through 1996, it estimated its total deposits at about US\$1.5 million.

In an instant, the Acholi farmers were deprived of the milk their cows provided; the additional acreage and higher yields which their oxen permitted them; their fallback for marriage dowries

and education; and the savings which carried them through drought, hard time, sickness and old age. The self-respect which attached to cattle ownership and the cultural functions upon which exchange of cattle had relied were disrupted. It was one of the greatest economic and moral blows of the war. It also deprived the insurgents of livestock upon which they relied for food and which they might have used to trade for the arms and ammunition upon which their viability increasingly depended.

The attitudes which had motivated the Acholi to launch or continue the armed anti-NRA struggle - pride, military humiliation, sense of betrayal and alien rule, loss of government power and its economic impact - were compounded by the loss of their livestock and the apparent loss of control over their environment, as well as the defeat of the Lakwena forces at the end of 1987. Six months later, the UPDA signed its peace agreement with the NRA. But perhaps in part because of bitterness over the cattle raids, not all the rebel forces abandoned the armed struggle.

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# DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

## General

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### **IDPs in Adjumani registered (September 2005)**

- IOM conducts registration of IDPs in Adjumani at 29 sites.

See, IDPs in Adjumani District

### **Importance of Birth and Death Registration not understood by IDPs in Karamajong affected areas (June 2005)**

- IDPs were aware of Birth and Death Registration, but limit registration to health centers
- Most IDPs do not register births and deaths at the Sub Counties

#### "6.1.2. Birth and Death Registration

Majority of the IDPs were aware of Birth and Death Registration (BDR), saying it is important for tracking the child's age, days for next immunisation and for other needs relating to education of the child. However, further probing indicated that most parents, despite knowledge of the importance of birth and death registration had not done so at the Sub Counties. Most parents considered the registration done at the health centre as comprehensive. Meanwhile some respondents said facilities including stationery were a hindrance since there was no local revenue especially at Sub Counties which are grossly affected by insecurity. "(GoU, 15 June 2005)

## ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

### General

#### New survey highlights vulnerability and resilience of male youth in IDP camps (September 2006)

- Over 50% of youth in northern Uganda remain in IDP camps in northern Uganda
- A balance between emergency services and long-term development programs must be carefully sought
- Dual focus on broad-based education and economic support needed
- Youth protection programming ought to be more inclusive of young adults, a group that should be referred to as a central category of concern

UNICEF, September 2006, Pg 6, iii-iv, 71

*Table 1: Average household characteristics in each camp/sub-county*

Characteristic	Acholibur	Akwang	Atanga	K.Matidi	Orom	Pader	Pajule	Palab...
Years household in camp	3.0	2.2	7.9	2.5	2.2	3.2	3.3	8.4
Household head a farmer	97%	82%	99%	84%	91%	91%	93%	89%
Household head a professional	2%	14%	0%	12%	6%	7%	6%	9%
Household head a soldier	1%	4%	1%	4%	4%	2%	1%	1%
Acres of land in 1996	27.1	30.4	25.3	22.9	21.0	25.2	26.7	22.6
Number of cattle in 1996	2.7	34.7	0.0	7.7	9.0	4.9	1.0	14.7
Number of other livestock in 1996	7.4	28.1	0.9	13.7	20.5	7.2	3.9	11.4
% pop in bottom 25% by assets	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
% pop in top 25% by assets	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3
% youth male	56%	54%	54%	55%	52%	55%	49%	53%
% youth staying in IDP camp	54%	62%	48%	64%	62%	64%	55%	62%
Avg yrs education (Male youth)	6.1	7.1	7.4	6.1	6.5	6.7	7.4	6.3
Avg yrs education (Female youth)	3.8	5.6	5.4	3.6	4.0	4.5	5.5	3.9
% males 18 to 30 in military	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.01	0.07	0.07
% youth abducted 3 days or longer	0.46	0.50	0.41	0.18	0.42	0.52	0.35	0.24
% youth died since 1996	19%	18%	15%	14%	23%	20%	11%	13%

"In short, the evidence argues for humanitarian organizations to maintain a delicate balance between emergency services and a long-term development program. Such a hybrid response is, we argue, the only effective response to what is essentially a hybrid problem: a prolonged emergency. The contradiction in terms is obvious most of all to those living it—an emergency situation stretched over years or even decades, where inattention to schooling and economic

activity risks losing a whole generation to poverty, while inattention to food and sanitation risks losing their lives.

The findings discussed in the previous seven chapters suggest that there is currently a mismatch between the needs of youth and the programs on offer. Current programming focuses primarily on humanitarian needs and psychosocial support (broadly-defined) with less emphasis on education and economic interventions. Moreover, programs and spending also appear to be more oriented towards children rather than young adults. SWAY data and analysis, however, suggest a strategic reorientation of governmental and non-governmental assistance.

- In general, we advocate a two-pronged strategy: broad-based education and economic support, combined with targeted interventions to the youth facing the greatest social, psychological, and material challenges.

- This programming ought to be more inclusive of young adults, treating them as a central category of concern, rather than an addendum to child support and protection programs.

- In particular, there is an urgent and immediate need to support broad-based secondary and tertiary schooling, support which should target the most able as well as the most vulnerable.

- Further, we argue for an increased focus on (and funding for) youth economic programs. However, the only real economic solution is to return youth and their households to their land and traditional livelihoods. Thus economic programs must include innovative strategies for increasing access to land in addition to the current attention on other income-generating activities.

- In terms of “high-deprivation” youth, one of our most surprising findings was the prevalence of serious war wounds. Such injuries, which have received little attention, should be addressed immediately through emergency medical services.

- We also note the significant number of illiterate young adults, who we feel can be targeted through alternative age-appropriate literacy and numeracy programs.

- We argue that psychosocial programming also needs to be more targeted and specific. In particular, psycho-social programming ought to: (i) target highly-affected individuals; (ii) shift from community sensitization to conflict resolution; and (iii) focus on family support and connectedness.

- Finally, we make a case for more evidence-based programming, in particular the formal and informal evaluation of programs.”

### **Uncertain coping mechanisms make children and women move in search of food and labour in Karamoja (November 2006)**

- Children and women move out of Karamoja searching for food and labour, falling pray to exploitation
- Children appear on streets of urban centers subjecting themselves to risk of exploitation and trafficking



**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 12, 33:**

“The Karamoja sub-region consistently demonstrates Uganda’s lowest scores on key development and humanitarian indicators. A protection crisis in relation to disarmament (as per above) but also due to commonly accepted coping mechanisms is ongoing. Critically risky coping mechanisms include the movement of women and children out of Karamoja in search of occasional labour or food that easily become victim of Gender Based Violence (GBV) or other forms of exploitation. Climatic and environmental factors, a long history of marginalisation by successive national governments, cultural traditions and a breakdown of law and order have all led to increased banditry, inter-communal and cross-border cattle raids and to a human rights and development crisis of complex dimensions.”

“Protection monitoring is particularly weak in Karamoja and issues such as SGBV go largely unreported. However, the consequences of marginalisation and insecurity are putting vulnerable populations, including children, at risk of exploitation. Growing numbers of Karamojong children are reported to be appearing on the streets of urban centres within Karamoja, in surrounding districts and in Kampala. Amid reports of labour markets established in Katakwi, there is concern that children may be at risk of being trafficked to other parts of Uganda. Forcible returns complete a cycle of disadvantage and vulnerability that needs to be better understood and responded to.”

**Weak family structures and vulnerability of women and children continue to present obstacles (November 2006)**

- Need for social welfare mechanisms to identify and help the most vulnerable
- Limited night-commuting ongoing
- Women and girls in conflict areas still vulnerable to SGBV and with return vulnerability likely to increase

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 32-33**

“Irrespective of location, the basic requirement for delivering protection to children is having social welfare mechanisms in place to identify the most vulnerable, provide frontline support to them and their families/care-givers and to enable access or referral to other forms of mainstream or specialist services (including education and skills training). A poor family situation is a reason why some children still night-commute even as overall security improves, resulting in the need to individually assess the situation of each commuting child and link them to social welfare provision. These same protection mechanisms support the social and economic reintegration of persons returning from the LRA (some of whom need specialised care in the reintegration process). Reception centres remain needed in anticipation of the possible return home of over 2,000 children, women and youth and new facilities will be required for adult men. With attempted recruitment into the armed forces (especially for boys) still reported, measures to strengthen prevention within the UPDF are required, including more effective Birth and Death Registration.

Women and girls in the conflict areas remain vulnerable to GBV, including all forms of sexual violence, as a result of the prevailing humanitarian and security conditions. They are at high risk of sexual exploitation as they are forced to engage in sex to meet basic needs of themselves and their families. Even as a return process accelerates, women and girls’ vulnerability to GBV will not reduce - indeed for some, such as those who head households and others with limited economic opportunities, it will be heightened. While progress has been made towards building a

coordinated humanitarian response to GBV among IDP communities in northern Uganda, much still needs to be urgently done to scale-up and improve both protective and remedial mechanisms. Institutional responses remain weak, with referral procedures poorly resourced, poorly understood and often ignored.”

### **Women and children affected by conflict in Karamoja (August 2005)**

- Women and children most affected by conflict, often displaced and/or widowed
- Women play a role both in conflict causation (due to high bride prices) and in conflict prevention

#### **USAID, August 2005, Pg. 37-38:**

“Conflict among pastoralist is indiscriminate and affects all people. Women and children are generally the most affected because they are vulnerable and defenseless, they aren’t in a position to feed themselves, they can lose loved ones (spouses, parents and sons), and they are easily made homeless and turned into refugees. The pastoralists women play a significant role in the conflict environment.

#### Role of women in conflict causation.

Women play a central part in raiding in a number of ways. When faced with shortages of household necessities, married women scorn the male members of the household, singing songs that pressure them to go raiding. They do this physically or indirectly, through beating of children and telling them things such as: “where can I get the milk to give you when your father is seated while other men have gone to look for cattle for their children’s milk.”[] In the past, renowned women were consulted by raiders. Warriors on a mission brought them gifts of tobacco or a ram in exchange for blessings for the raid. Women bless the men and smear them with protective soil, *Emunyen*. There is considerable dancing, ululation, celebration and merry making spearheaded by women after a very successful raid.

Women are also at the base of raiding because men are forced to pay high bride prices for them in exchange for social status. Sometimes women incite conflicts by abandoning men who have not paid dowries to join those who are capable of paying them off, or by belittling men who marry their daughters with few animal dowries. Such mortification compels men to collect livestock before they decide to marry. Disrespect accorded to men who are not fully married through dowry payment forces men to raid.

#### Role of women in conflict prevention

Women suffer the effects conflict a great deal. They are left as widows, displaced, left without food, and often bear the consequences of being inherited by the kinship of their deceased husbands. To avert this anguish, women have considerably contributed to reducing conflicts in the region. Their various involvements are summarized below:

- Due to death of many male members of the households, most women discourage their husbands and sons from going for raids.
- Women have been organizing peace marches and peace campaign rallies in the villages of Rupa, Tapac, and Iriir. Women peace group of Naoi Parish organize peace retreats and peace meetings.
- Refusing to praise raiders.
- Women have composed songs that draw warriors’ attention to the tribulations of raiding. They sing these songs to discourage the men from participating in raiding.
- Women encourage and entreat men to give back their guns to the government during disarmament exercises. Some women actually physically handed over their husbands’ guns.
- They enrollment their children in schools with the hope of transforming the society in the future.

- Senior women lament for peace at dawn before men are out. They decry the way raiding and the young generation have strayed.”

### **Internally-displaced youth a vulnerable category (October 2005)**

- Internally-displaced youth (IDY) neglected as a vulnerable category by humanitarian community
- Coping strategies of IDY often put exacerbate their vulnerability
- IDY perceived as a homogenous displaced category
- IDY endure high levels of sexual violence, torture, and abuse both by the LRA and Ugandan army

"The aim of this report is to learn from the voices and experiences of internally displaced youth (IDY) about their protection needs while living in the Gulu District of Northern Uganda. The report argues that neither the Government of Uganda nor humanitarian agencies officially recognize IDY as a vulnerable social category. Thus IDY are seldomly integrated into relief efforts or policies. The lack of recognition, research, and response to the particular threats facing IDY has generated a gap between government and humanitarian responsibilities, and field realities.

This report found three main factors that foster IDY vulnerabilities. First, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and Uganda's People Defence Force (UPDF) often recruit the youth into their forces. Their age group is viewed as ideal fighters or "wives." Second, IDY are often the labour force in their communities, making them responsible for sustaining family members; when trying to fulfill these obligations this group is susceptible to a series of physical threats and dangers. Third, IDY are perceived as a homogenous displaced category. IDY are regularly grouped with children or adults, though they seldom belong in either category. IDY are at the mental development stage of adolescents, but are forced to take on responsibilities of adults - without receiving any aid that directly targets their needs.

A Generation At Risk dissects the daily struggles confronting IDY. For organizational purposes, these are categorized into two sections – socio-economic challenges and physical security threats. However, this report recognizes that these two categories are complex, often overlapping, and therefore cannot be entirely divorced from each other.

Socio-economic challenges entail:

1. Food Insecurity – Out of 71 IDY respondents, 75% identified food insecurity as a major threat. The two most common constraints are the insufficient rations supplied by World Food Program (WFP), and lack of access to gardens, meant to complement aid distributions
2. Health Threats – Congestion and the lack of medical facilities perpetuate the spread of diseases. IDY are most susceptible to HIV/AIDS as they are most sexually active.
3. Alternative Sources of Income: Underage Recruitment and Sex Workers – Returnee youth commonly join Local Defence Units (LDUs) due primarily to stigmatization from communities and/or the critical lack of employment opportunities in camps. IDY involvement in sex work has devastated cultural roles as well as spread sexually transmitted disease.
4. Domestic Violence and Forced Relationships – Lack of economic opportunities has escalated both of these problems, while disrupting family households. Both female and male youth enter into forced relationships because they lack financial

alternatives, or because they are pressured by their family to do so.

Physical security threats involve:

1. Sexual Violence – Of 71 IDY respondents, 79% identified sexual violence as a major threat. Sexual violence was in fact the most frequently mentioned threat by respondents. Female youth were particularly targeted, and the UPDF were viewed as a major source of this threat.
2. Abduction – Of the random sample of respondents 1/3 had been previously abducted by the LRA or had either a family member or friend that had been abducted. The possibility of being abducted is a constant fear for IDY.
3. Physical Attacks and Related Violence (Unlawful Detention, Beatings, Mutilations, Torture and Killings) – IDY identified both the UPDF and the LRA as agents of this type of violence. Breaking camp curfew, alcohol consumption and undisciplined soldiers are common factors that lead to abuses committed by UPDF soldiers against Internally Displaced Youth. LRA abuses were common during a camp attack or an encounter in the fields.

IDY have developed a series of protection strategies for these challenges and threats; for the most part, they have learnt to simply rely on their basic instincts and senses. Tragically, some of the protection strategies against socio-economic threats employed by IDY expose them to security threats. For example, IDY move into their gardens or fields to collect food and firewood to supplement limited supplies; however as they do this, they endanger themselves through the possibility of encountering the LRA or breaking a camp curfew.

IDY are not granted any specific legal provisions under the National Youth Policy or the National Policy on Displacement; instead they are perceived as part of the general population. Similarly, responses by humanitarian agencies fail to adequately identify or address IDY threats and needs. For instance, although 75% of IDY reported food security as a problem, only 18% agencies made the same comment. Moreover, 59% of agencies further identified returnee youth as particularly vulnerable to stigmatization, verbal or physical abuse. Yet only 18% of agencies had programs that specifically addressed this problem.

The recommendations of this report focus on immediate ways to increase protection of IDY and to minimize their socio-economic challenges. This report views sustainable peace as a priority to end the identified threats; nevertheless it focuses on urgent actions required to promote better IDY protection. A Generation At Risk advocates for national and international agencies to recognize IDY vulnerabilities and strengthen strategies and mechanisms for youth protection.

A Generation At Risk explores the above-mentioned issues through six main sections. The first section provides a background to the report and the methodology used throughout the project. The second section provides a background to the war in Northern Uganda, with detailed descriptions of displacement camps titled '19 Years of War: A Snapshot'. The third section launches into the socio-economic challenges and physical security threats endured by IDY. Included in section three are descriptions of the threats and challenges as well as an explanation of what circumstances expose IDY to these conditions. The fourth section outlines IDY protection strategies based on the particular agent and threat. Vulnerable IDY categories are highlighted in the fifth section. The sixth section, 'Failure To Protect,' outlines the national policies that apply to IDY and critiques humanitarian aid responses from a youth centred perspective. Finally A Generation At Risk concludes with a set of recommendations for relevant actors" (Liu Institute for Global Issues/Gulu District NGO Forum/Ker Kwaro Acholi, October 2005).

### **Traditional cultural practices severely restricted by conflict and displacement (September 2005)**

- Despite attempts to revitalize cultural rituals and practices, due to conflict many Acholi have lost traditions and cultural practices
- Acholi cultural principles and values essential to rebuilding Acholi-land
- Commission on Reintegration and Reconciliation should be established

"The findings suggest that the Acholi people continue to hold sophisticated cultural beliefs in the spirit world, which greatly shape their perceptions of truth, justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. Nevertheless, traditional cultural practices and the role of Elders, Mego and Rwodi have been severely restricted by the conflict and circumstances of displacement. In the words of one Elder, 'these children don't know how to be Acholi'. Since their re-institutionalization in 2000, traditional leaders, through Ker Kwaro Acholi, have attempted to revitalize cultural rituals and practices, and to reach out to the population to encourage the safe reintegration of formerly abducted persons. Findings suggest that this initiative has had varying degrees of success on the ground, largely dependant upon the camp setting, leadership within the camp, as well as the individual circumstances the formerly abducted person (FAP) returns to, such as family life. Likewise, the approaches are often ad-hoc and lack coordination with other existing efforts, reflecting an institutional weakness of the organization.

Ker Kwaro Acholi must begin to define a unified, consensual vision of not only cultural contributions to the reintegration process, but also of how to adapt traditional justice mechanisms. This requires sorting out who should be subject to this justice process, as well as the mechanics of how this could take place. It will require local, national and international consultation and coordination with other stakeholders. For instance, the process of Mato Oput has received much attention by national and international stakeholders, with little understanding of what exactly is involved. The research found that the majority of Elders and Rwodi interviewed did not think that the process itself was possible to adapt in its current form. However, the principles, values and symbolic meaning of Mato Oput were considered essential to rebuilding a devastated Acholi-land, and should be carefully taken into consideration in the design of any future justice program in that region.

It is recommended at the conclusion of this report (see Chapter 6) that a Commission on Reintegration and Reconciliation be established in order to begin to investigate questions related to how best to: promote both justice and peace; facilitate reintegration and reconciliation; to maintain the momentum of the Amnesty Commission while at the same time ending the current impunity; and, to balance traditional and international approaches to justice" (September 2005).

### **Displacement erodes social ties (July 2005)**

- The physical structures of the camps have damaged the social fabric of the communities
- Killing and rape are not sanctioned anymore by customary justice
- Children grow up separated from their parents

[...]many informants referred to the fact that the essence of their lives had been destroyed by displacement: the physical structures of the camps have created an artificial environment that has damaged the fabric of the communities. As one elderly man said, "If you look at the way huts are

built, squeezed together, and what people do at night – even at daytime – has removed respect completely now... Morally we are completely broken, the Acholi way of life is torn apart.... Raping women has not been acceptable in Acholi culture, but today it is very pleasing. Killing has never been accepted in Acholi culture, but today it is considered a game. Go and see in the street what kind of games people play, the words people use. Our children now talk about laying ambush, shoot to kill – war games. Before they used to play marriage games, dancing games, hunting games. Now they make tanks, lorries, airplanes. Said another, “Our culture was very rich. Education was not just got from formal classrooms. Wang ‘oo’ was the place all the cultural, moral education happened. In camps the wang ‘oo’ is not there. Now parents do not have time to talk to their children... Now the basic “family” is destroyed and also the community at large. The camp situation has left people not believing in reality. They now have this as their way of life, they now dwell on artificial life, the hand-outs, feeding on WFP [World Food Program-provided food]. Being dependants is now part of the system, something that used not to happen.”(Refugee Law Project, July 2005, p. 27)

" However, the impact of displacement is not only interpreted in economic terms: it is also seen to have eroded the very roots of Acholi culture. A social worker commented: .Community laws are no longer there. There are very many family break-ups. Poverty is very deep. There was frequent reference to the fact that cultural taboos were being broken by families having to live close together, and that social support networks within the society were being eroded. As a local businessman commented, . We grew up with dignity. These children are not growing up as true Acholis. Our culture is being destroyed completely. The children won.t know about seasons and agriculture. A religious leader summarised the impression of humiliation that came through so tangibly in discussions about displacement:

This community is destroyed because the culture has gone. What is a community without a culture? There is no privacy, no morality in the camps. Children die very young. A young girl died yesterday giving birth. There were so many burials in this cemetery we had to take her elsewhere. The whole future of Acholi people is at stake, and this will also cause problems throughout the country. Even look at the night commuters. You are forced to let your children go each evening, but you don.t know where to.

The dramatic increase in the number of night commuters., referred to as another form of displacement in the previous quotation, has further highlighted the disruption within families and communities. Every night, up to 25,000 people, mainly children, walk into towns to sleep on verandas out of fear of LRA attacks during the night. As one informant commented: The future of the Acholi is very bleak . in the whole of the Acholi sub region. The culture of coming to town is a bad thing. If the commuters continue coming to town at night as the normal thing for the next three years, I don.t know what will happen. It should be a concern for the whole nation. A Catholic priest talked of the situation in his church where many children were sleeping: The children who are accommodated in the church use condoms. When I go to celebrate early mass I find a lot of condoms in my church. Lack of adequate parental control over the situation is having a devastating impact. As a teacher said, .The students have no respect. A very small child can abuse you. There.s no discipline. I found small children playing a game and one side played as rebels while the other as soldiers. Imagine these are nursery children!.” "(RLP, 28 February 2004, pp. 26-27)

### **Diverging perceptions of gender roles among IDPs in the camps (2002)**

- Male perception: Men looking after children
- Female perception: Men resorting to alcohol and shunning work

"Meanwhile the changes in the household economy have also led to changes in economic and domestic roles. More than ¼ (54/190) of the women interviewed are now heads of household due death of husbands or separation, while many men reported to be now responsible for child care than before after losing or separating with their wives.

"It is us the men who are mostly affected because for example when your wife is taken, it is us men who will look after the children by feeding them and doing domestic work"

Women on other hand reported taking over men's roles, as many men have resorted to drinking thereby shunning work. Some men were reported to avoid going to the gardens under the pretext that rebels will abduct them. This has resulted in increased workload for the women." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, p.10)

### **Conflict affected areas in northern Uganda suffer social and cultural breakdown**

- Loss of livestock one of the greatest economic and morale blows of the war.
- Parents feel they loose control over their children
- Problems include increased crime rate, consumption of alcohol and drug abuse, loss of respect and values and breakdown of family structure
- Anecdotal evidence suggests an increasing trend in child abuse
- Camp regulations undermining traditional gatherings

#### ***Further to decimation of livestock***

"In an instant, the Acholi farmers were deprived of the milk their cows provided; the additional acreage and higher yields which their oxen permitted them; their fallback for marriage dowries and education; and the savings which carried them through drought, hard time, sickness and old age. The self-respect which attached to cattle ownership and the cultural functions upon which exchange of cattle had relied were disrupted. It was one of the greatest economic and morale blows of the war. It also deprived the insurgents of livestock upon which they relied for food and which they might have used to trade for the arms and ammunition upon which their viability increasingly depended."(Gersony, 1997, Section 1, " The cattle factor")

"Whereas the Acholi are accustomed to living in widely dispersed settlements, the populations of the "protected" villages are tightly packed together, often with only an arm's length between houses.

