



# FAO UGANDA Information Bulletin



April - Aug. 2011

Volume 4 Issue 8

## Building Back Better

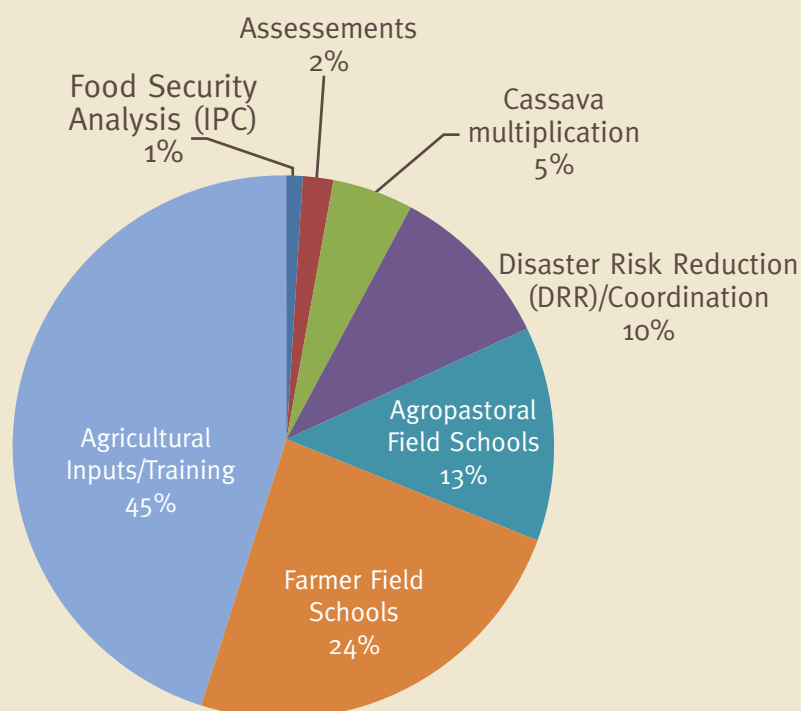
*FAO and EU  
Fighting Hunger,  
Restoring  
Livelihoods*

### Inside

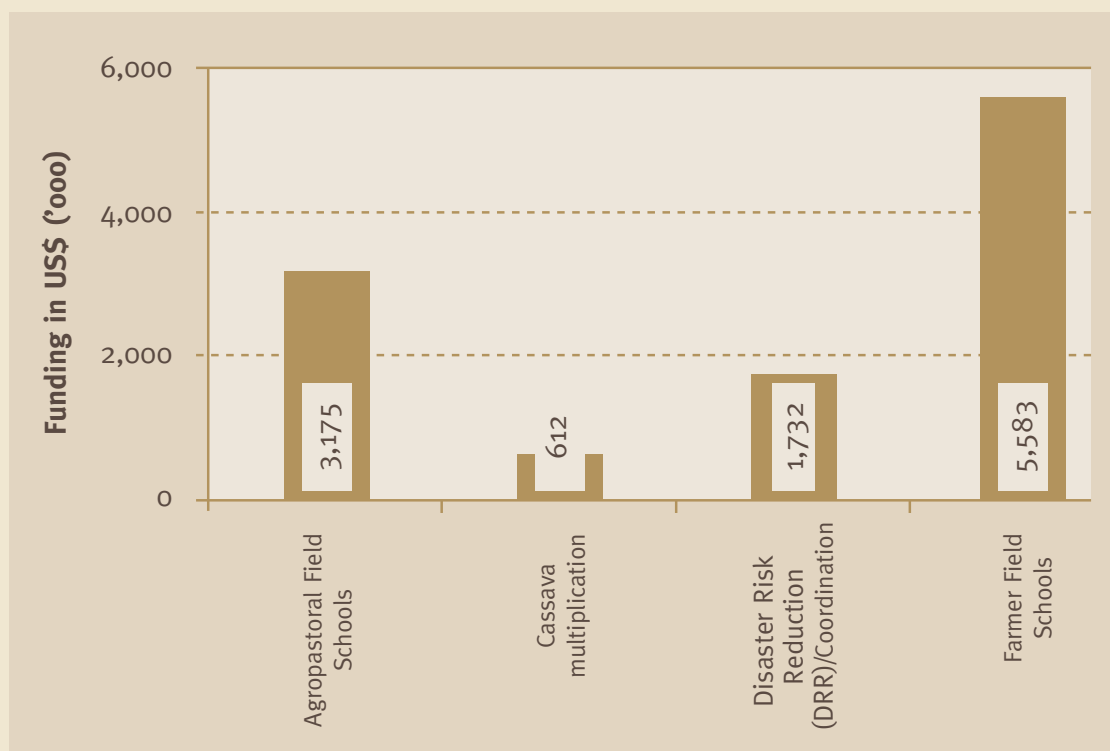
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## EU funding to FAO Uganda's Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordinatoin Programmes (ERCU) by activity



## Current activities implemented with funding from EU



# Dear Reader,

Welcome to the second issue of the FAO Uganda Information Bulletin in 2011.