Sanitation is inevitably poor, and exposure to communicable diseases high. Social conditions are a matter of universal concern: parents feel, in particular, that they are losing control over their children's behavior. Sexual promiscuity is perceived to be unacceptably high, with correspondingly high rates of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Girls and women turn to prostitution in the absence of other economic outlets, boys to brawling, to petty crime, to rape, and in some cases to armed banditry." (Weeks March 2002, p.3)

"The ongoing conflicts have also caused loss of life and major disruptions to the communities. Many children have witnessed violence and atrocities; lost family members to the war; been separated from their families, and undergone severe physical and mental hardships in fleeing the conflict. In addition, there have been massive abductions of children being trained as fighters or

forced into slave labour. The conflict has destroyed or undermined the community support systems that once assisted and protected these affected children and reintegrated them in the community.

With the full consensus of the members of the Psycho-social Core Team composed of NGOs working with affected communities in northern Uganda, national technical experts, line ministries and UN Agencies, an in-depth Northern Uganda Psycho-Social Needs Assessment (NUPSNA) was carried out in 1998. The final report highlighted negative social trends of magnitudes previously unknown to the affected areas. These problems include social and cultural breakdown e.g. increased crime rate, consumption of alcohol and drug abuse, loss of respect and values, as well as breakdown of family structure e.g. separation, orphan hood and increased domestic violence." (UN November 1999, p.21)

"Anecdotal evidence points to an increasing trend in child abuse, especially sexual abuse. One problem is that there is little knowledge of legal protection and how to obtain justice. To respond to this need, Child Rights Advocates are being trained. These advocates have basic training on the legal aspects of child protection and child abuse. In cases of child abuse, the advocates can give advice as to how to pursue the case and to ensure that justice is obtained. So far, 30 Advocates have been trained in Nwoya County, Gulu district." (UN July 2000, p.8)

"Over 800,000 IDPs have been traumatized by terrorist attacks and have remained physically and mentally idle in camps for over five years. Nearly all traditional community and family mechanisms for ensuring cohesiveness and stability in society have broken down. Children have lost years of schooling, preventing them equal access to employment and future opportunities for participating in the national political system and economy." (OCHA 23 May 2001, "Lessons learned")

"As one moves through any of the displaced camps, one of the most depressing sights is to see scores of unattended children everywhere, idle youth loitering about and men drinking alcohol. This is just the surface of a deeper problem that most people, especially elders, feel as something very painful: the collapse of the good cultural values that people used to feel proud of. A whole generation is growing up in a moral and cultural vacuum, and considering that children under the age of 15 account for more than 55% of the total population in the IDP camps in Acholi this is a very serious situation.

The main means of transmitting the Acholi traditional culture to the younger generations is the evening family gathering at the fireplace, referred to in the Acholi language as *Wang oo*. Army-enforced regulations in most camps state that everybody is expected to be indoors or at least next to their huts by 7:30 p.m. Those who break this rule are routinely beaten. The consequence is that since there is no more *wang oo*, children - adults often complain - are not taught good cultural values.

Cramming together people in a small space is seen in all camps as another main reason for the lack of respect that children show towards their parents, since both parents share the same hut with the children without any privacy and at times children make fun of their parents when they see them sleeping together at night.

As a result, very early pregnancies (at the age of thirteen or fourteen), children becoming thieves, and alcoholism among adolescents who have dropped out of school, are worrying features of life in the displaced camps. People resent very bitterly the fact that in recent years no pupil from a school in the camps got a first grade. Little wonder when one considers that in Acholibur there are only four classrooms for 1050 pupils (only 17% of their students pass exams to continue to secondary school after P7). Palabek Gem Displaced Schools had 20 teachers for the 1060 enrolled pupils, and only 13% were able to pass exams to continue to secondary school. Pajule



Displaced Primary School has an average of 300 pupils in the P1 classes, and in Pabbo the average size of a P1 class is about 500 pupils. Given these circumstances for most young people going to Secondary School is just a dream beyond all possibility." (Acholi Religious/Justice & Peace July 2001, p.13)

"Displaced persons were concerned with the degeneration of social values and order, as a result of displacement and staying in camps. Respondents noted that displacement has led to moral degeneration as reflected in behavior changes, neglect of responsibilities and disrespect.

[...]

Change in sexual behavior is among the areas that have significantly deteriorated. Many people confessed engaging in multiple and casual sexual relationships than before displacement. While the team did not collect any statistical data on this issue, female youth were reportedly most affected by the problem although adult and married people too are involved.

[...]

Alcoholism and drug abuses have been on the increase among IDPs staying in camps in particular those located in towns. The assessment observed several people chewing *mairungi/khati* in union camp located near Bundibugyo town. The youth were reported to be mainly engaged in drugs, while all categories (youth, men and women) locally brewed alcohol.

[...]

Respondents noted that the rate of domestic violence had increased with staying in camps. Wife battering and sexual harassment were reported as the most common forms of domestic violence. Women were particularly affected most by domestic violence. Idleness, poverty and increased alcohol use has aggravated the problem of domestic violence. Women reported being sexually harassed and or battered after their husbands were drunk." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, pp. 13-14)

### **Many abducted women and girls find it hard to adjust to the life back home(July 2003)**

- Higher rate of acceptance back into the community for long-term female abductees as opposed to male returnees
- Women who were married before being abducted are rarely accepted back by their husbands
- Returned women know they are a burden for their relatives

"Although abduction is a traumatizing experience for all abductees, abducted women and girls suffer unique abuses and consequent problems. Whereas beating, torture, and maltreatment are the experiences for most people abducted by the LRA, rape and forced sexual slavery is inflicted on women and girls. While there seems to be a higher rate of acceptance back into the community for long-term female abductees as opposed to male returnees who spend several years with the LRA, the pattern is different for mothers who have LRA-born children.

According to several Ugandan NGOs in Gulu working with returnees, the children born in captivity as a result of rape by one or several LRA soldiers are sometimes seen as unacceptable outsiders. According to the custom and kinship structure found amongst the Acholi people, the child belongs to the father and his family. Since the father in cases of gang rape is not known, or the father is an LRA rebel, the child may not be accepted by the mother's kin. Women who were married before being abducted are rarely accepted back by their husbands, who often fear their wives are infected with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS.

Another factor that makes it difficult for women to return from captivity is that they are expected to conform to certain stereotypes of female behavior. Women captive with the LRA for years have become used to war, fighting, rough bush life, harsh conditions, and living with other fighters. At times they may have difficulty adjusting to traditional expectations of women.

The twenty-two-year old former "wife" of LRA Commander Tabuley is one case in point, according to a woman responsible for following women's issues at Caritas: "She is a convinced

LRA fighter and does not want to be here." Many women and girls find it hard to adjust to the life back home. "They know they are a burden for their relatives, they will not be able to go to school if they return with children, and they don't see any future for themselves here." ( HRW, 15 July 2003, p 30)

### **Female-headed households disadvantaged during resettlement (2002)**

- Survey found that Female-headed households (FHH) were extremely disadvantaged and vulnerable compared to male-headed households (MHH)
- FHHs will have limited capacity to grow and access enough food upon resettlement
- FHH have limited sources of income and thus limited access to required farm inputs
- The number of MHHs that acquired new life sustaining skill during displacement found to be almost double that of FHH
- Only 7 percent of FHHs endowed with house construction skills

"Meanwhile the changes in the household economy have also led to changes in economic and domestic roles. More than ¼ (54/190) of the women interviewed are now heads of household due death of husbands or separation, while many men reported to be now responsible for child care than before after losing or separating with their wives." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, p.10)

"The purpose behind this inquiry was to understand the required support priorities of both displaced male and female-headed households [MHH/FHH in the Gulu district] which would in turn enhance strategic and effective targeting of donor, government and aid agency resettlement programmes.

[...]

Key findings include a deprivation trap [...], in which most female-headed households are entrapped making them extremely disadvantaged and vulnerable compared to male-headed households.

[...]

The project also discovered that resettlement priorities differ according to the age and gender of the household head. It was further discovered that though there may not appear to be a big divide between female and male-headed household resettlement priorities, the two groups emerge as two worlds apart when viewed from the vantage point of how their assessed capacities and vulnerabilities will impact on the identified resettlement priorities.

[...]

the FHH phenomenon has been exacerbated by the now 15 year-old civil conflict. An article by Onyango-Obbo (1996) observed that, *"in Acholiland, there is virtually no generation of elders. Most people are widows or orphans. In some families, the grandmother was a young widow, the mother a widow, and the grandchildren too are widows or orphans."* The same article reports that by 1991, women were heading about 60% of the homes, while a survey report by ICRC (2001) indicated that on average, widows head about 20.4% of the households in Acholiland.

### **[Food Production]**

When it comes to crop production, a typical Acholi household practices gender division of labour. Opening virgin land and digging is traditionally a male occupation, while planting and weeding is a female occupation.

[...]

For those that mentioned inability to grow enough food upon resettlement, a number of reasons were given to explain their responses and included the following. *"The land is fertile, but being a woman with young children, it will be very difficult at the beginning...I don't have enough working*

*tools, and there will be no man around to help me. We will try, but I don't even know where to begin,"* said Lucia, a 43 year-old widow and mother of eight.

[...]

A comparison of findings between FHH and MHH reveals that upon resettlement, FHH will have limited capacity to grow and keep enough food. This is explained by a number of factors. Firstly, FHH have weak labour compared to MHH and will comparatively not be able to open up enough land. This is coupled by the fact that digging is traditionally a male activity thus women don't have enough digging skills. Thirdly, compared to MHH, FHH have limited sources of income, thus limited access to required farm inputs, e.g. farm tools, animal traction technologies, and improved seeds.

Again, compared to MHH, FHH do not have the skills to make granaries nor the funds to have one made for them. They will therefore experience more post-harvest losses than MHH, and may continue to be lured into selling their produce during the immediate harvest period. There is therefore ample evidence for this study to conclude that compared to MHH, FHH will be more vulnerable to food insecurity during the reconstruction period." (World Vision/Cranfield University December 2001, pp. 1, 6, 24, 52)

### **[Means of production]**

"All respondents confirmed having had some form of life supporting skill before displacement. For the FHH, new and old life supporting skills include embroidery, brewing, pottery, modern agronomic practices, knitting, baking and cookery, livestock keeping, fish farming, bee keeping, TBA skills, tailoring, handcrafts and witchcraft. For the MHH new and old life supporting skills include modern agronomic practices, bicycle repair, tailoring, building huts and thatching skills, pitsawing, carpentry, brick making, brick laying, and making and weaving local crafts.

All interviewed MHH confirmed ability to continue using all their new and old skills, but mentioned problems associated with lack of investment capital. On the other hand, only 75% of the FHH confirmed ability to continue using all their life supporting skills amidst grinding constraints.

[...]

In their long lists of constraints, both FHH and MHH emphasised lack of capital as one of the leading constraints that continues limiting their production potential. *"I learnt carpentry and tailoring while undergoing rehabilitation with agency X, and am still taking tailoring classes for returned abducted children in the camp...If I had a sewing machine, I would be able to make dresses for sale,"* says Vincent, a 17 year ex-child soldier (formerly abducted). Vincent was abducted for two years, is still single but heads a household of eight, including his very weak mother.

[...]

Traditionally, the Acholi would keep livestock, especially cattle, as their main form of wealth. The study discovered that the number of IDP MHH keeping some form of livestock is more than double that of FHH, and the number of MHH that acquired new life sustaining skill during displacement is also almost double that of FHH. It would therefore follow that in times of severe stress; more MHH would have some form of fall back, which their FHH counterparts would not have.

Arguably, most of the MHH skills especially building, carpentry, opening up new land etc, will be more marketable during the reconstruction period, while for the FHH, their non-agricultural skills will have lost much of the market to the scattering effect caused by resettlement. It would therefore appear that during resettlement, more FHH will be more economically disadvantaged than MHH.." (World Vision/Cranfield University December 2001, pp.27, 28, 54)

### **[Housing]**

"House construction is a male domain activity, and as a result, only 7% FHH acknowledged to be endowed with house construction skills, and can construct their own huts without seeking for

male participation. Male participation is usually paid for in cash or in-kind, and the study discovered that some women have had to trade unwanted sex in exchange for the required male construction skills.

[...]

The study also found out that while in displacement, a number of FHH had acquired some of the required hut construction skills in order to reduce expenditure on house construction. Some of the skills include brick making, and the meticulous work of constructing the roof frame from the ground [...], instead of doing it from the housetop as usually done by men. Once the bricks are ready and the roof frame is in place, they then hire men to erect the wall and thatch the roof using the finished roofing frame." (World Vision/Cranfield University December 2001, pp. 30)

# PROPERTY ISSUES

## General

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### Land issue has potential to cause further conflict (September 2005)

- Landowners demand compensation for their land on which IDP camps are located
- IDP access to land slowly increases in some locations
- IDPs developed coping mechanisms to counter the LRA strategy of looting crops

"Land use and ownership continues to be a delicate and contentious matter in Gulu. As has been reported in previous Updates, some landowners are demanding compensation for their land on which IDP camps are located, and others threatening to evict the IDPs. This issue has the potential to develop into a major conflict if mishandled" (OCHA, September 2005).

"Since the previous EFSA exercise conducted in March/April 2004, the well being of the IDPs appears to have improved. The number of households with access to land has increased from 65 to 85 percent in Gulu and from 37 to 51 percent in Pader, while household access to land has remained relatively stationary in Kitgum. Apart from improvement in the number of households that had access to land, the amount of land accessed has also improved from 0.5 to 2.52 acres per household in Gulu and from 0.71 to 0.74 and 1.77 acres per household in Kitgum and Pader respectively" (WFP, September 2005).

"Although the overall majority of the camp population in Acholiland are effectively excluded from their original land, some are still supplementing their household income with small-scale agricultural activities, often in the form of small garden plots in the security zone surrounding their camp, along the roads, or on small plots around their huts. A few still continue to commute back and forth to their home of origin to cultivate their land. The latter case is almost exclusively for those who happen to have land close to roads or which land is now included in the security zone of the camp in which they 38 live. However, only one out of five households have currently access to land from the camp, as shown in Table 17.

*Table 17 Access to land for cultivation adjacent to the camp. Percentage of households*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Access to land	28	18	16	22

Not all those with actual access to land, cultivate it. As Table 18 shows, 13 percent of do not cultivate available land. The number reporting they do not cultivate is highest in Pader. The reasons for this are mainly linked to security concerns (see Figure 2).

*Table 18 Use of cultivation land. Percentage of HH with cultivation land adjacent*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Not cultivating on land accessible	13	9	18	13

The security situation (or lack thereof) has also contributed to some innovations in agriculture practice. LRA units by and large sustain themselves on what they can loot, and those that are

looted are mainly the civilian population (i.e. the IDPs). This has led some people to start cultivating crops that are not easily looted or demand careful preparation before they can be consumed. Such crops are less attractive as loot for the rebels who most of the time rely on hit-and-run tactics and high mobility. Crops like this include rice and cowpeas. More attention to this issue from the donors may be of great assistance, at least to those that still can carry out some agriculture and gardening. Another new coping strategy for those still able to cultivate, is to sell their products as soon as possible after harvest, in order to avoid the looting or destruction of their granaries" (FAFO, September 2005).

### **Displacement exacerbates consequences of the Land Act of 1998 for women's access to land (March 2004)**

- The IDPs, like other groups, reported that they know the boundaries of their land
- Presence of IDPs is one reason for the increase in all the sites visited of land renting being on the increase
- Number of sales and rentals is not nearly enough to give the IDPs access to adequate land
- As long as IDPs remain in camps, they will not be party to the implementation of the Land Market Policy and the Land Act
- In the past, elders ensured that land, especially land held under customary tenure, did not leave the clan through sales
- Women whose husbands had died were not thrown out of their land by other relatives
- Selling of land by citizens who held leases or rights in customary land was therefore legally limited to only improvements on land
- The Land Act of 1998 does not recognise the important role played by elders in the protection of land from leaving the clan, and protection of women
- Section 40 of the 1998 Land Act that was meant to protect women is ineffective because the names of the women and children are not reflected on the land titles or certificates
- Land transactions, including the selling of land are in compliance with the Land Act of 1998 presided over by the Local council chairmen, and not elders

"[...] "the land policy does not help us if other citizens can chase us from our own land and yet the policy says land belongs to the people. Our land now belongs to Kony" The fear that government intends to grab land, though common throughout the research areas, was more emotionally expressed by the IDPs than the others.

The IDPs, like other groups, reported that they know the boundaries of their land because they demarcate their land with trees such as shea and cassia trees so there is no need for them to have certificates for their land. Nonetheless, several people from the meeting said they have problems on their land due to their displacement. In some cases, their land is used by IDPs in Pader and these people are telling them not to claim this land anymore. There were also the usual cases where, for example, an uncle sold a nephew's land.

The presence of IDPs is one reason for the increase in all the sites visited of land renting being on the increase. Rental agreements with IDPs and occasional sales of land to IDPs, are distinct from the commercial land market, as was discussed above, in that they are given to IDPs (and sometimes also to other needy cases) as a kind of social welfare. Those with large acres of land

may rent them at between 10,000/= and 25,000/= a year for one garden of around an acre. However, the number of sales and rentals is not nearly enough to give the IDPs access to adequate land.

As long as IDPs remain in camps, they will not be party to the implementation of the Land Market Policy and the Land Act. Currently, not much is known by the IDP community on what is happening to their land in places of origin. They face two distinct problems: access to land in displacement for their survival and livelihoods; and potential future problems on their return. Where there is no surveyed land and no titles, there is great potential for future conflicts: over land borders when IDPs return; with people, some of whom are also IDPs, who are using their land now; or over land being sold to third parties by those who do not own the land. There is no mention of land issues in the current draft IDP policy."(LEMU, 31 March 2004)

"History. Control of land sales by elders - hence protecting women and children.

In the past, elders ensured that land, especially land held under customary tenure, did not leave the clan through sales. The elders believed that land should be held for the present generation as well as for the future generation. This strict watchdog role of the elders over land meant that women whose husbands had died were not thrown out of their land by other relatives. It also meant that INDIVIDUAL men did not have the right to sell land. The role of elders in managing land therefore had one very important function, which was that of protecting women and children from losing access to their land.

Land vested in the Government with rights to sell only "improvement" on land.

Until 1998, land was vested in the Government of Uganda. Selling of land by citizens who held leases or rights in customary land was therefore legally limited to only improvements on land.

Changes. Role of Elders "a group of men" in controlling land sales - not recognised.

In 1998, a new Land Act was passed that vested land in Citizens of Uganda. The Act does not recognise the important role played by elders in the protection of land from leaving the clan, and protection of women and children from losing access to their land. In the absence of the elders' important protection role, and in the belief that "women do not own land", individual men now seek to take absolute control of land, including the right to sell the land. Section 40 of the 1998 Land Act that was meant to protect women is ineffective because the names of the women and children are not reflected on the land titles or certificates, making it difficult for the buyers to know that there are other claimants to the land, whose consents are legally required.

By passing elders by the L.C. system in land sales.

Even in circumstances where elders are still able to control the selling of land, the introduction of the Local Council systems now means that land transactions, including the selling of land are presided over by the Local council chairmen, and not elders. Whilst elders preoccupation was to stop the clan from losing their land, the Local Council chairmen have different values and interests to that of elders. The elders, whose primary concern was keeping the land in the clans, are powerless to stop the sales of land and to protect the women and children from the process of landlessness.

Conclusion.

Because of the changes in the way land is managed in this country, changes brought about by the Land Act and the political system, women and children are seeking to have the law amended to reflect the reality on the ground and to protect them from becoming landless. NGO Women Activists such as the Uganda Land Alliance and the Uganda Women Network, (UWONET) have spearheaded an amendment to the Land Act that seeks to introduce family land titles. This would ensure that names of women and children are registered in the title deeds and land certificates. It would mean that if a family unit wants land sold, family members would ALL sit, discuss and

agree on how much to sell the land for, and decide how to use the money. If this amendment went through as proposed and not watered down, it would mean that the intention of S.40 of the Land Act, requiring spouses to give consent to sales of land will be met." (Gender Equality Incorporated, 1 August 2003)

### **The threat to Acholi lands has become a major point of contention in the on-going war in Acholiland, 2003-2004**

- The Acholi people have generally become convinced that the government intends to remove the people from their farmland
- It is believed that this would create room for commercial farmers from abroad
- Salim Saleh, [the President's half brother] through his enterprise called the Divinity Union has engaged in a series of projects under his personal control to exploit Acholi land
- Road ambushes could be the work of local petty criminals rather than Lord's Resistance Army
- The Karamojong warriors from the northeastern part of Uganda have moved deep into Acholi and Teso areas to loot cattle and household assets
- Theft committed by the general civilian population have also escalated over the past two years

"Although not linked to the original causes of the conflict, the threat to Acholi lands has become a major point of contention in the on-going war in Acholiland. The Acholi people have generally become convinced that the government's reluctance to end the rebellion by peaceful means, and hence the keeping of the people in the "protected camps," are part of the strategies intended to remove the people from their farmland. It is believed that this would create room for commercial farmers from abroad to come and exploit it under the U S African Growth and Opportunity Act.

One key informant pointed out that on the 8th October, 1995 when he was launching the new constitution, president Museveni had protested to the joint meeting of the National Resistance Council (then the country's parliament) and the Constituent Assembly for the failure by the Assembly to grant the government rights to own land for "development." But in March 1996 he expressed satisfaction that there was plenty of unoccupied land in Acholi, which could be put to use. His half brother Lt. General Salim Saleh and Geoffrey Obel, a presidential adviser on AGOA have plans to utilise this land for production of cotton for clothing for US markets.

Salim Saleh, through his enterprise called the Divinity Union has engaged in a series of projects under his personal control to exploit Acholi land. These projects have not succeeded but new attempts are being made under different guises. This is why there is a lot of suspicions about the new project called the "Security and Production Programme" which has come under the personal control of Salim Saleh himself, although it is supposed to be a UPDF/government project." (HURIEPEC, 30 October 2003, pp 94-95)

"Insecurity and internal displacement have also created conditions in which unscrupulous elements are able to exploit the vacuum of law and order to profit through the theft and destruction of civilian property. Particular threats include:

§ Boo Kec. A number of local petty criminals (known as boo kec or "bitter vegetables") have taken advantage of the security vacuum in northern Uganda, and loot shops and homesteads in search of livestock, foodstuffs and money. It is often suspected that significant amounts of looting in and around town centres, and road ambushes may be the work of these bandits rather than of the LRA proper.

§ Karamojong. The Karamojong warriors from the northeastern part of Uganda have also exploited this security vacuum in recent years, moving deep into Acholi and Teso areas to loot



cattle and household assets. For instance, large numbers of cattle were looted from Kitgum and Pader during the dry season of 2003 as the Karamojong sought pasture for their own cattle deep in Acholi territory.

§ Common Criminals. According to senior police officers in the region, incidences of theft committed by the general civilian population have also escalated over the past two years, largely as a result of increasing deprivation. Inequitable access to resources has created a situation in which frustrations have grown, and in which conflicts over resources have also ensued. In some case this has led to an increase in the number of arson cases, with huts being burned as a way of taking revenge against neighbours

§ Land Dispossession. Many Acholi IDPs fear that they will be dispossessed of their land while they languish, forcibly alienated from their villages, in the camps. While there is no clear evidence to yet show that this fear is justified, it is real and very serious to the IDPs. The vast majority of land in Acholiland is held according to traditional title and has most ownership in villages has not yet been registered according to the national laws on land title. As such, civilians are wary that while they are no longer living on and using their land, that it could easily be appropriated by others, particularly by GoU bureaucrats or UPDF officers. Indeed this fear goes so far that many Acholi believe that the state of war in the region is being maintained partly by the GoU so that such appropriation of land can take place. Initiatives such as Salim Saleh's Security and Protection programme only serve to reinforce this fear. CSOPNU is currently funding research into the implications of displacement for land rights in northern Uganda, and a fuller account of these issues will be available in that report."(CSOPNU, 10 December 2004, p. 93)

### **Plans for large scale mechanized farming with long-term impact on IDPs' access to land (August 2003)**

- The concept is modeled on the Israeli Moshav, where populations are grouped in defensive clusters and farm the surrounding lands using high intensity mechanized methods
- An average of 2,500 households are foreseen for each SPP, [Security and Production Programme ]i.e. some 45 SPPs for Gulu, Kitgum and Pader
- It is questionable whether this scheme would ever achieve all that it proposes
- The scheme would institutionalise the concentration of the IDP population

"The Government has recently proposed to implement a comprehensive resettlement programme for the camps in the Acholi sub-region – the Security and Production Programme (SPP). The concept is modeled on the Israeli Moshav, where populations are grouped in defensive clusters and farm the surrounding lands using high intensity mechanized methods. The proposed programme foresees that these larger groupings of populations will be able to better defend themselves through their collective 'civil defense' . An average of 2,500 households are foreseen for each SPP, i.e. some 45 SPPs for the three districts. While few would dispute the desirability of reducing the IDPs' near total dependence on food aid through returning large tracts of the once fully food-secure Acholi region to productive agriculture, it is questionable whether this scheme would ever achieve all that it proposes. Indeed, the fact that the UPDF is unable to provide reliable security to many of the existing camps suggests that the SPPs will also face problems of insecurity which,

in turn, will place at risk any attempts at large scale mechanized farming. Indeed, it can be argued that if this scheme were to be implemented, it would institutionalize the concentration of the IDP population in permanently 'protected' villages. If the scheme does go ahead, the UN system and its partners should carefully monitor the implementation to ensure that such resettlement is voluntary and in keeping with the guidelines set out in the Guiding Principles for Internal Displacement."

### **93 percent of women being locked out of ownership to land (2003)**

- Parliament passed an amendment to Section 40 of the 1998 Land Act in June 2003 that achieves a measured victory by broadening the definition of spousal land
- Activists' original intentions to assert a wife's co-ownership rights are still on hold

"Though there are no laws against women owning land in Uganda, the custom of male inheritance in a rural and poor society has resulted in 93 percent of women being locked out of ownership. To counter this trend and curb the widespread dispossession of widows and wives, activists for years have tried to amend Uganda's property laws so that spouses are deemed co-owners of "family land," that land on which the couple lives and depends. Despite Uganda's progressive 1995 Constitution, which values gender equity and reserves a significant number of seats in Parliament for women, despite numerous studies linking women's property rights to economic development, despite extensive coverage of the movement for women's land rights in Uganda, both in academia and in the press, and despite five years of activism, advocates for women's land rights have achieved few legislative successes.

Women, who supply 80 percent of agricultural labor in Uganda, are simply not expected to own land. When activists tried to have wives deemed co-owners of family land in 1998, opponents of the measure blocked such a clause from being incorporated into Section 40 of the Land Act, which required a spouse's written consent to sell land that provides the family both shelter and sustenance. Implementation of even this modest protection has been poor: one-third of adults are illiterate and a husband's verbal claim to the buyer that his wife agrees is often sufficient. If more proof is required, there are no safeguards to prevent a husband from supplying forged documents, or even hiring an impersonator.

Last month, Parliament passed an amendment to Section 40 of the 1998 Land Act that achieves a measured victory by broadening the definition of spousal land and preventing a spouse's objection to its sale from lapsing. However, activists' original intentions to assert a wife's co-ownership rights are still on hold. " (Women's E-news, 20 July 2003)

# PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

## General

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### **Movement from main camps to new settlement areas continues (November 2006)**

- Voluntary though cautious movement due to both reduced LRA threat and need to access arable land
- Freedom of movement still constrained
- In some areas more than 90% of IDPs have returned to their villages

#### **UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 12**

“IDP perception of a reduced LRA threat and the need to access arable land have prompted their voluntary, albeit cautious movement from main camps to new settlement areas. According to the findings of a recent assessment of population movements in Kitgum, Pader and Gulu,[...] the movement of some of the displaced population has also been influenced by the extension of UPDF presence to more locations in the rural areas of the Acholi sub-region. However, fear of possible resurgence of LRA activities, and continued restriction of movement outside camps by UPDF have continued to constrain freedom of movement and impact on human rights of IDPs. In the Acholi sub-region, the increase in population movements has increased the demand for provision of social services both in the existing IDP camps, the new settlement sites, and return areas.

Improvement in security conditions has led to population return in many parts of Lango and Teso sub-regions. Approximately 35,000 IDPs from Alanyi, Abako and Obim Rock camps returned to their areas of origin in central Lira district between January and June. An additional 150,000 IDPs are currently in the process of returning from seven camps (Alebetong, Aloji, Amugo, Agweng, Barr, Lira and Ogur) to their homesteads. Meanwhile, UNDP, UNHCR, FAO and NGO partners are stepping up efforts to initiate district-level early recovery programmes. In the Teso sub-region, Soroti and Kaberamaido districts, more than 90% of the IDPs have returned to their villages of origin. In Soroti, the residual caseload in 11 rural camps visited during a June inter-agency assessment was estimated to be no more than 3,000 IDPs, all of whom were reportedly coping well with their livelihoods, along with members of their host communities.”

### **Strategic Plan for Return, Resettlement and Reintegration in Lango and Teso Sub regions (November 2005)**

- Government submits action plan for resettlement of IDPs in Teso and Lango sub regions
- A number of factors must be met before return and resettlement takes place
- Ugandan government ministries must ensure that IDPs have access to services upon return, for example Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Defence must ensure that law and order and access to justice are guaranteed in return areas

"Factors for Return and Resettlement by end of December 2005

For the IDPs to go home by the end of December 2005, the following factors need to be taken

into consideration:

#### Priority 1: Security

The presence of security personnel (UPDF and Auxiliary Forces) to guarantee security for the IDPs who have returned home is a fundamental factor in convincing the IDPs to resettle back home by the end of December 2005, as directed by H.E The President. It has been generally observed that as soon as security is guaranteed, IDPs spontaneously wish to return to home villages. There is therefore need for a detailed deployment plan of both UPDF and Auxiliary Forces, which plan should be made known to the IDPs in order to reassure them of safety at their homes.

A meeting of Senior UPDF, Police, Prisons and CMI Officers held at the Ministry of Internal Affairs on Monday 7th November 2005 proposed that the return of people to their homes be done in a phased manner, camp by camp, sub country by sub county given that the security forces may not be having adequate resources to secure all the return areas at a go. Another joint security forces meeting was planned to take place on 10th November 2005 to work out a deployment plan which will be presented to the Rt.Hon. Prime Minister under separate cover.

The security forces also observed that December is the month when Karimojong pastoralists normally come to Teso and Lango in search of pasture and Water. Therefore, security precautions against armed Karimojong cattle raiders and warriors must be effectively undertaken throughout the borderline between Teso and Lango sub regions and Karamoja.

#### Priority 2: Physical and Mental Preparation of the IDPs

It is of paramount importance that political leaders (Ministers, Members of Parliament from the Teso and Lango, District Councillors) meet and agree to speak the same language of return if we are to succeed in preparing the IDPs physically and mentally to go back to their villages. It is therefore important that the National and District level political leadership start immediately to educate and appeal to the IDPs to appreciate the prevailing peace and security and plan to go home.

#### Priority 3: Bush Clearing Implements and Agricultural tools

After several years of abandonment, places where IDPs are returning had turned into thick bushes. The IDPs lack bush clearing tools such as axes, pangas, sickles and hoes. Some of these tools will also be used to clear gardens for food production, construction of shelter, etc. It is therefore, important that consideration is made to procure and avail the IDPs with these tools ahead of time of their return.

#### Priority 4: Relief Food Supplies

Hunger and malnutrition are potential threats to the process of return and resettlement. The IDPs should continue receiving food aid even at the return areas for quite some time, since their productive capacity will not have been rebuilt just on return. The vulnerable should be accorded special treatment to ensure that their rights are respected. There should be careful consideration in the manner of phasing out the food aid after about six months.

#### Priority 5: Food Production inputs

Just on return, efforts should also be directed at providing IDPs with seeds of short season crops like potatoe vines, peas, sorghum, maize and beans. Provision of seeds and agricultural tools should constitute a major component of return intervention.

#### Priority 6: Shelter Material

The LRA conflict led to the destruction of the livelihoods of people in the affected districts. Homes and settlements were either burnt down by rebels or collapsed due to lack of care

given to them. IDP households especially the vulnerable ones should be provided with tarpaulins/polythene sheets to roof their shelters as they begin reconstruction of their former homes.

**Priority7: Mosquito nets**

Mosquitoes/Malaria will be the biggest challenge to IDPs on return home because their surroundings will still be bushy at the same time they will be beginning new lives in very temporary shelters open to mosquitoes. It is strongly recommended that each IDP family returning home should be given at least two treated mosquito nets.

**Priority 8: Repair and Rehabilitation of boreholes and other water sources**

Water is essential to life. Due to IDPs long absence from the villages, many of the water sources have broken down. The District Local Governments assisted by the relevant national authorities with the above mandate should embark urgently on the repair and rehabilitation work so that the IDPs returning home have access to clean water.

There are a number of existing safe water sources, which include protected springs, boreholes and shallow wells in the villages. Most of them have degenerated and need urgent repairs and rehabilitation.

The above priorities are classified as emergency requirements that need to be addressed as the IDPs get going to their home villages" (GoU, November 2005).

**Small minority of IDPs in northern districts have concrete plans of leaving camps (September 2005)**

- If a peace agreement is reached, IDPs will likely vary in their movements -- 30% of IDPs will leave camps soon after peace agreement without assistance, 30% of IDPs will move out of camps if some assistance is provided and, 30% of IDPs will remain in camps, at least for awhile
- Return will most likely be a gradual process
- Majority of IDPs located a short distance away from their original homes

"Sooner or later all wars end, and this will also be the case of the war in Northern Uganda. Thus it is important that local and international stakeholder already now start to consider what will happen then. Will people move at once there is peace, or rumours of peace, will they return gradually, will it be difficult to convince people to return home, and what will the main challenges be in such a process?

Intentions to move

As we can see from Table 25, relatively few people have concrete plans of moving out of the camps. Not surprisingly, the number in Pader is the lowest. The reason for the low figure is probably that people are calculating a trade-off in uncertain circumstances: Life in the camps is a life of poverty and marginalization, but it is relatively predictable. The alternative involved literally moving into the unknown.

*Table 25 Concrete plans of moving. Percentage of adult population*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Concrete plans of moving out of the camp	17	8	5	12

This suggests that large-scale movements of people are connected to issues concerning peace and security, and therefore also the peace process.

*Table 26 Expectation of the peace process by district. Percentage of adult population*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Current peace process is heading in the right direction	54	39	32	45

Taking into consideration the little movement that has been in the peace process since the New Year 2004/5, the fact that 45 percent, as shown in Table 26, thinks the peace process moves in the right direction, is a surprise. The people in Gulu are the most optimistic ones concerning this peace process, while the ones in Pader are the most pessimistic ones. As shown in Table 27, the number of people with concrete plans of moving will increase if the peace process produces tangible results.

*Table 27 Conditions for willingness to move from the camps if a peace agreement by district. Percentage of the adult population*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Access to health services, school and stable potable water supply	62	72	75	67
Seeds, agricultural tools and access to land	63	68	71	66
Access to health services and stable potable water supply	54	67	64	59
Access to health services and school	55	61	64	59
Access to land and new shelter	59	57	61	59
New shelter	55	52	58	55
Willing to move even in the absence of aid	32	31	28	31

*Table 28 Conditions for willingness to move from the camps if a peace agreement by place of origin. Percentage of the adult population*

	Same sub-county	Same county, other sub-county	Other county, same district
Access to health services, school and safe and stable water supply	74	73	65
Seeds, agricultural tools and access to land	70	67	60
Access to health services and safe and stable water supply	64	63	59
Access to health services and school	63	60	52
Access to land and new shelter	62	57	51
New shelter	57	49	48
Willing to move also in the absence of aid	32	33	31

What Table 27 and Table 28 show, is that if a peace agreement comes into existence, one out three will move, even if no assistance is offered. What this means is that one should not rule out the possibility of relatively many people (about 400,000), moving out

of the camps uncoordinated, soon after a peace agreement. Another thirty percent will move out of the camps, if some assistance is given, it is however, of less importance what type this assistance is. The last third-part of the IDPs will however, remain in the camps at least for a while. Of course some of these originates from the camp area, or areas so close to the camp, that they will commute. This means that stakeholders must plan for three scenarios that will partly overlap, and partly not. This may be a challenge, and planning for this should start now, and not when the first groups start moving. The preferred option would be for people to return to their home villages.

However, in our view, such a process should be gradual. Families should be allowed to remain in the camp while some household members start to return to rebuild and reclaim their land. The camps as such should be phased out, but services such as health and education should remain and in fact be improved there. It would seem a waste of resources and further dislocation to people to close down such services in order to rebuild them elsewhere. This is particularly the case since the majority of the camp inhabitants have not displaced a great distance. We are aware that such a strategy can be controversial. Some IDPs fear that this will mean turning the camps into permanent large settlements (see CSOPNU 2004b). However, convincing them that this is not the case, should be seen as part of the general trust-building exercise that must be carried out anyway. The advantage of such a gradual approach is also that it allows more time to deal with one of the most challenging issues in a return situation, namely the land issue" (FAFO, September 2005).

#### **IDPs move from old camps to areas closer to home (January 2005)**

- As the rainy season begins, IDPs are making temporary return visits
- Virtually no support currently available for IDPs undertaking these movements
- Stakeholders believe that the UNCT should begin to reflect more actively on its own strategizing for return
- Regroupment of IDPs into large villages, may run contrary to principles that the international community would want to support

"Another development testing the already stretched capacity of humanitarian organizations in northern Uganda is recent population movements, following several months of relative stability in the area. As IDPs relocate from old camps to areas closer to home, temporary or otherwise, they are difficult to track and count, resulting in unexpected changes in IDP numbers. This has hampered planning and response so that organizations have been unable to provide adequate services to all IDPs. UN OCHA is reviewing the definition of IDPs with a view to helping to streamline the tracking of IDP numbers."(FEWS,

"Movement of IDP's [in Teso region]started as early as late February[2004], from Soroti municipality to sub-county camps closer to their homes and land in Katakwi and Kaberamaido districts, where security was provided by the UPDF and Arrow Boys. Most of this early movement occurred because IDPs wanted to as closer to their homes of origin, to be informed of the security situation and to take advantage of the March planting season. As the security situation continued to improve, with the deployment of Arrow Boy detaches in some parishes and villages, a lot of IDPs ventured out into their parishes and villages to cultivate or harvest their gardens, but would return to their sub-county camps before dark. Kaberamaido district has registered among the three districts a substantial number of returnees. In Soroti district, although most of the IDP's who

originated from the four affected sub-counties have returned, they still maintain their shelters where their children reside to attend school. Most of the IDP's from Kapelebyong county, and parts of Amuria county who sought refuge in Soroti municipality, have not returned. In Katakwi district, according to agencies operating in camps, October 2004 registered a 60-70% reduction of IDPs in camps in favour of return, particularly to sub-counties close to Soroti district. The majority of IDPs from areas bordering Lira district and Karamoja are still in camps for fear of LRA or Karimajong attacks."(UNOCHA, 13 November 2004)

"Although the conflict remains active throughout the north and parts of the east, IDPs are beginning to return in some areas, especially in the east. Elsewhere, as the rainy season begins, they are making temporary return visits in order to cultivate their fields. There is virtually no support currently available for IDPs undertaking these movements. There are also secondary movements being sponsored by the authorities, mostly consolidating people from smaller camps into larger ones that can be more readily protected. Conversely, in Gulu district the large Pabbo camp where over 60,000 residents live in extremely congested conditions, the authorities plan to move part of the population out to five smaller camps closer to their areas of origin.

Many stakeholders believe that the UNCT should begin to reflect more actively on its own strategizing for return, relocation and eventual recovery. Moreover, one of the 'solutions' that some senior Government officials are proposing for post-conflict recovery, namely the regroupment of IDPs into large villages, may run contrary to principles that the international community would want to support, especially if such regroupment is seen as anything less than voluntary and contrary to the Acholi people's traditional dispersed settlement pattern.

While the Government has established a task force for return and recovery, on which the UN is represented, it has done little so far in promoting a dialogue on these issues. It is suggested, therefore, that the UNCT begin a dialogue on its own strategy for support to authorities addressing the relocation of camp population, the ongoing seasonal or permanent return movements, and the eventual post-conflict return and reintegration needs. In particular, it should come to agreement on the principles that it will uphold in its assistance to the authorities when major return movements become possible. Ideally UNDP should lead this process and UN Habitat, although not currently in Kampala, should be brought into the UNCT's dialogue on these issues."(UNOCHA, 24 March 2004)

### **Attacks on relief workers hinder humanitarian assistance in northern Uganda and southern Sudan**

- For the first time in the history of the conflict, LRA rebels attack local and international relief organisations
- Attacks come in the wake of international arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court
- Attacks result in the deaths of a number of aid workers
- As a result, relief organisations severely cut back their operations



## **Majority of IDPs in the Teso region are moving back to their gardens to cultivate (June 2005)**

- In Pader, no major changes were noted in IDP figures
- There were also no major changes in IDP numbers in Gulu and Kitgum
- In Lira most IDPs (78.6%) are moving from Lira town to rural areas

### "IDP Movements and Statistics

In Teso, the majority of IDPs are moving out to their gardens to cultivate, with the exception of those in the sub-counties of Obalanga and Morungatuny in Katakwi district, along the border with Lira district. Security authorities advised some IDPs who had returned to the smaller camps nearer their homes of origin to move back to the main camps while they monitored the security situation along the borders.

In Pader, no major changes were noted in IDP figures, although more accurate statistics are expected after the revalidation exercise scheduled for June. There were also no major changes in IDP numbers in Gulu and Kitgum.

In Lira, due to the urban - rural migration of IDPs, rural camps such as Alooi, Ogur, Barr, Aler and Agweng continue to expand in size and population, while the urban camps are reducing in population (Light Force Int. April 05 registration exercise). From the recently concluded WFP population re-verification exercise, the IDP numbers in rural camps increased by about 29% (379,110 in May compared to 250,361 in October 2004). There was an almost corresponding percentage reduction of 24.79% registered in the urban camps (by Light Force Int.), confirming that most IDPs (78.6%) are moving from Lira town to rural areas. Some of the IDPs (10.5%) join rural camps from other rural camps or surrounding villages.

The rural camps with a significant population increase include: Aler (50.7%), Orum (48.3%) Barr (46.2%), Apala (31.6%), Aromo (31%), Alooi (29.5%) and Agweng (29.2%). These sub-counties are considered relatively safe, although recent security incidences have marred the relative calm. Aler and Barr registered the highest number of returning IDPs because they are closest to Lira town.

The increase in rural camp population raises the humanitarian gap already existing in the camps. UNICEF has identified some of these camps for the integrated programming under the Japanese Grant to provide health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, Early Child Development, education, water, sanitation and child protection services."(UNOCHA, 27 June 2005)

## **Return may open conflicts over land (December 2004)**

- Most IDPs wish to go home
- Confidence among IDPs that land borders will be clearly recognisable
- Fears of land grabbing
- Short distances from camps to return areas

### "RETURN AND THE LAND ACT

*As soon as this war ends, the next one will begin. It will be a land war, and it will be between brothers in the same clan. (Several interviewees, in almost identical words)*

*This chapter looks firstly at the likely process of return and the importance of land in that process, and then examines the changes in the rules and institutions of land that the IDPs are likely to find. Potentials for conflict are examined, together with the different processes by which people risk losing their land. Some factors that could help people secure their assets are also identified.*

### **The process of return**

Previous research among IDPs has already shown that the vast majority want to go back to their own land. This study did not look for quantitative data, but almost everyone interviewed expressed the desire of only wanting to go home (the few exceptions were widows and orphans who had been thrown off their land and who had nowhere to go). Some agencies had expressed fears that people would not know where their land was after many years in camps. Such fears appear to be misplaced according to all the IDPs interviewed. People say they know where their land is, and that if young people have difficulties, there are enough elders and neighbours alive who can help them identify their

land. There was also confidence that land borders will be clearly recognisable for at least several more years and even if some marker trees have been cut down or burnt, the borders between fields made over the years by piles of field refuse (*kingingi*) will still be visible and enough natural landmarks will be identifiable (even from a plane over Gulu, the outlines of fields can still be seen). The fear is not that people will be unaware of where their borders are, but that some will attempt to take advantage of others' weaknesses.

The actual process of return is likely to be simple. Most people are displaced only a few kilometres (on average six and a half kilometres or just two hours walk). This means that they will have little difficulty in carrying with them the few items they still have with them in the camps (utensils, clothes, tools, food and seeds, etc.). The distance from people's homes to the camps does not seem to vary much from district to district, with people in Kitgum displaced on average just 1 km more than in Gulu.

**Table 5: Percentage of IDP households by the distance displaced (in the three Districts of Acholiland)**

#### **Distance displaced IDP households**

<b>2 km or less</b>	17%
<b>4 km or less</b>	45%
<b>6 km or less</b>	64%
<b>8 km or less</b>	76%
<b>10 km or less</b>	86%

Many displaced have already had experience of the process of returning home in 1999 and 2000. Initially, more people would go to gather food and firewood from their home fields, then men would gradually spend longer, passing an occasional night in hiding in the village, and slowly preparations would be made to prepare shelter for a progressive return of other family members. It is likely that such a process would be repeated in many camps, although in others IDPs may wait for a clear end to the war and a clear directive from the Army that they can return home, which would mean a more sudden departure." (CSOPNU, 31 December 2004, p. 44)

### **Landmines could hamper return movements (November 2004)**

- The LRA has stocks of landmines, but have not used them extensively
- Acholiland is probably not heavily mined
- The Ugandan army has not been known to use mines against the rebel groups

- At least 34 casualties were recorded in northern Uganda between 2002 and 2003

[...] it is in the north - where the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has battled the NRM for 18 years - that the problem [of landmines] remains significant.

'The LRA has stocks of landmines, but have not used them extensively,' Lt Paddy Ankunda, the Ugandan army spokesman in northern Uganda, told IRIN in Gulu town, 380 km from the capital, Kampala, on 26 October. 'I don't think the region is heavily mined, although the army has recovered 52 anti-personnel and 34 anti-tank mines from the rebels.'

On 25 August 2002, President Yoweri Museveni, who led the NRM war, had reported that weapons and equipment - recovered during a military operation called 'Operation Iron Fist' - included 174 anti-personnel mines (APMs) and 20 anti-vehicle mines (AVMs).