The European Union (EU) is an important partner of FAO. At global level, the EU is one of the members of FAO and has remained a steadfast donor to FAO's emergency and rehabilitation coordination programmes in Uganda, funding over 70 percent of FAO's operations.

Funds from the EU have particularly been instrumental in restoring the livelihoods of

people who were affected by the war in northern Uganda and those that have been affected by natural disasters in the Karamoja region.

Early this year FAO was contracted to implement part of two EU funded Government of Uganda PRDP Special Programmes; Karamoja Livelihood Programme and the Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Programme in northern Uganda, whose details you find in this Bulletin.

This special edition is dedicated to the longstanding

partnership between the EU and FAO in fighting hunger and promoting development of humankind, globally and here in Uganda.

We have therefore provided a snapshot of the programmes and projects that have been funded by the EU through FAO, here in Uganda.

## Editor



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FAO/2011/R. NANDELENGA

## The European Union - FAO's committed partner in fighting hunger

*The EU ambassador to Uganda, His Excellency Roberto Ridolfi (left) talks to FAO supported farmers in Napak district. The EU is FAO's important partner*

Since 1992, the European Union through its European Commission (EC) and the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) divisions has funded development and humanitarian projects in more than 85 countries including Uganda.

The EU provides emergency assistance and relief to victims of natural disasters or armed conflict, irrespective of race, religion or political convictions.

The EU carries out its work from its headquarters in Brussels and by field offices throughout the world in collaboration with and through its partners, who include around 200 non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and international organizations.

In Uganda, the EU has been at the fore front in supporting communities that were affected by the war in northern Uganda to re-build their livelihoods. In

Karamoja, the EU's drought preparedness initiatives have supported pastoral and agro-pastoral communities to build resilience and better cope with the changing climatic conditions.

Since 1997, the EU and its member countries have funded over 70 percent of FAO's emergency and rehabilitation coordination programmes in Uganda. This financial support has enabled FAO to assist over one million households.





# NORTHERN UGANDA, Emerging from conflict

FAO/2011/A. MUHUMUZA

**T**he 20 year civil war that started in 1986 in the Northern and North Eastern regions of Uganda led to massive displacements of communities from their homes and farmlands. Over 90 percent of the population in some northern districts was forced into Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps by a military strategy which sought to protect the civil population from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The prolonged periods of armed conflict led to severe disruption of crop and livestock production, and marketing systems.

Northern Uganda also scores significantly lower than the national average on other major social indicators. According to the Uganda National Household Survey (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2010), the proportion of people in the north living in absolute poverty, i.e. on less than \$1 a day, is 46.2 percent - the highest in the country.

Following the initiation of peace talks and cessation of hostilities between government and the rebels, the people gradually started accessing their farmlands and eventually, there was a significant return to their communities. As the situation in the north improved, people are no longer destitute.

Instead of a means of survival, they now need longer-term solutions and skills to re-build their livelihood and FAO's current generation of projects are therefore based more on transferring these solutions and expertise.

To ensure the link between Relief, Recovery and Development under the post humanitarian context, the Farmer Field School approach has been adopted as an excellent platform for systematic farmer empowerment through production and entrepreneurial skills development for faster recovery as a precursor to more long term development.

# KARAMOJA, coping with a harsh environment

The Karamoja region is generally characterized by poor rainfall distribution and reliability manifested through prolonged drought and flash floods. The magnitude, frequency and severity of these hazards have increased over the past decades seriously eroding the productive assets and traditional coping capacities that support livelihoods.

As a result, there has been repeated crop failures and low livestock productivity. The effect of prolonged dry spells on livestock productivity has often been aggravated by presence of trans-boundary animal diseases such as Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia (CBPP), *Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR)*; *Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia (CCPP)* Foot & Mouth Disease and tick borne disease like *Anaplasmosis*, *Babesiosis* and East Cost Fever.