Other sources within the Ugandan army say retreating LRA fighters could be laying landmines in largely uninhabited swathes of land where the people fled years ago, citing areas near the Uganda-Sudan border, including the Dingotona mountains.

This, the sources said, would hamper the possibility of internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to their homes.

Relief workers in northern Uganda told IRIN a new APM exploded in early September in Pelah village near Kitgum town, injuring two government soldiers. Two other mines were found in Pajimo camp for IDPs. Another was found near a borehole and another close to a health centre, while a minefield is believed to exist in Pader District in the area between Puranga and Geregere.

According to experts, the Ugandan army has not been known to use mines against the rebel groups in the country, although it was suspected of using some during an earlier incursion into neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2001, the government closed down its mine-producing factory at Nakasongola, near Kampala. In July 2003, it destroyed over 4,000 APMs, but retained a few thousand 'for training purposes'. Nevertheless, hundreds of Ugandans have been hurt or killed by landmines over the years.

According to the Landmine Monitor Report of 2003, at least 34 casualties were recorded in northern Uganda between 2002 and 2003, including five people who were killed when a bus hit a landmine in June 2003. Another 19 people were seriously injured in the incident.

Data collected from hospitals in the north shows that 385 people suffered amputations as a result of mine or UXO accidents between 1999 and 2003, making this the single largest recorded cause of disability in the region."(IRIN, 26 November 2004)

### **Improved security in Rwenzori induced return (May 2003)**

- Increasing number of IDPs are in the process of returning to their original homes or to smaller settlements near their places in Rwenzori (2003)
- Most IDPs in Kasese and Kabarole districts either returned home or integrated(August 2002)
- Many people may not wish to return home after losing their economic bases in the original villages
- The youth singled out as a category that may be reluctant to return to villages.

### ***Southwestern Uganda (Rwenzori region 2002)***

" As a result of the relative peace that returned to most of the Southwest, IDPs started trickling back to the original homes in 2002. This process was further accelerated by the provision of return and reintegration packages distributed by the WFP in July/August 2002. This included: three months ration of posho, beans and cooking oil for up to 87,000 IDPs; hoes, pangas and sickles; School feeding programmes for 59 schools in the district (18 on solid meals and the rest on porridge). After the resettlement of the IDPs that ended in October 2002, WFP continued to provide social support to a total of 4,500 extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs) throughout the district.

[...] it is estimated that about 90% of the IDPs have since returned home, although it has also been noted that many of them are still living in communal settings. It is also noted that while many have returned to their villages, a sizable number still maintained homes in the areas surrounding the former camps, many of which are now sprawling trading centers. The remaining 10% of the IDPs are scattered sparsely through the existing camps in Nyahuka, Kaputabule, Bubukwanga, Mantrooba, Bugoto, Picfare and Busunga. It was observed in Nyahuka trading center that many former IDPs now engage in petty trading for subsistence while others rely on their small plots in the villages for food supply. Local authorities and IDPs have observed that many have opted to stay in the trading centers for any of the following reasons:

- Rural life is no longer attractive given that most of the former camps are now small trading centers
- Some IDPs it was reported still suffer from the trauma of the war and still need to be reassured that their homes are safe.
- Some have taken to petty trade.
- Many still assume that staying in the camps will entitle them to assistance from various agencies." (OCHA 31 may 2003)

"Developments in the situation in southwestern Uganda are more positive than in the North. The threat from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) appears to have reduced significantly and the Amnesty Commission and Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) are currently approaching donors in Uganda for the repatriation and rehabilitation of the ADF as stipulated by the Amnesty Act (2000). As a result, the situation in the Rwenzori region, particularly Bundibugyo District, is much calmer. As a direct result, an increasing number of IDPs are in the process of returning to their original homes or to smaller settlements near their places of origin. While there has been no recent verification of the numbers in IDP camps in Bundibugyo (last established in February 2002 at 87,000), there are indications that up to 40,000 people have since left the camps. Similar returns has taken place in Kasese and Kabarole, where all IDPs have either returned home or integrated in the community.(UN November 2002, p. 6)

"Though no comprehensive assessment has been undertaken, most IDPs in Kasese and Kabarole districts either returned home or integrated into the community. Kasese reports less than 200 IDPs remain and are in the process of integrating into the local population. Kabarole reports less than 100 IDPs remain and are expected to return permanently upon repairing their homes and community infrastructure. Repair of community infrastructure has been identified as one of the main incentives to facilitate IDPs return to their homes of origin. Other factors that would act as pull factors for IDPs are provision of building materials such as iron sheets; household supplies including jerry cans, kitchen utensils, blankets and so on; agricultural inputs (seeds, farming implements and livestock). Health interventions, particularly immunizations,

HIV/AIDS awareness, sensitisation in early childcare, prenatal care, malaria prevention and nutrition is also a key area of concern both for the displaced and those returning home.

Since late 2001 ADF attacks have greatly diminished resulting in the gradual return of IDPs to their original homes, greater access to gardens, markets and purchasing power. The changing situation has meant agencies move from relief efforts to development.

WFP, a major actor in the region, is distributing a settlement package, both food and non-food items (NFIs) to about 74,657 out of 87,000 IDPs. The beneficiaries are receiving food for three months and agricultural tools of a hoe and a panga per family and distributions are scheduled to end in the first week of September. Meanwhile, WFP, which ceased general food distributions in the first week of July 2002, is still receiving registrations of IDPs who have returned to their homes of origin and also concentrating on its remaining programmes - school feeding to cover all 112 primary schools with an estimated 62,000 pupils and Food for Assets (FFA) which is slowly picking up pace.

Several factors have been cited as cause for residual IDPs especially in Bundibugyo District. These include urbanization, the need to rebuild community infrastructure, disrepair of homes and pit latrines, lack of land - some families sold their land during the war - and, many IDPs remain sceptical about security in the villages thus remaining in the IDP camps. ." (OCHA July/August 2002)

"As a result of great reduction of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) threat, there has been prolonged improved security in Rwenzori region, particularly Bundibugyo District. As a direct result of security there is increasing return of IDPs to their homes or to smaller settlements near their homes of origin.

According to the last verification exercise done by WFP in February 2002, there were 87,000 IDPs in camps in Bundibugyo. However, current reports indicate that about 40,000 IDPs have left the camps and either gone home or to smaller settlements near their homes of origin. This means that there are about 47,000 IDPs left in camps. There have not been current verification exercises in the neighbouring districts of Kasese and Kabarole, but reports from district authorities and some agencies indicate that IDPs in here have either returned home or been integrated into the community. It has however been noted that those IDPs in camps in valleys are not moving back as fast as those on the mountain side, and this could possibly be because of the social changes experienced during the period of displacement; for example, some have started income generating activities that are keeping them in the camps. This brings out the fact that some IDPs may never leave the camps, which may then turn into rural trading centres and humanitarian agencies will then have to support Government in addressing the issue." (OCHA June 2002)

"According to the WFP April report, a total of 25,084 IDPs (12,063 males and 13,021 females) have returned to their original homes in Bundibugyo district. WFP and the District authorities continued to track and document the return of IDPs to their homes." (OCHA April/May 2002)

"Security is a key concern for people to resettle in their communities, this was reported by 52% of the respondents. When some IDPs were asked why they have not yet returned to their homes, the general feeling is that security has improved in the region, there is still uncertainty about the sustainability of relative security that they are enjoying. Most respondents (82%) want government to make a statement guarantying that their villages are secure before they can go back.

Many people may not wish to return home after losing their economic bases in the original villages. During the war many cocoa and coffee plantations were destroyed. While majority of the household (94%) had land before displacement, some people have sold it out during the period of

displacement. Several internally displaced people lost their houses and household property during the insurgency.

Meanwhile, data obtained from focus group discussions and key informant interviews indicates that some people may be reluctant to go back to their original villages, due to better life experienced while in camps or changes that have occurred in their social life. The youth were particularly singled out as a category that may be reluctant to return to villages.

Other challenges for resettlement include:

Breakdown of social infrastructure in the original communities where IDPs came from

Lack of accurate data on the magnitude of displacement in the region

Local leaders who are allegedly using the insurgency for their own selfish political gains

Inadequate districts' capacities to handle the resettlement process

High expectations by IDPs from government and other agencies before returning home

[...]

"Internally displaced persons look forward to leaving camps and go back to their villages.

During household interviews 90% of the respondents noted the desire to return home but only constrained by issues such as security in their original villages (52%), lack of shelter (25% - lack roofing materials such as grass or iron sheets) or waiting for others to return to their original villages (6%). Only 7% would opt to stay in camps and the remaining 3% undecided. [...].

### **Existing efforts towards resettlement**

Internally displaced people, central government and districts have begun some activities that are directed towards resettlement. Majority of the displaced people in the three districts go back to their homes during day to carry out cultivation and later return to camps in the evening. In Kasese and Kabarole, many camps are getting smaller as most people are beginning to return to their homes voluntarily. For example, in Kyamukube camp, the camp size has reduced from 956 households to 496 (reduced by 63%), and in Mitandi camp, 53% of the households have returned

....

[...]

People from Bundibugyo who had camped in Kasese and Kabarole, Mubende, Masindi or other districts are already joining camps in Bundibugyo that are closer to their homes as a process of returning home.

[...]

The statement from central government on its intention to have all IDPs resettled by March 2002, as well as the visit of the second deputy prime minister in the region was a good signal, many people seem to be mentally preparing for return to their homes. However even before this statement, district authorities in the region had begun some efforts toward resettlement. In Bundibugyo for example, the RDC encouraged IDPs to go to camps that are closer to their homes so that they can access their gardens. Other IDPs have applied to the security authorities for setting up decongestion camps. In Kasese there is a draft document towards displaced persons although the focus was more on providing services to people who are still in camps. Security Personnel in the districts indicated their desire to see people going back to their original communities. All these are indicators of the political will for solving the problems of displaced persons, which is important if resettlement is to be done." (Oxfam 8 February 2002, pp. vi-vii, 15-16)

## **Return and reintegration**

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### **Return progresses in eastern Uganda (June 2006)**

**IDMC, June 2006, Pg. 9:**

“In the Teso and Lango sub-regions of eastern Uganda, significant numbers of IDPs returned to their home parishes and many to their farms, and many more are expected to return depending on security. Inter-agency assessments led by UNHCR in December 2005 and by the District Disaster Management Committee in Lira district in March 2006 indicate that 55% of the IDP population in the central part of the district have either partially or permanently returned. Assessments also revealed three displacement camps where more than 70% of huts had been abandoned and occupants either temporarily or permanently returned to their villages. Returnees face a number of obstacles hindering a durable reintegration process, including lack of teachers in schools due to a deficit of staff housing, lack of equipment and school materials, extremely poor health services and the absence of micro credit facilities in nearly all areas of origin. To redress these obstacles, UNDP and UNHCR are leading early recovery assessments to consult the local population on infrastructure needs. Lack of civilian police and justice institutions in areas of return is also of concern (UNOCHA, 15 May 2006, p.1-3). In an effort to facilitate the return process, the government has set up a team of landmine experts to locate and remove land mines before IDPs return to specific areas (IRIN, 19 April 2006).”

### **Abducted children return to farming and recruitment by UPDF (April 2005)**

- The government has provided the returnees with land in Gulu
- A special battalion within UPDF has been created strictly for former LRA fighters
- The army had recruited more than 800 former rebels into its ranks
- The battalion retains the LRA culture and command structure
- Proposal to create a settlement for former LRA and their families could raise tensions
- 

"Thousands of former fighters of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have started farming in war-torn northern Uganda in an effort to adjust to civilian life, the minister for northern rehabilitation, Grace Akello, told IRIN on Tuesday.

"The government has provided them with the land in Gulu, and they have since ploughed over 500 acres and planted their own food," Akello said. "The land is free to all former rebels and we have over 20,000 who have returned."

Many of the former fighters have recently given themselves up to the government or been captured during battle. Others were former child soldiers rescued from the LRA, which is notorious for abducting children.

The LRA has waged a 19-year war against the government of President Yoweri Museveni, and is estimated to have abducted more than 20,000 children to serve as fighters, porters and sex slaves during that time.

Akello said the government wanted to change the people's perception of the former rebels being rehabilitated.

"When the former rebels return to the villages, fingers point at them as the people who killed, who stole and who perpetuated mayhem in the region," Akello said. "We want to change that by giving them a chance to adapt to their new life."

The Ugandan army spokesman, Maj Shaban Bantariza, told IRIN in January that the army had recruited more than 800 former rebels into its ranks. He said these soldiers now made up a new brigade, one of those charged with defeating the LRA.

The government has offered a blanket amnesty to any rebels who surrender to its forces, and has pledged to help in their disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration."(IRIN, 26 April 2005)

"Formerly abducted children and adults from the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda are finding themselves without options as they return to communities that are unprepared to meet their reintegration needs. A brutal civil war has raged in northern Uganda for the past 18 years between Government forces and the LRA, which is made up largely of children who were abducted from their homes and forced to join the rebel group. In 2004 the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) has had military success, weakening the LRA, and resulting in an increased number of formerly abducted children and adults being rescued by the UPDF or escaping and seeking amnesty.

Upon return, some of the former abductees feel that they have no choice but to join government forces, either the UPDF or militias known as Local Defense Units. Children are particularly vulnerable to re-recruitment by the UPDF. After escaping or being rescued from the LRA, and prior to going to the UPDF-run Child Protection Unit (CPU), where NGOs have access to them, some of the children "get lost." These children are usually the ones who have been identified by former LRA commanders, now working for the UPDF, as skillful fighters. Although the CPU is a focal place for child protection agencies to access children and take them to reception centers, the CPU is housed in the UPDF barracks and thus the children remain in a militarized environment.

Some adult former LRA, especially the hard core fighters, choose to stay with the military, either due to the appeal of a steady income or for fear of returning to communities in which they have committed atrocities. Within the UPDF, a special battalions --- Battalion 105 --- has been created strictly for former LRA fighters. According to NGOs, the battalion retains the LRA culture and command structure, which are built on coercion. According to a child protection expert, "...[T]his battalion is a time bomb, waiting to explode." The battalion has come under a great deal of criticism, and NGOs are pressuring the UPDF to allow former LRA to go through reception centers before they are given the choice to join it.

There is also concern about government proposals to create a settlement for former LRA and their families at Labora farm. Government officials describe Labora as a place where former LRA will receive basic services and can work on agricultural enterprises. Isolating the former LRA, however, is likely to undermine their ability to reintegrate into society. The special attention given to former LRA living at Labora, with better access to job opportunities and improved facilities, is also likely to increase tensions between returnees and communities, which are not benefiting from similar services and which suffered at the hands of the rebels. While donors have been unwilling to fund this scheme, it is going forward under a Presidential directive."(RI, 15 December 2004)

"Two more senior commanders of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have sent their families home in northern Uganda, reported state-owned newspaper The New Vision on Tuesday.

The two commanders, Major Gen. Caesar Accellam and Major Acel Calo Apar, released their wives and five children and escorted them up to Palaro Ugandan army detachment in northern Gulu district where they are being taken care of. Another rebel commander Brig. Sam Kolo sent his family home last week.



These rebel commander sent their families back during the ceasefire between the Ugandan army and the rebels, which will end on Dec. 15.

Army spokesman in northern Uganda Lt. Paddy Ankunda said the women would be transferred to Gulu barracks on Monday."(Xinhua, 14 December 2004)

"Resettlement and re-integration of 'returnees' (former LRA rebels/former abductees): Children and adults, male and female, have been reporting to the UPDF and to reception centres at a high rate for the past three months. The capacity of the children's centres is adequate, but the capacity for adults is insufficient. There are concerns within the aid community that returning former LRA soldiers, after going through the reception centres and receiving amnesty, could be integrated in a separate battalion without having the choice not to do so, without adequate screening, and without a transparent civilian oversight mechanism. Others could be resettled with their families in a former government agricultural research station close to Gulu, instead of being reintegrated into their original communities."(OCHA, 11 November 2004, p.6)

### **Challenges of Reintegration (September 2005)**

- Process of reintegration complicated by challenges encountered by returnees and community members, such as stigmatization and resentment, a general lack of economic opportunities; and insecurities in camp settings
- Returnees identify name labeling/calling as biggest challenge upon return
- Poverty, poor health care, and limited access to humanitarian assistance pose significant challenges to ability of IDPs and returnees to realize livelihoods
- Returnees fear being re-abducted due to lack of protection in the camps -- returnees particularly vulnerable to Ugandan army abuse
- Ugandan Amnesty Commission helps former combatants and returnees to reintegrate

#### **"Stigmatization and Resentment**

In camps, returnees are frequently called names such as 'rebel', 'Kony', 'children of the rebels', 'rebel wife', or 'chicken thief'. Half of the informants identified name labelling as their biggest challenge upon return. Name-calling does not only act as a barrier to reintegration, it also increases the levels of trauma a returnee experiences. It is destructive to their psychosocial recovery, as it constantly reminds them of atrocities they witnessed or committed in the bush. In fact, one informant noted that the worst part about being in the 'bush' was the punishment you receive when returning home. Furthermore, stigmatization generates a sense of guilt for the returnee, which can trigger depression or even feelings and acts of revenge. If returnees continue to be viewed as rebels, they could eventually internalize this identity and act accordingly. Stigmatization does not only affect the returnee, but it also extends to returnees' children. As one child's mother noted, "Everywhere there is talk about me and my baby."

In addition to name-calling, returnees are often accused of having cen, which is another form of social rejection from the community. Male and female returnees reported being told they had cen, particularly when they displayed signs of psychosocial trauma or made 'mistakes' in front of the community. This induces a sense of paranoia as returnees feel that their community is constantly watching them. In some ways, this is similar to their experience in the 'bush', where commanders would monitor everything abductees said or did. Cen is also used to keep a physical separation between returnees and other children. "[We] are not allowed to interact freely with the community because we are said to have cen which can harm the other children".<sup>100</sup> Male and female returnees also reported being accused of murder, abduction and looting while they were in the bush. Yet despite this, very few cases of reprisal beatings or killings of returnees were reported.

Returnees are also socially ostracized through resentment, which is illustrated in various ways. For community members whose children have been abducted, but who have not returned home or who have been reported dead, often there is tremendous anger as to why their children were not lucky enough to come home. Commonly, returnees are blamed for the suffering in camps, since they are at times viewed as the ones responsible for directing the rebels to the communities. "Community members suffer much from the pain of killings and abductions, and so they blame those who return and use the word *cen* as a way of provoking them."

Returnees also noted that their communities were resentful for the assistance that they receive. One informant explained how he used money that was given to him through the Amnesty package to start a small business at his camp, but was harassed for this initiative: "the community points their fingers and tells us we are eating on the blood of the people we killed".<sup>102</sup> There is the perception that returnees are 'better off' than the rest of the community because they receive specific assistance that is entirely based on their 'rebel' experience. Community members often interpret this aid as a reward; some take it even further by claiming that returnees are "prospering from the killings committed in the bush". It is important to recognize why some community members respond like this. The conditions in IDP camps in northern Uganda are below internationally agreed to standards and very often community members are in extreme need of assistance to rebuild what has been destroyed by the LRA.

#### Economic Challenges

Poverty, poor health care, and limited access to humanitarian assistance pose significant challenges to the ability of IDPs to realize livelihoods. Returnees identified food security as a major problem when returning home. One informant recognized the source of the problem as being "[the] failure to get food distribution by the World Food Programme [WFP] because our names take too long to get into the distribution lists."<sup>104</sup> Distribution lists by WFP are not updated as frequently as they should be; yet numbers frequently fluctuate with the entrance of new people into IDP camps. The other alternative to collecting food is to access nearby fields and gardens; however, this is an extremely dangerous activity, and many children have been abducted or encounter the LRA when leaving their camps. The basic essentials of food, water, security and health are often inaccessible to returnees and IDPs. A recent study conducted by *Medicins Sans Frontiers* "showed that ten children below 12 years out of 10,000 die every day because of severe conditions in IDP camps."<sup>105</sup> This finding conveys the conditions returnees encounter in their homes.

Breaking out of these conditions is extremely difficult, as there are very few options available. It is particularly difficult for returnees who often do not have the skills and educational background to enable them to find job opportunities. Returnees are in need of "catch-up" education programs and vocational skills training, as their schooling is interrupted by the years they spent in captivity. Very often when they return there are no resources to enrol them in school, or they have passed their schooling years. The researchers were not able to gather statistics, but it appears that because of poor livelihood alternatives, a significant number of male returnees joined the local militias and UPDF to survive. Many female returnees, especially those who return with children, lack some sort of income and parental support.

[...]

#### Insecurity

Commonly the return and reintegration aspects of disarmament and demobilization operations occur in a post-conflict scenario or in a place where there is a ceasefire. This, however, is not the case for northern Uganda. The lack of proper protection in these camps is perhaps one of the most tormenting challenges for returnees. The same fears that these children had prior to abduction frequently resurface upon return. These worries will have developed into a more profound fear, since FAP know exactly what it is to be abducted by the LRA. They also know that if they are re-abducted, there is a high possibility they will be killed instantly if the LRA commander or fighters recognize that the 'new' abductee had previously escaped LRA forces.

Security threats do not only come from the LRA, but also from the UPDF. The UPDF is meant to act as the "security provider" in IDP camps, but it often acts as a major source of insecurity by beating, torturing, harassing, raping, killing, or stealing from civilians. A report focusing on internally displaced youth, "When All You Do Is Fear", indicates that returnees were particularly vulnerable to UPDF abuses and were often targeted by them through name-calling and physical violence, especially when soldiers are under the influence of alcohol. The lack of security provisions in camps makes it difficult for returnees to feel at home and recover from their psychosocial trauma" (Liu Insitute for Global Issues/Gulu District NGO Forum/Ker Kwaro Acholi).

"The Amnesty Commission (AC) is the body established by parliament to oversee the amnesty, and is the lead agency in the implementation of the 2000 Amnesty Act. Its two key objectives are "to persuade reporters to take advantage of the amnesty and to encourage communities to reconcile with those who have committed the offences; and to consolidate the progress so far made in amnesty implementation and ensure that more insurgents respond to the amnesty and that the community is ready to receive them." The Act also established a Demobilisation and Resettlement Team (DRT) whose functions are to decommission arms, demobilise, resettle and reintegrate reporters. The DRT functions at a regional level, and is responsible for the implementation of the amnesty, under direct supervision of the Commission. There are six DRT offices around the country, located in Gulu, Kitgum, Arua, Kasese, Mbale and Kampala, all of which rely heavily on other government agencies, civil society organisations, the community and donors for successful implementation.

In the case of former combatants who are in prison on charges of treason and want to receive Amnesty, the Director of Public Prosecution clears them before their applications are passed on to the AC. Reporters denounce their activities by signing a declaration, after which they are registered, receive an Amnesty Certificate, and then, in theory, a package. A standard package contains UgShs 263,000 in cash (equivalent to 3 months salary of a policeman or teacher at the time the Commission began plus UgShs 20,000 transport money), and a home kit, which includes a mattress, saucepans, blankets, plates, cups, maize flour and seeds. Each total package, including the cash payment, costs the equivalent of UgShs 350,000.

To date, the Commission has been successful in both encouraging thousands of combatants to renounce rebellion, and in its involvement in bringing about a negotiated settlement to conflict, particularly in West Nile. Indeed, Justice Onega, the AC chairperson was the mediator in the UNRFII peace negotiations process in West Nile in which 2,500 UNRFII combatants, under Major General Bamuze, came out of the bush and renounced rebellion. Furthermore, in western Uganda, in collaboration with the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the AC has initiated contact with many combatants in the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and National Union for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) based in the DRC" (Refugee Law Project, Febraruy 2005).

### **Returned rebels risk being reabducted (May 2004)**

- The number of children born in captivity has reached unprecedented numbers and requires special attention
- Most of the children returning from captivity have been in captivity since the mid-1990s
- Many children said they had been under pressure to join the army upon return

- The children continue to remain under constant risk of re-abduction
- Community usually welcomes child returnees
- Problem of acceptance has occurred mostly with child mothers

"With an increasing number of children rescued or escaping from LRA captivity in northern Uganda, the capacity of child care agencies working with formerly abducted children is getting stretched.

"The World Vision Centre in Gulu was set up to handle 250 children, with a capacity to stretch up to 400 but we are now nearing the 600 mark," said the Children of War Rehabilitation Centre Coordinator, Michael Oruni.

The number of children at the World Vision Centre is increasing by an average of 15 children a day. In addition to this, Oruni says the number of children born in captivity has reached unprecedented numbers and requires special attention.

"We need extra funding. I am proposing that we open a separate centre for child mothers. We now have 76 children born in captivity camped with their mothers at the rehabilitation centre," Oruni said.

Most of the children returning from captivity have been in captivity since the mid-1990s. Because the children have been in captivity for so long, the time needed for proper counseling and rehabilitation is much longer. In addition, many of the children come from Pader district, where it is difficult for World Vision Uganda to reunite them with their families due to the high levels of insecurity. The community program in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader has been slowed down, due to insecurity in the more remote areas.

Unicef has provided five tents, each with the capacity to accommodate at least 50 children. They are to deliver 1,350 mattresses, blankets, cups and plates that World Vision requested, and this will go a long way in addressing the swelling numbers of children at the centre.

However, the centre needs more funds to buy extra materials, recruit more staff, and provide beds and clothes. World Vision has also contacted the Gulu district administration for land to be able to extend the activities of the centre." ( World Vision, 28 May 2004).

"52 children, who are former victims of abduction by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), are returning to their home communities in northern Uganda. The airlift is part of an ongoing programme organised by World Vision with UNICEF support, to help the children return to normal life after their experiences at the hands of the LRA.

[...]The children who are joining the current airlift were released after fighting between Ugandan troops and the LRA. All have spent anywhere between a few days to several months in reception centres, where they received medical and psychosocial counselling support.

UNICEF provides air and road transport for formerly abducted children, and also supports a network of community volunteer counsellors with training in psychosocial counselling and referral, once the children are reunited with their families.

The 52 children travelled from Gulu to their homes in Kitgum and Kalongo Districts." (UNICEF, 17 May 2004)

"Returning abductees are required to first report to the Child Protection Units set up within the UPDF, before being taken to rehabilitation centres such as GUSCO and KICWA. While under the control of the UPDF, many said they had been under pressure to join the army.

Fifteen-year-old Denis Nyero, who was rescued by the army, told IRIN he had refused to give in to the pressure, but many boys who were with him at the child protection centre had agreed to remain behind and join the army.

The rehabilitation centres are, however, just a temporary respite for returning abductees. Once return to their families has been facilitated, the children continue to remain under constant risk of re-abduction, which would mean almost certain execution at the hands of the LRA.

There are also children in the centres who were born in LRA captivity, and have no parents or relatives to care for them because they were either orphaned or separated from their parents in the bush.

One positive aspect of the human tragedy in the Acholi subregion is that the community usually welcomes child returnees, despite the atrocities they may have committed against their own people. Even where children's parents are dead, the extended families will always accept them back without attaching much stigma to them, according to the KICWA centre manager. "I do not remember of any children who have been rejected by their families," said Christopher Arwai, who heads the KICWA centre

The problem of acceptance has occurred mostly with child mothers, because relatives are often not willing to support their children, according to Julius, a programme manager at GUSCO. "Our major problem is with the child mothers who often find it difficult to get support from their families. When they are with two or three children, they become an extra burden for the families," he said." (OCHA 31 September 2001, p.26)

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

## General

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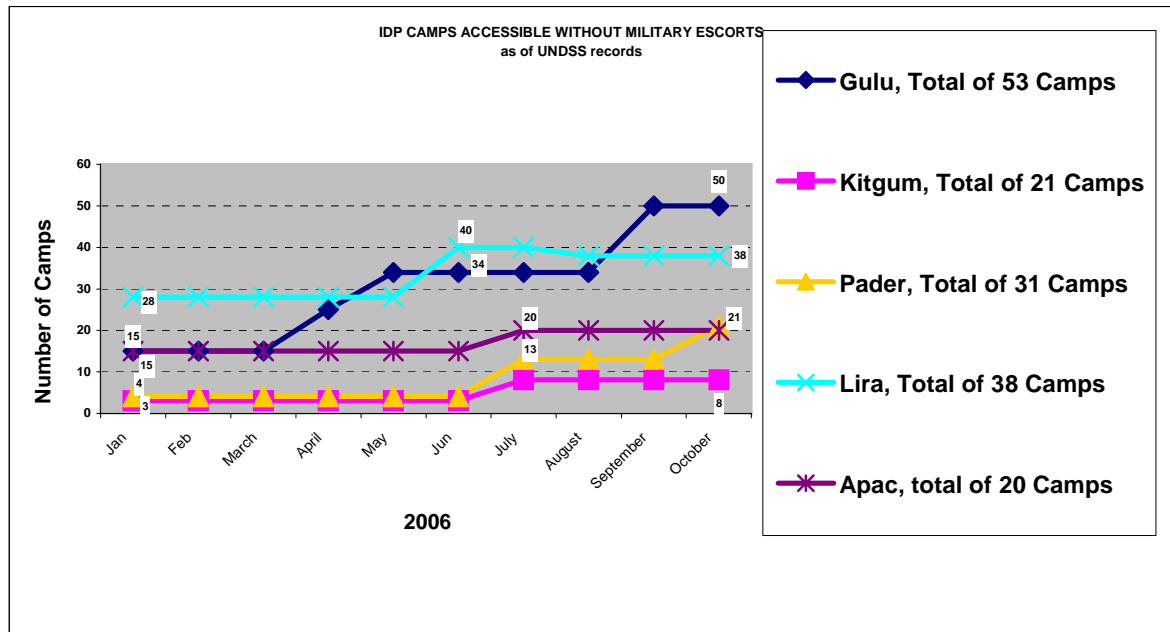
### Humanitarian access improves (November 2006)

- No hostile reaction by the LRA to humanitarian and human rights actors
- Humanitarian, human rights and development presence increasing
- The number of IDP camps accessible without military increases

### UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 9-10, 34:

"The [United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)] report establishes no hostile reaction by the LRA towards humanitarian actors. On the recommendation of UNDSS, the UN Security Management Team (SMT) approved movement without military escorts to 90 IDP camps in the Acholi sub-region and northern Lira compared to 18 prior to April 2006. By October 2006, only 29 camps in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader still need escort. Out of these, nine only need one military vehicle and 20 still require two military vehicles. The whole of Lira can now be accessed without military escort. The historical Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the GoU and the LRA on 26 August marks a potential turning point in the security situation in northern Uganda. While the improvement in security predates the cessation of hostilities agreement, its sustainability will be contingent upon the observation of the agreement by all parties, and the outcome of the peace talks."

"In 2006 UN and NGO staff has not been the direct target of an attack by the LRA. The humanitarian, human rights and developmental presence is still expanding with more staff and new offices throughout the conflict area. There has been progress on the priorities set down in CAP 2006. The number of IDP camps accessible without military escort has significantly improved. Currently armed escorts are used in exceptional circumstances where the security situation dictates it. A security coordination cell has been established and is operational in Kitgum (March 2006). The collection, analysis and dissemination of information on security in camps, roads and return areas have improved significantly."



### Insecurity continues in Karamoja (November 2006)

- Banditry and inter-communal raiding hinder access in Karamoja
- GoU forceful disarmament process has caused human rights violations

#### UN, 30 November 2006, Pg. 10:

“In Karamoja, the Uganda People’s Defense Forces initiated a cordon and search operation in April aimed at forcibly disarming warriors. This programme is ongoing and has led to a slight drop in security incidents in the past few months as well as the collection of approximately 4,500 weapons. At the same time, the forceful disarmament process has reportedly resulted in serious human rights violations against the civilian population. The Government established a commission of investigation to look into the matter, which has not yet produced a public report. The disarmament process in itself is not expected to produce a sustainable impact on the security situation in Karamoja mainly due to lack of alternative livelihood options, and has not substantially improved access to the communities. Armed car ambushes targeting NGO vehicles have continued, as have banditry, inter-communal raiding and human rights abuses. The Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan (KIDDP), the Government’s comprehensive response to the situation in Karamoja, has not yet been launched and its future remains unclear.”

### Humanitarian Access improves (June 2006)

#### IDMC, June 2006, pg. 8:

“In a number of areas in northern Uganda humanitarian access improved while in other areas access to IDP camps remained limited. Improvement was recorded in Gulu, where 69 per cent of camps no longer require military escorts, enabling agencies to access an increased number of camps (UNOCHA, 29 May 2006, p.1). In April 2006, due to a redeployment of troops to enlarge protected areas and to de-emphasis convoy-specific security, the Ugandan military announced news rules in relation to its provision of military escorts to humanitarian agencies (UNOCHA, 3 May 2006). Previously individual humanitarian organisations arranged escorts directly with

military, whereas now agencies submit escort requests to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs which then processes requests with the Ugandan military. While the implementation of the new escort system is proceeding well in some areas such as Gulu, problems have been reported in Pader and Kitgum (UNOCHA, 17 May 2006). As of May 2006, movements by UN personnel remain restricted to between 9:00 and 16:30 hours. The majority of camps in Pader district still require military escorts. In Gulu district, military escorts are required to access 15 out of 53 camps, in Kitgum three out of 22 camps (UNOCHA, 6 May 2006, p.4). In Lira district, the UPDF maintains that no camps require military escort but still provides escorts on request to remote camps (UNOCHA, 29 May 2006, p.1)."

### **Attacks on aid workers hinder relief operations (November 2005)**

- For the first time in the history of the conflict, LRA rebels fatally attack international and local relief workers in both northern Uganda and southern Sudan
- Attacks come in the wake of international arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC)
- As a result of the attacks, humanitarian organisations restrict operations to a population already heavily reliant on humanitarian aid

"The aid agencies said that many of them had been forced to restrict their work in northern Uganda two weeks ago following three LRA attacks, which left two aid workers dead and several others seriously injured. UN humanitarian operations in northern Uganda resumed on 1 November, after a review of the situation, according to a statement issued by the UN humanitarian coordinator in Kampala on Friday" (Reuters, 9 November 2005).

"On 2 November, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) suspended its operations in areas of southern Sudan after the LRA killed two of its de-miners - an Iraqi international team supervisor and his Sudanese colleague.

The FSD said the killings occurred when its convoy of three vehicles travelling from Jebelin minefield to Nasito Campsite, about 30 km south of Juba, was stopped by three armed men.

A week earlier, two aid workers were killed in LRA attacks in northern Uganda, prompting several NGOs to suspend work in the region.

The latest actions by the LRA have come in the wake of last month's indictments issued by the International Criminal Court against several LRA leaders. Some relief agencies believe the indictments are likely to lead to an escalation of the violence" (IRIN, 7 November 2005).

### **Limited access to IDP camps (September 2005)**

- Due to security conditions, a number IDP camps do not receive assistance

"As Table 14 shows, 85 percent of the households have received food aid. Approximately half of the households also report receiving non-food items such as jerry cans, blankets, cultivation tools and seeds. This assistance is, however, not equally distributed and as the table shows the pattern here is different from the pattern observed on almost all other indicators. Here Kitgum receives most, while the level is about the same in Gulu and Pader. As such, this is a break with the pattern of Gulu scoring highest and Pader the lowest on all the other indicators.



*Table 14 Humanitarian assistance ever received. Percentage of households*

	Gulu	Kitgum	Pader	All
Food aid	83	93	85	85
Jerry cans	38	72	47	46
Blankets	38	76	38	45
Cultivation tools	41	67	34	45
Seeds	38	67	32	43
Kitchen utensils	38	73	28	37
Medicines	31	29	23	29
Clothes	8	12	5	9
School fees	5	6	5	5
School supplies	6	2	3	5
Shelter materials	5	4	1	4

There may be several reasons why some households report not receiving food aid, but one reason is the relative isolation of the camp in which they live. There are certain camps that are not serviced by the World Food Programme. The reason for this is security, or rather lack thereof. In a camp called Omee Lower in Gulu, the inhabitants reported that WFP refused to come to their camp due to security considerations. This camp is very isolated, it's a distance of over 20 kilometres to the next camp, and the road is very narrow and the bush surrounding it is dense. Not even our escort service from the UPDF felt very comfortable driving on this road. Food is in theory still delivered to this camp, as supplies are dropped at the nearest camp 20 kilometres away. The inhabitants must therefore walk to collect it. The problem is that the road is long and dangerous and, since the scheduling of WFP supplies are in theory secret (for security reasons), it takes quite some time before the inhabitants of Omee Lower are informed that supplies are waiting for them in the other camp. They reported that often, when they eventually arrived to collect the supplies, there was not much food left for them.

One question asked was whether people have ever received assistance, but it is also of interest to see when was the last time they received food and non-food items. This shown in Table 15. Of the 85 percent receiving food aid, 15 percent had not received this assistance in the previous two months, the rations are meant to cover 70 percent of the household needs for one month.<sup>21</sup> This shows that even though most receive food aid; there are still a nearly 30 percent of the households that either do not get any food aid at all, or irregularly.

*Table 15 Month food aid was last received. Percentage of HH ever received foods aid*

	Gulu	Pader	Kitgum	All
June, 2005	24	32	43	33
May, 2005	57	54	47	53
March, 2005 to April, 2005	14	12	8	12
Before March, 2005	4	2	2	3

The fieldwork was carried out 13-18 June in Gulu; 19-24 June in Kitgum; and 24-28 June in Pader

It is good that most receive food aid, because otherwise there would be starvation. However, it is also clear that even those who regularly receive this aid, receive too little to cover their needs"(FAFO, September 2005).

"Gulu - [...] There were some restrictions on NGO movements particularly on the Awere road. Movement along Alero-Anaka-Purongo road was only possible with military escorts for a period of time, as was the Atiak-Bibia road.

Kitgum – All the camps in the district are accessible with military escorts, though agencies not mandated to move with escorts, like Uganda Red Cross Society, ICRC and MSF continue to traverse the district. In addition many agencies are using the UNICEF armoured plated vehicle to access the more difficult parts in terms of security, such as Agoro, Potika, Orom, Ogili and Lukung. IDPs access to agricultural land has also improved slightly, because they now utilize the roadsides for agricultural production. This is as a result of UPDF deployment (foot patrols) on the roads.

Pader – As in Kitgum, agencies continue to access all camps in the district using military escort and those not mandated to use escorts continue to access their areas of operation without military escort.

IDPs' access to agricultural land is limited to areas near IDP camps and the road sides. The main agricultural activity is heaping of sweet potatoes planting and harvesting green vegetables.

Lira - Due to the increased security incidents during the month, there is more caution and military patrol has been reinforced in the affected areas. Camps remain accessible with the usual security clearance procedures through the UPDF. Road travel is cleared after 9:00 a.m. after the morning patrol by the military and all field travel remains closed after 5:00 p.m."(UNOCHA, 27 June 2005)

#### **Guidelines for use of military escort to access camps (October 2004)**

- All humanitarian agencies operating in Kitgum will provide water and biscuits to the military escorts instead of money
- Agencies are urged to report any indiscipline on the part of the military escorts
- Agencies are requested to submit monthly work-plan to the Brigade commanding officer
- Routinely request / notify the UPDF when you intend to go out despite the fact that you have submitted a work- plan

"The chair in his opening remarks, appreciated the good cooperation existing between the UPDF and the humanitarian actors in the district that has enable them to execute their duties. He mentioned that the meeting was called to look at the best way on how to handle the issues of escorts. Some agencies were facing some difficulties and there were suggesting that a common standard be formulated and applied by all the actors operating in the district. He then asked the representative of Oxfam to lead the meeting through the first agenda.

Standardizing the incentives given to the military escorts:

It was noted that some agencies have been paying the escorts some money ranging from 2,000-3,000 shillings while others were giving out water plus biscuits. This had caused some problems to some agencies that do not pay cash. NRC for example cited an incidence that happened in Mucwini were soldiers refused to take water and demanded for cash instead. She then asked the brigade intelligence officer on what he thinks should be the most appropriate incentive that can be given to the escorts.

The Brigade Intelligence Officer clarified that the policy of the UPDF is very clear in that it states that no soldier should be paid by any humanitarian agency for such kind of work. WFP convoy

system was authorized by the UPDF high command and those soldiers are provided with rations to take care of their movement. WFP supplements that by providing water and biscuits. On the other hand, the local escorts are not well facilitated because the Brigade doesn't have the capacity to provide those rations.

He also noted some agencies operating in the district have been providing some incentives to the escorts out of humanitarian ground because some assignments take a long time in the field to be accomplished thus necessitating such assistance. He also noted that any indiscipline on the part of the escorts should not be tolerated but should be reported to any UPDF detach. He then mentioned that it was very difficult for him to specify a standard since the incentive issues was not official and only those in the high command can talk about it.

The agencies then later discussed the pros and cons of either giving water/biscuits or money to the escorts. Those in support of water and biscuits argued that providing money would promote indiscipline on the part of the soldiers since they can utilize the money to buy alcohol thus limiting their capacities/ abilities to respond in case of any attack.

Coupled to that, it is their national responsibilities to provide security and humanitarian agencies might not have money all the time to cater those arrangements. Those in favor of money incentive were of view that giving water/biscuits would limit the choices on the part of the soldiers on what they can have for lunch and this is bound to create dissatisfaction on their part. After all, these are adults who are in position to know what is best for them.

Consensus on the issue:

- 1- Effective 1st/November/2004, all humanitarian agencies operating in Kitgum will provide water and biscuits to the military escorts instead of money.
- 2- Agencies are urged to report any indiscipline on the part of the military escorts to the nearest military detach for possible disciplinary measure.

Procedures of requesting for escorts:

The military was of the view that for smooth handling of the issue, the NGOs should adhere to the following:

- 1- Agencies are requested to submit monthly work-plan to the Brigade commanding officer stating clearly dates and camps to be visited to allow the military planned for soldiers.
- 2- Routinely request / notify the UPDF when you intend to go out despite the fact that you have submitted a work- plan to the military. Change in programmes should also be communicated to the army.

Numbers of escorts to accompanied a convoy:

Members were concern that on several occasions, they have noticed a variation on the numbers of escorts given to escort humanitarian agencies to the field. This has varied from eight to thirty military personnel thus creating fear in some situation.

The army clarified that the numbers of military escorts to accompany a convoy varies according to the following factors, which makes the issue of consistency in numbers very difficult to achieve.

- 1- The security threat level in a particular area you intend to visit. Areas, which are more insecure usually, are accompanied with more military personnel and vice versa. In some instances, the military have availed APCs to escort agencies.

- 2- Size of the convoy to be used. A long convoy with several vehicles will tend to have more military escorts compared to a small convoy.
- 3- Other operational issues – intelligence reports affects the deployment of personnel.
- 4- Numbers of agencies requesting for military escorts on a particular day can affect the numbers of military escorts to be used.

Agencies were advised to always hire pick-up trucks specifically for the escorts to reduce their vulnerability in case of any attack or ambush. Never share the same vehicle with the escorts.

The performance of the new system will be regularly monitored and reviewed during the weekly coordination meetings to assess the implementation of the new system."(OCHA, 26 October 2004)

### **Increasing humanitarian activities by the UN require additional security management (June 2004)**

- Dedicated security professional will assist in programme delivery and quick adaptation to evolving circumstances
- UNICEF has bought two armoured Toyota Land Cruisers at the cost of US\$ 280,000

"The United Nations agencies in Uganda are expanding their operations in four locations either by increasing staff numbers or by opening new offices (i.e. Gulu, Kitgum, Lira and Soroti). As the situation remains volatile, day-to-day close monitoring by a dedicated security professional will assist in programme delivery and quick adaptation to evolving circumstances. The increasing staff numbers and activities require additional security management, resulting in the proposal for the deployment of a Deputy Field Security Coordination Officer (DFSCO) to northern Uganda. The DFSCO will be mobilised and deployed as soon as possible upon receipt of donor contributions.

Armored vehicles: There has been no funding for this project despite the continuing problem of access. UNICEF has bought two armoured Toyota Land Cruisers at the cost of US\$ 280,000. There still remains the need for four more, and it should be a priority for funding. Without secure access, the humanitarian issues on health, water, sanitation and education in the IDP camps cannot be addressed properly." (UNOCHA, 15 June 2004)

### **Food deliveries need to be protected by military escorts (April 2004)**

- Increased humanitarian aid to IDP camps is at the heart of USAID's Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI)
- The hope is that both sides could accept limited demilitarised zones so civilians could return to their fields, in a slowly expanding, de facto ceasefire
- NUPI may rely too heavily on an inappropriate model from Sudan's Nuba Mountain
- LRA is not comparable to the SPLA, which controls territory so that such measures as "corridors of tranquillity" are appropriate

"Increased humanitarian aid to IDP camps is at the heart of USAID's Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI). If talks move forward, the U.S. is prepared to help resettle people from the camps to their home areas. The hope is that both sides could accept limited demilitarised zones so civilians could return to their fields, in a slowly expanding, de facto ceasefire. However, NUPI may rely too heavily on an inappropriate model from Sudan's Nuba Mountains. Army officers reject a comparison to the ceasefire there. They say the LRA is not comparable to the SPLA, which controls territory so that such measures as "corridors of tranquillity" are appropriate. The LRA, however, controls no territory, cannot move humanitarian aid and has never made an agreement that it has kept. They also cite great differences in geography. Noting that food is presently delivered to the IDP camps, a European aid official asks, "what would corridors of tranquillity do besides possibly making the delivery a bit cheaper"? In fact, it would be naïve and dangerous – in response to a deal on corridors of tranquillity – to end military escorts with food deliveries. A Western military analyst also calls humanitarian corridors naïve: "Kony could issue orders to subordinates not to ambush, but if they are hungry they will disregard these instructions. Morale and command/control are deteriorating within the LRA. However, safe havens might work: security guarantees and assistance could be provided to these areas while negotiations are ongoing". ICG interviews, Kampala, December 2003." (ICG, 14 April 2004, pp. 22,23)

#### **NGOs that access some of the camps without escort place themselves at considerable risk (August 2003)**

- Overarching constraint to enhanced protection and assistance to IDPs is that of security
- UN agencies and other international NGOs are restricted to movement only in the presence of armed escort
- WFP runs convoys six days a week to camps under heavy protection
- Action Against Hunger (AHH) is as of August 2003 able to access 21 of the 33 camps in Gulu District
- UPDF expects the same 'compensation' to be provided as is by WFP for its food convoys

"The overarching constraint to enhanced protection and assistance to IDPs is that of security. While some international NGOs and local CBOs risk LRA ambushes in accessing the camps, the UN agencies and other international NGOs are restricted to movement only in the presence of armed escort provided by the UPDF. WFP runs convoys six days a week to camps under heavy protection. While agencies are able to join such convoys, their time in the camps is limited to the time it takes to distribute the food and when the majority of the camp population is preoccupied in collecting their allotments.

The few NGOs that access some of the camps without escort place themselves at considerable risk, especially if they are delivering tangible goods as distinct from providing social services. For example, Action Against Hunger (AHH) is currently able to access 21 of the 33 camps in Gulu District, albeit some of them only on rare occasions. While some NGOs/CBOs do not wish to use military escorts out of principle, others are unable to afford the costs of such escorts as UPDF expects the same 'compensation' to be provided as is by WFP for its food convoys. The relatively limited access to the camps is also a deterrent for many NGOs to set up programmes in the three districts, and especially in Pader District where lack of access is acute. Given the scale of the problem and the concomitant needs, it is disappointing yet understandable that the number of international NGOs in the region remains relatively modest." (UN OCHA, 31 August 2003)

# NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

## National response

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### **The Office of Prime Minister issues new response plan to address Karamoja situation (January 2007)**

- Revised government plan for Karamoja to enhance security and promote recovery, the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme
- Military operations to be used in one component aimed at enhancing security
- Virtually no attention to the issue of displacement
- IDP camps in Northern Uganda to be dismantled and people to be resettled in their former homes as part of PRDP for Northern Uganda

#### **Government of Uganda, January 2007, Pg. xii, 43:**

“KIDDP is intended to contribute to human security and promote conditions for recovery and development in Karamoja, and to formulate a course of action that will define interventions by government and other stakeholders necessary to achieve a comprehensive and coordinated disarmament that will enhance sustainable peace building and development in Karamoja.

Component 1 on: *‘Providing and Ensuring Adequate Security for the People of Karamoja’:*

1. Undertake strategic deployment of the Uganda People’s Defense Forces (UPDF) and Local Defence Units (LDUs) to effectively check the international trafficking of small arms and ammunition into Karamoja, as well as protect the people of Karamoja and their property

Planned interventions under the KIDDP are thematically categorised into three: (a) Military-type operations; (b) development-type interventions for socio-economic transformation; (c) conflict management and peace building initiatives. Military operations will be coordinated through the normal military command structures and systems.”

“In this revised KIDDP, the primary strategy to be pursued during the disarmament is the voluntary surrender of illegally held guns. Peaceful and voluntary disarmament is encouraged as far as possible. The recourse to the use of force to disarm is considered necessary, only and only as a last resort, when it becomes completely unavoidable. Forceful disarmament should only become necessary to disarm: (i) those who are found with arms and ammunition in public places; (ii) those who commit crime using guns, including staging road ambushes and conducting cattle raids.”

“In order to provide a framework for the coordination of intervention for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Northern Uganda, government launched the Peace, Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP) for Northern Uganda. The primary goal of the PRDP is to accelerate poverty reduction and development of Northern Uganda to bring it at parity with other regions.”

### **Office of Prime Minister responds to international concerns and investigates human rights violations by UPDF in Karamoja (November 2006)**

- Investigative committee on UDPF violations established in July 2006
- According to the UN, a more thorough investigation needed

**OHCHR, 23 November 2006, Pg 3-4:**

“In response to concerns expressed by the United Nations and international organizations, the office of the Prime Minister, in July 2006, established a committee to investigate alleged human rights violations by the UDPF in the context of the ongoing disarmament exercise. The report of the committee is currently under consideration by the government, in dialogue with international partners.

From 29 October 2006, however, the violence linked to the cordon and search exercises has escalated considerably and the situation has reached a critical stage for the protection of individuals, especially women and children, on the ground. As a result, a United Nations/non-governmental organizations humanitarian and human rights assessment mission visited Kotido on 7 November 2006. Amongst other issues, the assessment recommended that a more thorough investigation take place into the allegations of human rights violations and abuses that reportedly took place in Kotido on and after 29 October 2006.”

“The mission was also informed that in response to the recent Kotido events, the Government of Uganda, through the Chief of Defence Forces, has constituted a Board of Enquiry to look into events of 29 October in Kotido.”

**Inadequate attention on the part of national and non-governmental actors in Karamoja (November 2006)**

**UN, 30 November 2006, Pg 12-13:**

“In spite of the sub-region’s immense needs, Karamoja has not attracted the attention it deserves from both Government and non-governmental actors and the international community. The dilemma facing both Government and development partners remains how to find the appropriate approach and balance for addressing Karamoja’s urgent security, human rights, humanitarian and development challenges, while recognising the importance of their pastoral economy.”

**National Mine Action Programme to secure returns (November 2006)**

- Mine action programme’s direction changed to enable safe return for IDPs
- Land-release mechanisms and assistance to mine victims to be established by the OPM

**CAP Uganda 2007, 30 November 2006, Pg 30:**

“In November 2005, a Presidential Directive was given for IDPs to return to safe areas. This altered the direction of mine action in Uganda during 2006 to provide for a safe and protected return for the approximate 1.7 million IDPs, with mine action becoming a prerequisite and directly linked with the National IDP Policy and disaster preparedness in the country.

Within the National IDP Policy, the OPM is mandated to install a safe, effective and highly productive land-release mechanism, covering suspected hazardous areas and areas of return, as one of the preconditions for return and early recovery. In addition, mine risk education is required to protect the IDPs. Victim assistance will develop measures to ensure landmine victims have the opportunity to return, to protect land and their rights. Community support to victims will be almost simultaneous. The key issues for the National Mine Action Programme are that return can be

made safe, and how return can be adapted to protect the returning population and promote a reunited and integrated society.”

### **Joint Monitoring Committee on Northern Uganda (May 2006)**

- On May 4th the Government of Uganda launched the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Interventions for the North. The JMC comes as a result of consultations with donors and the UN that took place both in Geneva and New York.
- The JMC and Emergency Action Plan takes into consideration enhanced protection, increased humanitarian assistance to IDPs, peace building and reconciliation.
- A comprehensive Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda will be finalised.
- The UN welcomed the launch of the Joint Monitoring Committee but points out that it will be judged by its actual results on the ground.

### **Government of Uganda, March 2006:**

“1.1 On March 20, 2006 an inter-ministerial meeting was held in Geneva, to discuss proposals by Government of Uganda for a Joint Monitoring Mechanism to coordinate emergency humanitarian interventions in Northern Uganda [...].

[...]

1.3 Government of Uganda in consultation with bilateral and multilateral partners has prepared an Emergency Action Plan for Humanitarian interventions in Northern Uganda [...]. The Plan also takes into consideration numerous interventions currently ongoing in the North by Government and other partners. These include: cessation of hostilities, enhanced protection of the civilian population, increased humanitarian assistance to IDPs, peace building and reconciliation. In addition, Government is finalizing a comprehensive Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda, which incorporates all of the above.

1.4 While awaiting the finalisation of comprehensive Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda[...], Government aims to re-double its efforts in the following areas:

1.4.1 ending the conflict and laying the foundation for reconciliation in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral partners in the region and outside;

1.4.2 enhancing protection of the civilian population;

1.4.3 improving priority conditions in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps and preparing the population for return and reintegration in a more coordinated manner.

[...]

### **2.1 Terms of Reference**

2.1.1 Identify, discuss and monitor issues related to the Emergency Action Plan for humanitarian interventions in LRA affected areas;

2.1.2 Provide advice to Government and key stakeholders on action areas;

2.1.3 Establish benchmarks and mobilize resources needed for implementation of the Emergency Action Plan; and

2.1.4 Ensure that decisions taken by the JMC are implemented by the relevant Ministries and Institutions.

[...]



#### 4. EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS FOR LRA-AFFECTED AREAS

ISSUES	KEY ACTIONS	RESULTS EXPECTED	GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE	COORDINATION MECHANISM
<b>4.1 Cessation of Hostilities and Regional Security</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue diplomatic cooperation with regional partners.</li> <li>2. Continue military pressure on LRA in cooperation with regional partners.</li> <li>3. Establish regular contact with UN peace missions in Sudan and The Democratic Republic of Congo.</li> <li>4. Continue to facilitate and cooperate with the activities of the International Criminal Court.</li> <li>5. Consolidate peace initiatives to establish contact and promote dialogue with middle-level LRA, where possible.</li> </ol>	To be discussed by Regional Security Group.	Office of President, Office of Prime Minister (OPM) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Security Group</li> <li>• International Criminal Court</li> </ul>
<b>4.2 Peace Building</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote reconciliation processes at individual, community and national levels.</li> </ol>	<p>-Strengthened Amnesty Commission capacity to deliver assistance to reporters/ex-combatants especially children and promote reconciliation.</p> <p>-Increased assistance to reporters within enhanced</p>	<p>Amnesty Commission</p> <p>Uganda Human Rights Commission.</p> <p>Ministry of Local Government.</p>	<p>Amnesty Working Group</p> <p>Human Rights Protection and Promotion Working Group.</p>

ISSUES	KEY ACTIONS	RESULTS EXPECTED	GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE	COORDINATION MECHANISM
		<p>Amnesty and Reintegration Programme (ARP).</p> <p>-Ongoing community dialogue initiatives in region reinforced (e.g. traditional leaders, peace forums and other stakeholders)</p> <p>-Reconciliation issues identified for national discussion.</p> <p>-Reinforcement of ongoing information and sensitization campaigns of the Uganda Human Rights Commission.</p>		
<b>4.3 Protection of IDP Population Enhanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase and enhance police presence in LRA affected areas</li> <li>2. Establish clear roles and responsibilities between UPDF, Local Defence Units and Police in protection of the civilian population</li> <li>3. Co-ordinate more effectively the Police, UPDF/ Civil Defence Units to respond to civilian concerns.</li> <li>4. Increase security around IDP camps in order to facilitate voluntary return and/or increase production around camps.</li> </ol>	<p>-Increase in number of police, and number policing stations in priority IDP areas.</p> <p>-Facilitate regular meetings of the District Security Committees (DSC)</p> <p>-Facilitate meetings of the DSC and District Disaster Management Coordinator and representatives of DDMCs to discuss security situation and address concerns of the population.</p> <p>- Security improved, number of</p>	<p>OPM/Department of Disaster Preparedness</p> <p>Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.</p> <p>Ministry of Internal Affairs/Uganda Police Force</p> <p>Ministry of Defence/UPDF</p> <p>Local Governments</p> <p>Ministry of Justice and</p>	<p>IDP Policy Committee.</p> <p>Inter-Agency Technical Committees( IATC)</p>

ISSUES	KEY ACTIONS	RESULTS EXPECTED	GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE	COORDINATION MECHANISM
	5. Review the status of access to justice in the region.	-IDPs returning or accessing more land for farming rising. - Gaps in access to justice identified and incorporated into the PRDP	Constitutional Affairs.	
<b>4.4 Conditions of displaced persons in camps improved.</b>	1. Increase humanitarian assistance, in priority IDP camps and in key sectors including, water, health, and food-- contributing to lowering morbidity and mortality rates.  2. Strengthen Local Governments, in particular District Disaster Management Committee's, capacity to coordinate humanitarian response with service delivery partners.  3. Review and identify ways to guide and facilitate NGOs to provide focused humanitarian interventions in Northern Uganda.	-Increase in the immediate IDP Assistance, (e.g. full implementation of MOH/UN emergency health plan of USD 11 million).  -Improvement in conditions as in key sectors (e.g. water and sanitation) as per the targets established by sector working groups.  -NGO partnership are focused on priority areas and working within IDP policy guidelines.	OPM/ Department of Disaster Preparedness	IDP Policy Committee/ IATC- Sub-Committees
<b>4.5 Continue Planning for Return of IDPs as part of the PRDP process.</b>	1. Continue to review return issues and strategies.  2. Increase the number of IDPs returning through the implementation of Lango and Teso return plan <sup>3</sup> .	-Increase in Number of IDP Returning to their areas.  -Review outcomes of the initial return and use lessons learnt to plan for other Districts.	OPM/Department of Disaster Preparedness, PRDP Secretariat	IDP Policy Committee/ IATC

”

#### **UN OCHA, May 2006:**

“With the current intolerable conditions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Northern Uganda, I welcome the Government of Uganda’s launch today of the Joint Monitoring Committee,” said United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland. “It will be judged by how it manages to change conditions for the better,” he added.

On 31 March, Egeland met with Uganda’s President Museveni and held discussions that centred on the situation in northern Uganda with special emphasis on the need to improve conditions in the camps for internally displaced persons and to do more to protect civilians. During the discussions, Egeland welcomed the proposed Joint Monitoring Committee and also discussed the possibility of working with military experts with high-level peacekeeping and protection experience attached to them through the United Nations. President Museveni and the USG also discussed the idea of a regional Special Envoy, the possibility that a United Nations agency could support the Government’s efforts to promote national reconciliation, the establishment of a joint health task force, and the demilitarization of protection of civilians.

[...]

“For this to succeed, those involved must engage so that we can see actual results on the ground—fewer deaths, better conditions, and increased returns,” said Egeland.”

#### **National response: IDP Policy (October 2005)**

- Government adopts IDP Policy
- Policy is broadly consistent with UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- Policy launched in Kampala followed by regional launches in districts affected by the conflict

- A lack of resources and government will and participation has hindered the policy's implementation
- The majority of IDPs are unaware of that the policy exists

"In August 2004, the Ugandan Cabinet adopted the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons. The Policy establishes rights of IDPs, specifies the roles and responsibilities of various branches of the government, humanitarian and development agencies, donors, displaced persons and other relevant stakeholders. It also introduces various multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary structures at national, district and sub-county levels in an attempt to more effectively address the protection and assistance needs of displaced persons. The overall goal of the Policy is to ensure that IDPs enjoy the same rights and freedoms under the Constitution and national and international laws as do all other Ugandans. To meet this objective, the IDP Policy attempts to integrate IDP issues into all aspects of government planning and programming (GoU, August 2004).

While the adoption of the IDP Policy is considered a positive achievement, it has yet to succeed in improving situations endured by IDPs. In certain areas, there is a total lack of awareness regarding the existence of the Policy. In the Teso sub-region a recent study found that out of 13 camps visited only one camp leader had a copy of the Policy whereas the other camp leaders had not even heard of it (DANIDA, August 2005, p.25).

A lack of resources has also hindered the Policy's implementation. At the district level, the Policy mandates that a District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) act as the lead agency in responding to and providing for the needs of displaced persons. Yet the Committees, constituted by all relevant heads of local government as well as humanitarian actors, do not have the resources nor the capacity to implement the IDP Policy and thus have been unsuccessful in ensuring that displaced persons are able to fully exercise both their social and livelihood-related rights (UNHCR, October 2005, p.1; IDMC interviews, Kampala, 29 October 2005). While the IDP Policy notes that the DDMC can establish a district disaster management fund, in Katakwi district for example, local authorities have received no instructions from the central government as to where and how they were expected to find the resources to enable them to implement the many activities mandated by the IDP Policy (DANIDA, August 2005, p.27). While the government has acknowledged that the resources needed to operationalise the IDP Policy are considerable (GoU, April 2005, p.7), these resources have yet to materialise in the affected districts. The IDP policy does make provision for disaster-prone districts to recruit a full time District Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, many of whom have already been recruited and are operational in the affected districts. However because the Coordinators are funded by an outside agency, research in the Teso region has shown that many within the local government were confused about the Coordinator's role in relation to the rest of the district structure (DANIDA, August 2005, p.14). Anecdotal evidence also indicates that Coordinators are not integral members of the local government and lack authority and credibility to make decisions (UNHCR, October 2005, p.2).

Another concern relates to government's participation in implementing the Policy – in Lira district for example, for three months government representatives failed to attend the District Disaster Management Committee meetings (UNHCR, October 2005, p.1). The highest level committee, the Inter-Ministerial Policy Committee consisting of various government ministers, which is mandated to meet in Kampala as needed, is non-functional as it has yet to convene its first meeting (UNHCR, October 2005, p. 1).

## **International response**

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### **UN urges government to review the forced disarmament strategy, investigate human rights violations in Karamoja (November 2006)**

- Louise Arbour urges the GoU to review its forced disarmament strategy in Karamoja and end violence
- Impartial, transparent and timely investigation into human rights abuses needed

#### **OHCHR, 23 November 2006**

“United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour today urged the Government of Uganda to review its forced disarmament strategy in Karamoja, North Eastern Uganda, and end violence and human rights violations against civilians in the area.

The High Commissioner, in a report released today, said allegations of human rights violations and abuses in the Karamoja region have persisted since the May 2006 forced disarmament exercise initiated by the Government of Uganda. Karamoja is traditionally characterized by high levels of insecurity relating to the proliferation of illegal fire arms, cattle rustling, looting, ambushes, but also political marginalization and the absence of adequate central government services and institutions, including civilian law enforcement.

...’The ongoing forced disarmament exercise in Karamoja must stop until adequate measures have been put in place to ensure the safety, security and full human rights protection of civilians, including women and children’, Ms. Arbour said.

The High Commissioner urged the Government to ensure an impartial, transparent and timely investigation into the human rights violations and abuses, in order to establish accountability, punish the perpetrators and protect the rights of victims.”

### **International response to address vulnerabilities among IDPs in 2006 improves (November 2006)**

- Improved response enabled by the implementation of the cluster approach
- Competing priorities for different agencies a key challenge
- New protection strategy agreed on by the IASC to facilitate the freedom of movement and return and to improve service delivery to IDPs in camps is a positive step
- Protection monitoring mechanisms established in and around IDP camps in the process of being established

#### **CAP Uganda 2007, 30 November 2006, Pg. 5:**

“Humanitarian activities to address vulnerabilities among IDPs in 2006 have made some progress and sustained the lives of approximately 1.5 million IDPs. Improved response, made possible partly by the implementation of the cluster approach, has limited potentially high fatality rates following the outbreak of infectious diseases. There has been some evolution in the progressive phasing out of relief assistance with the progressive reduction of food rations in areas of displacement and the sustainable phasing out of approximately 180,000 food beneficiaries in return areas. Early recovery support and expansion of basic social services in areas of return are ongoing. The co-existence of competing priorities for Government, humanitarian agencies and

donors of continued assistance to IDPs in camps and returning populations constitutes a key challenge to effectively address all humanitarian vulnerability in Uganda in 2007.

**Coordination:** the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) introduced the cluster leadership approach in four sectors (health, nutrition and Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), early recovery, protection including camp coordination and camp management, water and sanitation) to improve and strengthen management and accountability. The four clusters and the Education Working Group have developed strategies, while the health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS cluster also conducted service availability mapping. During 2006, humanitarian agencies have agreed on the harmonisation of data collection and information management tools to improve the response both in camps and in return areas.”

**Protection:** a protection strategy that encompasses the activities of the three sub-sectors of camp management (led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]), child protection and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) (led by the United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF]), and human rights & rule of law (led by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR]) was agreed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). The strategy has two main impetuses: to facilitate the freedom of movement, the return of displaced persons to their areas of origin; to improve the delivery of protection and services to vulnerable populations remaining in camps. The national policy for IDPs was supported through the creation of District Human Rights Protection and Promotion sub-committees. The Government of Uganda (GoU) hosted a workshop organised by the Brookings – Bern Project on Internal Displacement on the implementation of the national policy for IDPs with the participation of the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on IDPs.

The three protection sub-sectors have, to different degrees, deployed staff to the conflict-affected districts to respond to the protection and human rights challenges. Protection monitoring mechanisms are being established in the camps and in return areas. In addition to its presence in the Acholi and Lango sub-regions, OHCHR has established a presence in Karamoja. The camp coordination and camp management sub-cluster has initiated the monitoring of IDP camps in Lira and Gulu districts. Civil Military Coordination Centres in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Lira have been strengthened with the presence of 14 United Nations Volunteers coordinated by UNHCR and supported by OHCHR.”

### **EU response (May 2006)**

- After the first multiparty election for 25 years the EU calls to continue democratisation process and expresses need for cooperation and dialogue between the Government of Uganda and the EU.
- The EU reaffirms that the Government of Uganda has the primary responsibility for addressing the conflict in Northern Uganda as well as its grave humanitarian impact, and calls on the government to actively work for peaceful resolutions.
- The EU supports the increased involvement of the UN, in particular the recommendations for tackling illegal armed groups, including the LRA, and welcomes the establishment of a Joint Monitoring Committee
- The EU calls for the LRA commanders indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to be apprehended and brought to face justice
- While welcoming the involvement of the UN, the EU does not request that the UN Security Council pass a resolution on Northern Uganda

### **EU, Conclusions on Uganda, May 2006:**

"The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The Council welcomes the holding in Uganda of the first multiparty elections for 25 years, and welcomes the high turnout which demonstrates the people's strong commitment to pluralist democracy. It congratulates the people of Uganda on the elections and President Yoweri Museveni on the occasion of his inauguration for a further term as president of the Republic of Uganda.

2. The Council calls on the Government of Uganda to continue the democratisation process in a multiparty environment, in particular with regard to the functioning of the Parliament, the dialogue between the government and the opposition parties and civilian control of the military in a democratic society. It reiterates its willingness to support Uganda in these efforts, as well as in the fight against corruption and for poverty alleviation. In this regard, the Council expresses the need for continued cooperation and dialogue between the EU and the Government of Uganda in the framework of Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement.

3. The Council reaffirms its concerns about the continuation of the conflict in Northern Uganda, which has caused serious security problems and a grave humanitarian situation. The Government of Uganda has the primary responsibility for addressing the conflict and the grave humanitarian impact it has had. The EU calls upon the Ugandan Government to further increase protection of its citizens in Northern Uganda and to actively promote the economic and social development of the region.

4. The Council notes with concern that the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have increasingly taken on a regional dimension, posing a threat to the peace processes in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The EU calls on the Ugandan Government to actively work for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Northern Uganda in collaboration with countries in the region, noting that it would contribute greatly to the promotion of lasting peace and security in the Great Lakes region.

5. The Council urges the Government of Uganda, together with its international partners, to work towards implementing a comprehensive strategy that will include political, humanitarian, reconstruction and developmental aspects, as well as addressing security issues in Northern Uganda and the region.

6. The Council welcomes the increased involvement of the UN with regard to the conflict with the LRA, and in particular UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1653 and 1663 which call for UN Secretary General recommendations for tackling illegal armed groups, including the LRA. It welcomes the initial recommendations made to the UNSC on 26 April. The Council looks forward to a more detailed elaboration of these proposals, including for a High Level Envoy with a regional focus, and calls on the Government of Uganda to accept recommendations from the international community aimed at bringing an early end to the conflict.

7. In line with these recommendations, the Council welcomes the setting up by the Ugandan Government of a Joint Monitoring Committee to help improve the humanitarian situation in Northern Uganda. Having been invited to do so, the EU will participate fully in this mechanism.

8. The LRA commanders indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) must be apprehended and brought to face justice as a matter of urgency. The Council calls on the Government of Uganda and neighbouring countries to work together to effect the arrest warrants. The Council also urged for increased international involvement by the Tripartite Plus Mechanism, the Core Group and other regional and international partners, with regard to the national and regional security aspects of the conflict.

9. Recalling its conclusions on the DRC of 12 December 2005, the Council reiterates that the successful completion of the transition process in the DRC is not only essential for the peaceful, long-term democratic development of the DRC but also for fostering peace and stability throughout the Great Lakes region. The Council therefore wishes Uganda to persist in its efforts to support the political transition in the DRC with a view to improving regional co-operation. It calls on Uganda to strengthen its co-operation with the UN and to help implement the arms embargo in the DRC, to sever all links and support to foreign armed groups in the DRC and to abstain from any unilateral intervention into eastern DRC or any action that would undermine the progress of the transitional process in DRC supported by the international community.

10. The EU urges all parties to intensify their efforts to promote regional co-operation, security and stability with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the Great Lakes region. It condemns the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. The EU recalls that full compliance with the obligations imposed by the arms embargo on illegal armed groups in DRC is an obligation for all states in the region.””

### **IDD mission to Uganda (April 2006)**

- In March 2006, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Internal Displacement Division, led a multi donor mission to Uganda. The mission found that the government rhetoric on the war being over incompatible with the security reality. Other key mission findings include:
- The mission stresses that the strategy to promote freedom of movement and the broader human rights agenda must go hand in hand with efforts to demilitarise the north and reinstate rule of law and justice systems.
- The mission recommends donors to make a coherent and coordinated approach and to urgently consider how best to influence the government to provide substantial resources to northern Uganda.
- Cluster lead agencies should take the generic terms of reference for cluster leads as their point of departure, ensuring that they focus equally on the performance of the whole cluster as on their own agency performance.

### **UN OCHA, Mission, April 2006:**

“The mission originated from a donor-led evaluation of donors’ response to IDP crises published in January 2005. The report recommended more coherent donor strategy in two ongoing cases of massive displacement. Uganda was selected as one such case. The ToR for the mission was derived from the synthesis report. In addition, it was agreed by the IASC and UNCT in Uganda in December 2005 to begin implementing the humanitarian reform agenda, including the “cluster approach.” The mission was therefore interested to learn more about the Country Team’s plans for phasing in the cluster approach and how donors could better support this effort.

#### **Main findings and recommendations**

1. The GoU's National Policy for IDPs was approved in September 2004. Since then, institutional structures were established at both the national and district level to manage the IDP crisis. The mission found that these structures are generally under (or un)-funded, lack resources and capacity to perform their tasks, do not meet on a regular basis and consequently have achieved little. The GoU has primary responsibility to provide the necessary resources to implement its national IDP policy. Donors could explore how budget support can be used to encourage the GoU to fulfil its obligations.

2. Following the release of a July 2005 GoU/WHO/UNICEF/WFP/UNFPA/IRC health and mortality survey among IDPs in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, there is increasing recognition that congestion, poor water and sanitation conditions, poor access to health care and restrictions on

the basic right to freedom of movement are major contributing factors to excessive mortality and morbidity rates in many IDP camps. (The rates exceed emergency thresholds; are three times the national average, and twice that of some IDP camps in Darfur.) Although the GoU has distanced itself from the report's findings, the mission contends that the report findings should be considered valid and efforts must continue, and in some instances redoubled, to address the humanitarian emergency.

3. The GoU continues to assert that remnants of the LRA operating in Uganda are nearly defeated and that security is improving. Indeed, UNDSS has recorded a decline in LRA attacks in Uganda in the past six months (although some feel this may be due to seasonal factors). However, the mission was informed that, on average, 35 people continue to be abducted and 15 people are killed by the LRA in Uganda each month. IDPs in Kitgum reported that UPDF restrictions on freedom of movement (e.g. curfews, narrow security perimeters) are still in place. Some undisciplined UPDF soldiers and Local Defence Units (LDUs) continue to threaten and abuse IDPs, particularly women and girls. The mission itself was escorted by two armoured vehicles and some 30 armed troops travelling on the road between Kitgum and Gulu. In short, the rhetoric of the GoU does not yet match the security reality—and procedures—on the ground for the protection of civilians and the safeguarding of humanitarian access in conflict-affected areas.

[...]

6. In response to the above, the UN issued a *Concept Note on Return Planning for and Emergency Decongestion (Relocation) of IDP Camps*. It stated that return of IDPs to their villages of origin is the

preferred option in exercise of the freedom of movement of the individual, beginning in Teso and Lango, where conditions are favourable. This is in accordance with National IDP Policy and internationally recognized legal standards<sup>1</sup>, which guarantee the right of an individual to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his or her place of residence. The UNCT further agreed that “decongestion” is only exceptionally acceptable as an emergency measure in situations where health and mortality indicators are poor, where there are security and protection risks in current locations, and where no return appears feasible for the foreseeable future. It should not lead to the creation of new semi-permanent camp settlements.

[...]

8. However, the mission found that the concept of “freedom of movement” in this context is still not widely understood by humanitarian partners in Uganda. It is the mission's understanding that the strategy for promoting greater freedom of movement does not necessarily imply return at this stage, but rather a gradual process that enables IDPs to make their own choices to farm, assess their areas of return, and test the waters for return at their own pace. It involves, fundamentally, advocating with the GoU and UPDF for revised security procedures; validating security assessments; providing objective security information to IDPs to inform their decision-making process; supporting the choices of IDPs through the provision of basic humanitarian assistance and working with the GoU to increase resources to the north to provide basic services in areas of return, demilitarise such areas, and reinstate civilian justice and police systems.

9. Promoting freedom of movement and providing assistance in camps should not be mutually exclusive activities. It is widely recognized that the majority of IDP will remain in camps for the foreseeable future due to insecurity (especially in Acholi areas) and that emergency assistance will continue to be required and in some sectors, should be increased. At the same time, promoting greater freedom of movement could be a viable first step in finding durable solutions, especially in areas of the Lira district where improved security conditions have already led to the spontaneous and voluntary return of some 50,000 people in Lira. In areas of return, there is a need to significantly increase UN and NGO recovery and development activities.

10. The mission stresses that the strategy to promote freedom of movement and the broader human rights agenda must go hand in hand with efforts to demilitarise the north and reinstate rule



of law and justice systems, including civilian police. In this regard, the GoU would need to take a proactive lead.

11. The GoU, with support from the World Bank, is developing a Recovery and Development Programme, which will include the north. It is envisaged that the plan will bring coherence to the GoU's disparate strategies for the north, and that efforts will be made to ensure that the GoU commits substantially more funds to the north. The mission recommends consultations with all relevant partners before the RDP is finalised, and urges the RDP to ensure more flexible funds are made available to the north so that services can be provided in an emergency setting. The support of the World Bank for the overall recovery and reintegration strategy in the north will be particularly important.

12. Finally, the mission met with Ms. Betty Bigombe, traditional, civil society and religious leaders. It is clear that greater efforts are needed to structure and coordinate mediation and reconciliation efforts. The mission recommends direct UN technical and financial support to Betty Bigombe to implement a "Peace Secretariat" which would facilitate the mediation process. Mediation should be focused on a) cessation of acts of violence and b) arranging surrender and transfer of ICC indictees and c) arranging the surrender and transfer to DDR programs of mid-level LRA and their followers. It is envisaged that Ms. Bigombe would play a broader role as well, e.g. maintaining high-level dialog with both sides."

#### **UN OCHA, Recommendations, April 2006:**

##### **"Recommendations**

##### **Donors, at all levels, to:**

- make a concerted and sustained effort to ensure coherence among donors, at all levels and particularly with regard to advocacy, policy and funding decisions. A coherent and coordinated approach is crucial;
- provide strong and sustained support to the HC[...], including in his relations with the IASC Country Team and the Ugandan authorities, not least the UPDF;
- urgently consider – together with the HC, the IASC Country Team and, perhaps most important, the World Bank - how best to influence the government to provide new – or reallocated - substantial resources to northern Uganda;
- support implementation and dissemination of the national IDP policy, as well as the establishment and effective functioning of Civil-Military Coordination Centers in all areas of displacement;
- coordinate humanitarian advocacy, in support of the ERC and the HC, particularly on the need for urgent implementation of the national IDP policy and the need for improved security for civilians in northern Uganda;
- consider funding or seconding military expertise to advise the HC, and in order to reinforce dialogue on civilian protection and humanitarian issues between the humanitarian community and the UPDF.

[...]

##### **IASC Country Team to:**

- strengthen a coordinated approach by actively and consistently supporting, at all levels, the HC and OCHA, as well as taking an active and constructive part in CAP and CHAP discussions;
- continue to stress the importance of creating conditions for increased freedom of movement for the IDP population in all districts in northern Uganda;
- ensure that there is a balance between the attention and resources focused on areas where some (voluntary, safe and viable) return is feasible and those areas where return is not an option. A needs-based approach – that is, improving protection of and assistance to those populations with the greatest need and vulnerabilities - is particularly important for the UNHCR-led protection and camp management cluster. This is likely to urgently demand far greater UNHCR attention to the situation in the districts of Kitgum, Gulu and Pader;

- actively and constructively support a successful implementation of the cluster leadership approach. (This implies, i.a., joint assessments, genuine consultation, programme coordination and agreement on priorities and strategies).

**Cluster lead agencies to:**

- take the generic terms of reference for cluster leads as their point of departure, ensuring that they focus equally on the performance of the whole cluster as on their own agency performance. Likewise, cluster leads should take into account the funding needs of the whole cluster and not only of their own organisation;
- demonstrate clear awareness of current activities of cluster participants, the added value of additional activities, and encourage NGO and beneficiary participation.”

**UN Security Council (March 2006)**

- Through two resolutions (1663 and 1653), the UN Security Council has expressed concern at the brutal insurgency waged by the LRA and condemned the activities of militias and armed groups attacking civilians and committing human rights abuses against local populations in the Great Lakes region.
- The Secretary-General was requested to make recommendations on how UN agencies and missions could more effectively address the problem of the LRA.
- The Security Council underlined that the governments in the region have a primary responsibility to protect their populations and called upon them to reinforce their cooperation with the Security Council.
- The international community, non-governmental organizations and civil society are urged to increase humanitarian assistance to civilians affected by displacements and violence from years of protracted conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

**UN Security Council, March 2006:**

"The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions, in particular resolution 1627 (2005) and 1653 (2006), and statements of its President, in particular that of 3 February 2006 (S/PRST/2006/5), concerning the situation in the Sudan, Reaffirming its commitment to the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of the Sudan,

Welcoming implementation by the parties of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 9 January 2005, and urging them to meet their commitments, Acknowledging the commitments by troop-contributing countries in support of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and encouraging deployment in order for UNMIS to support timely implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement,

Reiterating in the strongest terms the need for all parties to the conflict in Darfur to put an end to the violence and atrocities,

Stressing the importance of urgently reaching a successful conclusion of the Abuja Talks and calling on the parties to conclude a peace agreement as soon as possible,

Welcoming the Communiqué of the 46th meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council of 10 March 2006, and its decision to support in principle the transition of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to a United Nations operation within the framework of partnership between the African Union and the United Nations in the promotion of peace, security

and stability in Africa, to pursue the conclusion of a peace agreement on Darfur by the end of April 2006, and to extend the mandate of AMIS until 30 September 2006,

Expressing its deep concern at the movement of arms and armed groups across borders such as the long running and brutal insurgency by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which has caused the death, abduction and displacement of many innocent civilians in the Sudan,

Determining that the situation in the Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security,

1. Decides to extend the mandate of UNMIS until 24 September 2006, with the intention to renew it for further periods;
2. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council every three months on the implementation of the mandate of UNMIS;
3. Reiterates its request in paragraph 2 of resolution 1590 (2005) that UNMIS closely and continuously liaise and coordinate at all levels with AMIS, and urges it to intensify its efforts in this regard;
4. Requests that the Secretary-General, jointly with the African Union, in close and continuing consultation with the Security Council, and in cooperation and close consultation with the parties to the Abuja Peace Talks, including the Government of National Unity, expedite the necessary preparatory planning for transition of AMIS to a United Nations operation, including options for how UNMIS can reinforce the effort for peace in Darfur through additional appropriate transitional assistance to AMIS, including assistance in logistics, mobility and communications, and that the Secretary-General present to the Council by 24 April 2006 for its consideration a range of options for a United Nations operation in Darfur;
5. Encourages the Secretary-General to continue to provide maximum possible assistance to AMIS;
6. Requests the Secretary-General and the African Union to consult with international and regional organizations and member States to identify resources to support AMIS during transition to a United Nations operation;
7. Strongly condemns the activities of militias and armed groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which continue to attack civilians and commit human rights abuses in the Sudan; and urges in this regard UNMIS to make full use of its current mandate and capabilities;
8. Recalls resolution 1653 (2006) and its request that the Secretary-General make recommendations to the Council; and looks forward to receiving by 24 April 2006 these recommendations which would include proposals on how United Nations agencies and missions, in particular UNMIS, could more effectively address the problem of the LRA;
9. Encourages the Sudanese parties to finalize the establishment of national institutions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR), as stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and to expedite the development of a comprehensive DDR programme, with the assistance of UNMIS as provided in resolution 1590 (2005);
10. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter."

**UN Security Council, January 2006:**

"The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions and the statements by its President on the Great Lakes region of Africa and concerning the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi, and in particular resolutions 1649 and 1650 of 21 December 2005,

Recalling its resolution 1625 (2005) on strengthening the effectiveness of the Security Council and the role of civil society in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, particularly in Africa,

Further recalling its resolution 1631 (2005) on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and General Assembly resolution 59/213 (2004) on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union,

Reaffirming its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of all States in the region, and recalling the importance of the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and cooperation in the relations among States in the region,

Reiterating its condemnation of the genocide in Rwanda of 1994 and the armed conflicts which have plagued the Great Lakes region of Africa in the past decade and expressing its profound concern at the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law resulting in wide scale loss of life, human suffering and destruction of property,

Aware that the link between the illegal exploitation of natural resources, the illicit trade in those resources and the proliferation and trafficking of arms is one of the factors fuelling and exacerbating conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa, and especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Expressing its deep concern at the devastating impact of conflict and insecurity on the humanitarian situation throughout the Great Lakes region and their implications for regional peace and security, especially where arms and armed groups move across borders, such as the long-running and brutal insurgency by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda which has caused the death, abduction and displacement of thousands of innocent civilians in Uganda, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Welcoming the efforts undertaken by the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission comprising Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda as a significant contribution to heightened dialogue between the countries of the Great Lakes,

Recalling its previous resolutions that reaffirmed the importance of holding an international conference on peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region and recognizing the continued ownership of the process by the countries of the region with the facilitation of the United Nations, the African Union, the Group of Friends and all others concerned,

Taking note with satisfaction of the holding of the First International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, in Dar es Salaam, on 19 and 20 November 2004,

Recognizing the "Good Neighbourly Declaration" of September 2003 by the representatives of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda and the Dar es Salaam Declaration of 2004 adopted by the first Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region,

Recognizing the significant achievements and progress in the peace processes in the Great Lakes region, the recent installation of a democratically elected government in Burundi and progress in the transition to democratic institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Expressing its gratitude to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and to the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) for their significant contribution to peace in the region,

Paying tribute to the donor community for the assistance it is providing to the countries in the region, and encouraging it to maintain that assistance,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 60/1 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome and in particular the commitment to address the special needs of Africa,

1. Commends the positive role played by the Secretary-General, the African Union, the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes region and other stakeholders in organizing and participating in the First Summit of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region of Africa;

2. Urges the countries of the Great Lakes region to continue in their collective efforts to develop a subregional approach for promoting good relations, peaceful coexistence, peaceful resolution of disputes as envisaged in the Dar es Salaam Declaration and encourages them, in partnership with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and other stakeholders, to finalize the preparations for the second Summit to be held in Nairobi, including a clear focus on peace and security issues, with a view to adopting a Security, Stability and Development Pact for the countries of the Great Lakes region;

3. Calls upon the countries of the region to agree on confidence-building measures based on effective and concrete actions;

4. Encourages and supports the countries of the Great Lakes region, individually and collectively, to strengthen and institutionalize respect for human rights and humanitarian law, including respect for women's rights and protection of children affected by armed conflict, good governance, rule of law, democratic practices as well as development cooperation;

5. Encourages the development of the prevailing goodwill and relations among the countries of the region which have positively influenced the successful transition in Burundi and the course of the ongoing democratic transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

6. Urges all States concerned to take action to bring to justice perpetrators of grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and to take appropriate measures of international cooperation and judicial assistance in this regard;

7. Expresses its support for the efforts by States in the region to build independent and reliable national judicial institutions in order to put an end to impunity;

8. Strongly condemns the activities of militias and armed groups operating in the Great Lakes region such as the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Palipehutu-Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which continue to attack civilians and United Nations and humanitarian personnel and commit human rights abuses against local populations and threaten the stability of individual States and the region as a whole and reiterates its demand that all such armed groups lay down their arms and engage voluntarily and without any delay or preconditions in their disarmament and in their repatriation and resettlement;

9. Stresses the need for the States in the region, within their respective territories, to disarm, demobilize and cooperate in the repatriation or resettlement, as appropriate, of foreign armed groups and local militias, and commends in this regard the robust action of MONUC, acting in

accordance with its mandate, in support of the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

10. Underscores that the governments in the region have a primary responsibility to protect their populations, including from attacks by militias and armed groups and stresses the importance of ensuring the full, safe and unhindered access of humanitarian workers to people in need in accordance with international law;

11. Calls upon all States in the region to deepen their cooperation with a view to putting an end to the activities of illegal armed groups, and underlines that these States must abide by their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of their neighbours;

12. Urges the international community, non-governmental organizations and civil society to increase humanitarian assistance to civilians affected by displacements and violence from years of protracted conflicts in the Great Lakes region;

13. Commends the efforts of the United Nations Organization Missions in the region in accordance with their respective mandates, to protect civilians, including humanitarian personnel, to enable delivery of humanitarian aid and to create the necessary conditions for the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to make recommendations to the Council, as appropriate, on how best to support efforts by States in the region to put an end to the activities of illegal armed groups, and to recommend how United Nations agencies and missions — the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), MONUC and ONUB — can help, including through further support for the efforts of the governments concerned to ensure protection of, and humanitarian assistance to, civilians in need;

15. Calls upon the countries of the region to continue in their efforts to create conducive conditions for voluntary repatriation, safe and durable integration of refugees and former combatants in their respective countries of origin. In this regard, calls for commensurate international support for refugees and reintegration and reinsertion of returnees, internally displaced persons and former combatants;

16. Calls upon the countries of the region to reinforce their cooperation with the Security Council's Committee and with the Group of Experts established by resolution 1533 (2004) in enforcing the arms embargo in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to combat cross-border trafficking of illicit small arms, light weapons and illicit natural resources as well as the movement of combatants, and reiterates its demand that the Governments of Uganda, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi take measures to prevent the use of their respective territories in support of the activities of armed groups present in the region;

17. Urges the governments concerned in the region to enhance their cooperation to promote lawful and transparent exploitation of natural resources among themselves and in the region;

18. Welcomes the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and underlines its potential importance to the work of the Security Council in this region;

19. Invites the international community, including regional organizations, international financial institutions and relevant bodies of the United Nations system, to support and complement the peacebuilding and development initiatives required to sustain peace, security and stability in the countries of the Great Lakes region;

20. Decides to remain seized of the matter."

### **International response (November 2005)**

- Considering the scope of the situation, international response remains largely inadequate
- UNHCR plans to take on greater protection role for IDPs in northern Uganda
- UN credibility in Uganda hampered by lack of UN Humanitarian Coordinator
- UN Security Council visits Uganda and appears ignorant about the situation in northern Uganda
- Intensified international pressure is needed on all parties in an effort to resolve the conflict peacefully

The international response to the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda remains largely inadequate. The response of the UN – with the exception of the World Food Programme – as well as those of non-governmental organisations has not yet met the scale of the crisis. Despite the presence of the UN agencies for children (UNICEF), agriculture (FAO), health (WHO), human rights (OHCHR) and relief coordination (UNOCHA), a vast majority of IDPs are continuously unable to meet their basic needs. The visit to Uganda by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland in 2003 and a number of follow-up visits by the UN inter-agency Internal Displacement Division, which made Uganda one of its priority countries in 2004, were positive steps that increased international focus on northern Uganda. The UN is also considering Uganda as one of the countries where it will implement a new “cluster” approach aimed at increasing accountability and predictability of the international response. This may lead to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, taking on responsibility for the protection cluster, which includes the protection of IDPs in northern Uganda. In addition, the UN recently announced it plans to increase its request for humanitarian programmes to more than \$200 million for 2006 (IRIN, 22 November 2005).

UN relief efforts – and the credibility and legitimacy of the broader UN presence in Uganda – have been severely impacted by the UN’s failure to fill the vacant position of UN Humanitarian Coordinator, a key function in coordinating humanitarian assistance and bringing up issues of concern with the government.

In early November 2005, the UN Security Council conducted a mission to Uganda, where it met with Ugandan President Museveni regarding the situation in northern Uganda. In anticipation of the mission, a coalition of NGOs working in Uganda urged the Council to pass a resolution demanding protection of civilians in northern Uganda. After 19 years of an extremely violent war which has included the abduction of over 25,000 children, a multitude of civilian massacres, and instigated the deaths of 1,000 displaced persons each week, the Security Council has never passed a resolution on northern Uganda (Oxfam, 9 November 2005). Following the Security Council’s visit, UN agencies and NGOs working in Uganda expressed extreme disappointment regarding the failure of the Security Council mission to make a clear statement about the crisis in northern Uganda and the government’s responsibilities to address assistance and protection concerns (OCHA/IDD, November 2005).

While the EU recently called on the Ugandan government to ensure protection of civilians in northern Uganda (Reuters, 8 November 2005), intensified international pressure is needed on all parties in an effort to resolve the conflict peacefully, in particular in view of the recent regional dimension of the LRA’s area of operation. Enhanced and stronger humanitarian responses are positive, yet humanitarian objectives will never bear the fruits of a political resolution to the

conflict. In addition, as humanitarian agencies have proven unsuccessful in providing for the basic needs of IDPs in government-mandated camps, international political pressure is also needed to ensure that displaced persons are able to exercise their right to move outside of camps in an effort to increase their self-sustainability.

## **Policy and recommendations**

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### **Implementation of the cluster approach in Uganda (November 2005)**

- UN Country team plans to phase in new 'cluster approach'
- Government of Uganda plans to co-lead cluster approach
- UN remains understaffed in Uganda
- UNHCR plans to take lead in protection cluster

“At the ERC’s request, an OCHA-IDD support mission to Uganda took place from 14-18 November 2005. The mission aimed to support the Humanitarian Coordinator and IASC country team in preliminary capacity mapping and response planning in the context of the cluster leadership approach, in advance of the IASC Principals meeting on 12 December. The mission, under the overall authority of the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i., was led by Dennis McNamara (OCHA-IDD), and included Headquarters representatives from UNDP, UNHCR, OCHA and UNICEF as well as the NGO consortia, InterAction. The mission consulted Government, UN, NGO, Red Cross, and donor partners in Kampala and Kitgum, where the mission also met IDP representatives. Main mission recommendations can be found on page four. At the HC and UNCT’s request, the mission: (1) briefed field colleagues on the cluster approach; (2) consulted humanitarian partners on how the cluster approach may be implemented in Uganda, with a particular focus on camp coordination and management, protection, health, early recovery, water and sanitation and emergency shelter; (3) consulted with IASC country team members on main gaps/weaknesses in the current humanitarian response in Uganda; and (4) advised on ways to strengthen the response and ensure adequate resource mobilisation.

As with the similar recent mission to DRC (1-12 November 2005), the mission to Uganda found a significant lack of clarity among humanitarian partners at the field level about the humanitarian reform agenda broadly, and the cluster approach specifically. The mission felt that the lack of communication strategy on the humanitarian reform process may hamper successful implementation at the field level. The generic terms of reference for cluster leads, developed during the DRC mission, was useful, although some modifications are needed for the Uganda context, in particular clarifying the role of the GoU in coleading the clusters (see below). More generally, it was felt that some cluster activities, such as standard setting, should be addressed by the global cluster leads, while country-level cluster leads would be responsible for applying standards and monitoring. Furthermore, economies of scale could be achieved for some common cluster activities (such as information management, advocacy and joint resource mobilization) by centralizing these in the OCHA Office and strengthening it accordingly to perform these tasks.

#### **Implementation of the cluster approach in Uganda**

There was general acceptance among humanitarian partners that sector management and accountability in Uganda needs to be strengthened. The IASC Country Team (IASC CT) believes this can be achieved by making existing and nascent sector coordination groups more robust, accountable and inclusive (the “cluster approach”). The IASC CT plans to phase-in the cluster approach over 2006-2007, with the expectation that additional resources will be forthcoming. It is



expected that the ERC, the HC and sector leads will each play their part, on behalf of *all* cluster members, to mobilize the necessary resources. OCHA-IDD plans to lead a donor mission to Uganda in late January 2006, and this will be an opportunity to present additional funding requirements related to phasing-in the cluster approach.

The GoU has primary responsibility to ensure assistance and protection for its citizens, and lead the humanitarian response and, in comparison to many other countries with major IDP crises, has greater capacity to fulfill this responsibility. In that regard, the IASC CT proposed that the GoU should co-lead the cluster approach. Where GoU capacity is weak, the UN and partners agreed to step-up capacity building efforts. Initial consultations with the GoU on the cluster approach were positive. The GoU indicated its intention to realign, as feasible, its coordination structures to be coherent with the UN's approach.

The IASC CT noted that sector coordination varied in quality both among sectors, and between the district and national levels; at the district, sub-district and camp level coordination was often insufficient or nonexistent. It will be important that measures to strengthen sector management and accountability take into account the coordination needs at all levels. Cross-sector assessment, analysis, planning and monitoring is, on the whole, lacking. The phasing-in of the cluster approach can be an opportunity to readjust coordination structures to foster greater inter-sectoral collaboration.

There was consensus in the IASC CT that the HC, supported by a strong OCHA Office, will be vital to the success of the cluster approach. The IASC CT urged the ERC to immediately appoint an HC and fill key OCHA vacancies in Kampala and in northern Uganda. The mission also discussed the need for a Deputy HC based in northern Uganda, which some supported strongly.

Following consultations with a wide range of humanitarian partners, the acting HC and the IASC CT endorsed a proposal to strengthen sector management and accountability in four priority sectors, along the following lines: *[NB further to IASC CT discussions, it was agreed that there was not a need for the time being to further strengthen management and accountability in the Emergency Shelter sector; non-food items should be addressed through other respective cluster groups.]* (UNOCHA/IDD, November 2005)

### **Peace efforts should be supported and promoted (June 2005)**

- More ambitious and creative mediation strategy needed
- Government policy of 'fighting and talking' offers no hope for people of Uganda
- Pressure on Sudanese government to play more assertive role in bringing the rebellion to a close
- Reintegration strategy should be enhanced in order to accelerate acceptance of LRA ex-combatants



# CSOPNU

Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda

## "Fighting and talking" offers no relief for people of northern Uganda

For the people of northern Uganda life is getting worse rather than better. Over the last two months attacks and abductions by the LRA have continued on an almost daily basis with civilians caught up in clashes between both sides.

### A peaceful settlement offers the best hope for a just and lasting peace:

Ms. Betty Bigombe has been leading peace talks between the two sides since 2004. Despite the end of a ceasefire earlier this year, contacts have continued. Ms. Bigombe is still optimistic that a ceasefire agreement can be brokered in the near future. Unfortunately the current policy of 'fighting and talking' is not fostering trust between the LRA and UPDF and has the potential to undermine hopes for a peaceful settlement.

The earlier ceasefires brought considerable benefit, enabling relief agencies to access areas in desperate need of relief, and opening up space for dialogue for the first time in more than a decade. Both parties should re-commit themselves to a ceasefire and sustained dialogue. This would enable negotiators to work together to plan a process for confidence building and practical steps towards peace. A ceasefire would also offer respite from the suffering of two million people.

We believe that there is still hope for a negotiated settlement and appeal to both the Government of Uganda and the LRA to renew their commitment to bringing a peaceful end to this conflict.

"Whatever is humanity possible to sustain this peace process should be exploited, if there is a glimmer of hope for a peaceful resolution to this conflict we should follow it" said Betty Bigombe.

### To the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA):

We appeal to you to immediately cease attacks on and abduc-

tions of civilians and to respond positively to opportunities for peace-talks by maintaining regular contact with the negotiators. These concrete steps would show commitment to resolving this conflict peacefully and enable discussion of your needs. Such commitment should happen sooner rather than later.

### To the Government of Uganda:

While we welcome your recent offer of a limited area of non-operation to enable contact, we appeal to you to rethink your approach to resolving the conflict in northern Uganda. We understand that you have a right and a responsibility to protect the people in northern Uganda. If you focus on protection rather than confrontation, this will send a clear signal of your commitment, respect and unreserved support for a peaceful settlement to this conflict. This is the best hope for sustainable peace and stability in the region.

### To the International Criminal Court (ICC):

We support your commitment to bringing the perpetrators of crimes to justice. However, we fear that moves by the ICC to indict LRA leaders threaten to derail the fragile peace process. Recent reports have stated that you have started the process of issuing arrest warrants for the top members of the LRA. If these are issued now this will be a fatal blow to hopes of sustainable peace in northern Uganda.

We are concerned that the ending of the investigations may discourage the rebels from talking peace and could jeopardise any future discussions. Furthermore Ms. Bigombe's support from donor governments could disappear if arrest warrants are issued. The peace initiative is widely supported by the international community, in particular the Governments of the UK, Norway, the Netherlands and the US as well as the UN. Some of these Governments may have to withdraw their assistance to the peace initiative if arrest warrants are issued.

"We have always supported the peace process. We have seen the impact of the conflict on the lives of the victims, we urge the Government to take the necessary steps to resolve the conflict," said Stella Ayo Obbo.

We believe that only a negotiated settlement can end this conflict.

The peace effort needs to be sustained. We urge the LRA to give this a chance. If setbacks occur, we urge the LRA to give this a chance.

For the sake of all Ugandans, we urge the LRA to give this a chance.

CSOPNU is a coalition of civil society organisations. We believe that the need for a negotiated settlement must be central to any peace process.

Just and lasting peace is possible. For more information contact CARE, 17 Mackinnon Road, Kampala, Uganda. Box 7280. Tel: +256 414 344235. Email: csopnu@care.org. Steering Committee: Gulu NGO Forum, Interfaith Dialogue Council, Oxfam, Refugees and Social Workers, SODANN, Uganda National NGO Forum.

"Peace may yet be possible in Northern Uganda in 2005. Many elements seem to be in place, but they need to be pursued by President Museveni's government in a more comprehensive framework, given stronger international support and -- most urgently -- be committed to by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the context of a specific process with a clearly definable endgame. The outlines of rebel demands are clearer, the government has expressed flexibility, and the LRA military position is becoming more tenuous. However, there has not yet been tangible progress. The unanswered question is whether Joseph Kony, the unpredictable insurgent leader, is truly nearing a strategic decision that his prospects and those of his supporters are better served by a deal or whether he is merely playing for time in order to regroup as he has done several times previously. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is expected to issue arrest warrants for Kony and senior deputies shortly, which will put new pressure on all concerned, including the government and its authorised mediator, Betty Bigombe, to decide whether they will continue with the effort at negotiation. Patience is wearing thin on all sides.

The mediation has been pursued in recent months against a backdrop of continuing LRA atrocities directed at Acholi civilians. The LRA remains focused on terror tactics, not the control of territory. Even with gradually eroding force levels, it still can wreak havoc with spectacularly brutal strikes, which prevent resettlement of the 1.5 million displaced persons and give the appearance the government is not in firm control of the North. Leaving the decision on peace or war solely in the hands of the brutal Kony would be irresponsible on the part of the government and the international community. Much more can be done now not only to support the potential the talks seem to retain in the wake of recent gestures by Kony to meet with Bigombe, but also to prepare the ground for sustainable peace and reconciliation in Northern Uganda as a society. The government, in cooperation with the concerned international community, should construct and implement a comprehensive strategy for peace including the following elements:

- a more ambitious mediation strategy, including preparation of detailed proposals to have the LRA sign up to a ceasefire, security guarantees, and a more expansive program for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration into society (DDR);

- a military strategy that maximises civilian protection and the ability of the army to prevent further attacks and abductions, in the context of a more sophisticated counter-insurgency strategy that does a better job of respecting human rights and avoiding abuses that cost the government dearly in terms of civilian support in the North;

- a more robust reintegration strategy that begins immediately and seeks to do a better job with all ex-LRA combatants in order to accelerate the return of those who remain in the bush, including through guarantees of education and microenterprise support;

- a justice and accountability strategy that involves better understanding by the government of the ICC's independent responsibilities and objectives while striving to take into account the related objectives of peace and reconciliation;

- a better coordinated reconciliation strategy that provides more direct support for initiatives and processes such as community-based efforts already being led by women's and victims' groups, that would accelerate the acceptance of LRA ex-combatants back into local communities and facilitate the restoration of intercommunal links that have been damaged by nearly two decades of war;

- a more concerted hearts and minds strategy that features visible efforts to improve governance

in the North, strengthen the humanitarian safety net in the camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and include Northern Ugandans in planning and preparing for eventual normalisation of life in their region; and

- pressure on the Sudanese government, which has substantially sustained the LRA for a decade, to play a more assertive role in bringing the rebellion to a close -- including by taking steps to arrest Kony or expel him from southern Sudan if he will not negotiate seriously" (ICG, June 2005).

### **IDP camps: "protected villages" or "protected barracks"?**

- Protected villages established as military tactic, argue opponents
- Assisting the villages would violate the neutrality of NGOs
- The Geneva Convention permits the Government to displace populations for their protection
- The Army says it is incapable of protecting the people in dispersed rural areas

"When the protected villages were established, a debate ensued among some elements of the humanitarian assistance community and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerning the appropriateness of assisting their involuntarily displaced residents. Some organizations, such as the World Food Program and World Vision, did respond promptly to requests for assistance.

Some opponents of the protected villages withheld their assistance. They argued that these villages were established as a military tactic, and were not a spontaneous civilian response to conflict. To assist the protected villages would therefore violate the neutrality of NGOs. They also questioned the military effectiveness of the strategy and whether civilians were better protected in them. A few, including some who had not visited any such places, asserted that they were all similar to the site at Pabo (i.e., they were all co-located with the military detachments), which was inaccurate. Referring to cases like Pabo, they characterized all the centers as 'protected villages' or 'protected barracks,' alleging that the civilians were used as a first-line of alert against rebel attacks against the military. Advocates of the 'protected villages' argued that the UPDF was in the process of an aggressive operation against the LRA. To the degree that the LRA could replenish its losses by abducting more youngsters - which in the highly dispersed rural areas the army could not effectively prevent - its effort and sacrifice seemed futile. By eliminating the LRA's ability to loot food and abduct youngsters - frequent complaints of the rural population - rebel forces would be weakened. Able to concentrate its stationary units in a limited number of locations, the remainder of the army would be freer to pursue the rebels. The Geneva Convention, it was argued, permits the Government to displace populations for their protection [although it also requires that adequate arrangements for their material well-being be provided]. As long as the LRA continues its attacks and executions on undefended civilians, advocates argue, it is impossible for the UPDF to protect so many potential targets in such a vast area. The army is criticized for not effectively protecting the civilian population from LRA assaults, yet it is also criticized for attempting to concentrate the population so that it can address the problem more effectively. " (Gersony, Section 1, 1997, "The Protected Villages debate")

"In human rights terms the movement of people into camps in Gulu and Kitgum Districts presents a series of dilemmas. Villagers are being attacked with extreme violence by the LRA, in breach of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. The authorities have an obligation to protect

people from violence perpetrated by the LRA and, of course, by UPDF soldiers and other government agents. The authorities argue that providing protection from the LRA is not possible if people remain dispersed throughout the countryside." (AI 17 March 1999 "Breaking the Circle", para.2)

***The Geneva Convention awards right to move or contain people***

"Under the Geneva Convention, the GoU has the right to move or contain people if, for reasons of insecurity, such relocation is in the people's best interest. In the majority of cases, it would appear as if displaced Ugandans have been able to exercise their right to residence and movement and that their choice of location/abode has generally been voluntary. Due consideration must be given to the fact that rebel movements have not only failed to establish a basis of civilian support but have continuously launched campaigns of terror against the civilian population. Rarely do they engage in combat with the UPDF." (OCHA 23 May 2001, "Lessons learned")

## **References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**

### **Known references to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as of December 2004**

- For updated information on implementation of the IDP policy, see National Response: IDP Policy
- A National Policy on Internal Displacement of Persons National Policy on IDPs has been adopted by the Cabinet in August 2004
- IDP policy has drawn extensively on the Guiding Principles for Internal Displacement
- The policy recognises that IDPs should enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under the Constitution and all other laws, as do all other persons in Uganda
- The policy sets out to establish an institutional framework for IDP protection through local government
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

"Prompted by lobbying and funding from UNOCHA, the OPM has also developed a National Policy on Internal Displacement of Persons (NPIDP), which is designed to bring Ugandan legislation in line with the principles enshrined within IHL and IHRL and within the GPID in particular. The policy seeks to provide for the protection and assistance of IDPs by providing guidelines to government institutions, local and international humanitarian organizations and NGOs involved in upholding the rights and entitlements of the IDPs through all the phases of displacement. As such, the policy recognises that IDPs should "enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under the Constitution and all other laws, as do all other persons in Uganda", and it therefore sets out to establish an institutional framework for IDP protection through national and district government, with the Office of the Prime Minister acting as the coordinating body. The policy also contains clear definitions of what kinds of situations relating to internal displacement constitute a 'disaster' or an 'emergency' thereby providing a clearer means of holding government accountable for the fulfilment of its responsibilities in such situations. The Cabinet finally passed

the policy on 24 August 2004, but no implementation plan has yet been made public, nor is it clear what resources will be specifically allocated to cater for the implementation (if any).

The development of the IDP policy has been an extremely positive step on the part of the GoU, as the immediacy, scale and horror of the situation of internal displacement in northern Uganda clearly requires that an effective, functioning and practicable government strategy for alleviating the effects of displacement is put in place and mobilised as quickly as possible. Unfortunately however, being only a policy, the provisions of the NPIDP are rather toothless given current legislation."(CSOPNU, 10 December 2004, p. 43)

"[...] on 25 August 2004, the government of Uganda approved the National Policy on Internal Displacement (IDP Policy). Any legal issues in the document that need discussion will be debated in Parliament. OCHA has a copy of the draft IDP policy that was approved (without the Cabinet's input incorporated) and can avail it to those interested."(OCHA, 15 September 2004)

"The National Policy on IDPs after being discussed with the Ministry of Finance has been adopted by the Cabinet early May. Its timely and successful implementation will require both Government budget contributions and donor support. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) with the support of the UN Country Team (UNCT) has started working on it." (UNOCHA, 15 June 2004)

"For the past year, the Government has been developing a national policy on internal displacement. The current and near final draft of this policy, which has drawn extensively on the Guiding Principles for Internal Displacement, meets most of the requirements that a national policy should include. One area where it could be strengthened is with respect to the search for, and implementation of durable solutions. Hence, OCHA may want to continue a dialogue with the Office of the Prime Minister on this issue in order that durable solutions are more comprehensively dealt with in the policy. The Government has indicated that the draft policy will go before Cabinet by the end of the year. It is hoped that this timeline will be adhered to and it would be desirable if the Humanitarian Coordinator uses his good offices to encourage the highest levels of Government to ensure that the policy be endorsed as early as possible. Once the policy is endorsed, a major challenge will be the implementation of the policy. OCHA should work closely with its counterparts in the Office of the Prime Minister to ensure that an implementation plan is developed and, if required to, provide any technical support for this process." (UN OCHA, 31 August 2003)

### **Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation**

<p><del>The National Policy on Internal Displacement Policy and Institutional Framework:</del> In consultation with the UN IDP UNIT, and Dr Deng, the Government of Uganda working on the development of a national policy paper on internal displacement. <del>The Policy seeks to protect Ugandan citizens against displacement and to protect and assist IDPs during displacement, return, resettlement or local integration. It also seeks to prevent displacement. The policy does this by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of Government institutions, humanitarian organisations, donors, the displaced community and other stakeholders and spelling out the rights of IDPs.</del></p>
<p>Source: The Republic of Uganda</p>
<p>Date: April 2002 draft</p>
<p>Document: Final draft not yet available</p>

## Availability of the Guiding Principles

The Government of Uganda has translated the UN Guiding Principles into the first three African/local languages Swahili (regional), Luo (Northern Uganda) and Rutoro (Southwestern Uganda).
Source: OCHA
Date: 2002
Documents: To access the Swahili document click <a href="#">[here]</a>
To access the Luo document click <a href="#">[here]</a>
To access the Rutoro document click <a href="#">[here]</a>

## Training on the Guiding Principles

<p>Workshop on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement:</p> <p>"Over 150 displaced camp leaders, representatives of women associations and of local authorities participated in a series of workshops on IDP protection organized by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Oxfam in Gulu and Kitgum, Northern Uganda in November 2003. These workshops followed the visit of the UN Special Representative on Internal Displacement and of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator to northern Uganda in mid-2003. They also aimed to complement workshops on IDP protection organized by the UN IDP Unit in November 2003, which targeted authorities and humanitarian personnel. Participants to the trainings deplored that the national government has so far failed to protect them. Their situation has actually worsened over the past year, following the deterioration of the security situation and the subsequent decreased humanitarian access. The rebel group Lord Resistance Army (LRA) was seen by all as the major threat to their physical security. Despite the terrible situation in which they are today, participants showed an admirable determination to gain knowledge on their rights. They proposed solutions to better define their roles vis-à-vis authorities, and how to organize themselves better. They also said they wished for more training on their rights, if possible jointly with government forces and on communication channels to address their needs." (NRC, November 2003)</p> <p>"The Office of the Prime Minister - Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, and the Norwegian Refugee Council hosted a 3 day workshop, which brought together District officials from Gulu, Kitgum, Kasese and Kabarole, IDPs from Gulu, Kitgum and Masindi and a number of NGOs, UN agencies and the ICRC. The workshop called for strengthening Government assistance to and protection of IDPs and for greater coordination between government and relief organizations. A core conclusion from the workshop was that as human beings, IDPs have human rights that include rights to greater protection and involvement in decisions affecting their lives. Participants also concluded that strategies aimed at long term self-reliance for IDPs should be sought. Regarding the military, there was a call for greater discipline, and training and sensitization in international human rights and humanitarian law. Participants also recommended the dissemination of the Guiding Principles more broadly to affected communities." (NRC, 31 March 1999)</p>
Source: Norwegian Refugee Council
Date: Kampala, Uganda 29-31 March 1999
Document: <a href="http://www.idpproject.org/training/reports/Kampala_workshop_1999.pdf">http://www.idpproject.org/training/reports/Kampala_workshop_1999.pdf</a>

## **Analysing the "Protected Villages" in reference to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (March 2002)**

- Prolongation of forced encampment seem arbitrary
- Lack of clarity if IDPs may or may not leave the "protected villages" seem to contradict a number of core personal freedoms
- Complaints about lack of reaction or preventive measures against destruction and looting of property and possessions

- Reason for concern but no direct evidence of punitive treatment of the Acholi on ethnic grounds

***Only extracts from the analysis included here. It's recommended to read the complete chapter in Weeks' report (March 2002, pp. 26-35)***

" Finding 1:

While the establishment of the "Protected Villages" may have been justifiable on grounds of military exigency in 1996, their prolongation into 2002 would seem to be inconsistent with international humanitarian principles.

In the UN "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement", Principle 6 states as follows: "(1) Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence. (2) The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement:...(b) In situations of armed conflict, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand; ....(3) Displacement shall last no longer than required by circumstances". [Emphasis added.]

While the LRA is still an active menace to civilians, it seems to have been sub-stancially weakened in recent years. The "imperative military reasons" that presumably led to the establishment of the villages would thus seem to have re-ceded accordingly, while the situation with regard to the security of civilians would appear to vary considerably from one area to the next, making the blanket prolongation of forced encampment to seem arbitrary and to reflect a failure to fully examine possible alternatives.

[...]

Finding 2:

The arbitrary nature of the forced encampment of the majority of the people of Acholiland, and the lack of clarity as to the circumstances under which they may or may not leave the "protected villages", for example to pursue agricultural activities in their home areas, would seem to stand in contradiction of a number of core personal freedoms.

Though all of the interviewees with whom the consultant spoke expressed a passionate desire to return home as soon as feasible, many recognized that the circumstances now were not right, and that as long as insecurity continued to prevail they would choose to remain in the camps until (for example) "guarantees of security" could be given by the authorities. Many of these would doubtless choose to remain in the villages even if a blanket green light for a return home were given.

But many others feel passionately that the time to return is now. Guiding Principles 14 states: "(1) Every internally displaced person has the right to liberty of movement and freedom to chose his or her residence. (2) In particular, internally displaced persons have the right to move freely in and out of camps or other settlements."

[...]

Finding 3:

Most or all property and possessions of the internally displaced, including houses, have been destroyed or looted. Personal security in the "protected villages" is often poor, with attacks, abductions, rapes, lootings and other violent acts being committed variously by LRA assailants, by UPDF elements, by free-lance bandits, and by other village residents. While there is no evidence of a deliberate official policy to incite or encourage such acts, residents complain that too little is done to prevent them or to hold perpetrators accountable.

Guiding principle 11 (2) holds that "internally displaced persons, whether or not their liberty has been restricted, shall be protected in particular against: (a) rape, mutilation, torture, inhuman or



degrading treatment or punishment, another outrages upon personal dignity, such as acts of gender-specific violence, forced prostitution or any form of indecent assault.'

Guiding Principle 21 (2) states: 'The property and possessions of internally displaced persons shall in all circumstances be protected, in particular, against the following acts: (a) Pillage; (b) Direct or indiscriminate attacks or other acts of violence....'

[...]

Finding 4:

Prolonged, enforced encampment of the Acholi threatens the basis of their economic system.

According to Principle 9, "States are under a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of indigenous peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with special dependency on and attachment to their land."

As a long-established agro-pastoral society, the Acholi have such a dependency, and their displacement is consequently far more destructive, socially and economically, than might be the case for, say, a more urbanized population.

Finding 5:

There is no direct evidence that the Acholi displaced are being targeted for punitive treatment on ethnic grounds.

Principle 6, (2) (a) and (e), is relevant here: "The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement: (a) when based on policies of apartheid, "ethnic cleansing" or similar practices and at/or resulting in altering the ethnic, religious, or racial composition of the affected population...(e) When it is used as collective punishment."

When combined with the history of tension and mutual suspicion between the Acholi and the central government mentioned previously in this report, the very fact that Acholiland is ethnically so homogeneous (virtually all the displaced are presumed to be of Acholi origin and ethnicity) and so distinct from the rest of the country must raise some concerns. Loose talk noted among government officials in Kampala adds to the concern: at a superficial level, remarks are often made that, taken out of context, could be interpreted as laying collective blame on the Acholi for, for example, the actions of the LRA. If this came to reflect a clear pattern of thought, as opposed to being mere passing expressions of frustration, it would raise the matter of enforced encampment in Acholiland to the very highest level of international concern and invite a level of scrutiny that the circumstances do not at present appear to warrant." (Weeks March 2002, pp. 26, 27, 28)

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