Crop production is affected by the massive environmental degradation as a result of deforestation, monoculture, and poor land and water management practices leading to uncontrollable runoff, erosion, nutrient depletion, and water pollution and flooding in low lying areas.

These underlying factors mirror the general limited production skills and over-stretched agriculture and livestock extension service delivery in the region.

FAO in collaboration with the Government of Uganda has been supporting communities in Karamoja to build resilience over the past six years through a holistic livelihood programme focusing on three integrated priority areas of Agriculture, Livestock production and Land and water management within a Disaster Risk Management framework.



Members of an Agro Pastoral Field School in Karamoja. FAO is foccusing on building the farmers' resilience



# EU commits Euro 6.5 million for Government of Uganda program through FAO

Targets Northern Uganda and Karamoja



Through two new programmes that were rolled out in early 2011, the EU has committed Euro 6.5 million towards revitalizing agricultural production among farming communities in northern Uganda and Karamoja through FAO. The programmes will be implemented between 2011 and 2014.

*Farmers welcome the EU ambassador to Uganda to Gulu recently. EU has committed Euro 6.5 million to northern Uganda and Karamoja.*



FAO/2011/R. NANDELENGA

## Northern Uganda - improving food security and agricultural livelihoods through the Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Program (AREP)

FAO is implementing the Result 1 of ALREP – increased agricultural production and productivity titled “Improving Food Security and Agricultural Livelihoods of the War Affected Communities in Acholi and Teso” worth Euro 3.9 million. The project aims at raising the prosperity for the war affected population to a level at least at par with the rest of the country and to increased economic growth of the region and Uganda.

It will support the war affected population of Acholi and Teso sub regions of northern

Uganda to engage in productive and profitable agricultural on the lessons learnt over the last three years to expand and consolidate the critical mass of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) groups and associated sub county FFS Networks to improve and stabilize food and income security in northern Uganda.

The FFS approach emphasizes skills building as a first step towards improved agricultural production, using hands on-practical learning while respecting and building on farmers’ indigenous knowledge. Through the approach

and under the guidance of a qualified and trained facilitator farmers are able to identify and solve problems affecting production, learn and adopt improved agricultural production techniques and technologies, as well as carry out farming as a business to supplement household income. The approach in northern Uganda has been enriched to include basic input provision for effective utilization of the skills learnt. FAO has established 2,000 FFS groups in northern Uganda. The 430 FFS groups under this project will be provided with training and agricultural inputs including seeds, vegetative planting materials, food processing equipment, improved breeder goats, basic animal health starter

kits and investment grants. Rural market information systems for FFS networks will also be developed through the programme.

The remarkable improvement in the security situation in northern Uganda has resulted in the return to places of origin of over 90 percent of former Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who have started to engage in agricultural production. “Considering the fact that agriculture is the major livelihood stay of most of the population living in northern Uganda, increased investment in this sector is required to foster the necessary change in the shortest time possible”, said Mr. Mario Samaja, the FAO Representative in Uganda, a.i.

## Improving food security and diversifying livelihoods through Karamoja Livelihood Programme (KALIP)

For the Karamoja region, FAO will implement Result 2 of the KALIP- Agro-pastoral production improved and alternative means of livelihoods promoted titled “Improving Food Security and Diversification of Livelihood Opportunities for Communities in Karamoja”.

The Euro 2.5 million project aims at supporting 13,200 vulnerable households in Karamoja to increase production, incomes and resilience capacities at household and community levels.

Through this project, 240 new Agro Pastoral Field Schools will be established and a total of 200 of the existing ones will be further supported benefiting a total of about 13,200 households will be consolidated.

The concept of Agro-Pastoralist Field Schools (APFS) has been developed by FAO for areas populated by pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities like Karamoja. It is an adaption of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) concept that addresses the specific needs of agro-pastoralist communities including inadequate production, poor land use practices, degraded soils and rangelands, disease prevalence, environmental degradation, among others. To date, FAO has built the capacity of more than 15 NGOs and supported the establishment of over 600 APFS in Karamoja. Under the KALIP, through the APFS the communities in Karamoja that are perpetually prone to a range of hazards and disasters resulting from various factors and exacerbated by the current climatic changes will be in position to undertake participatory assessment of the hazards affecting

their livelihoods and draw plans for implementing community actions to minimize their impact.

Within a DRM framework, the integration of soil and water conservation, watershed management, crop and live stock production, farming as a business and village saving schemes as integral component of the APFS, communities are in a better position to respond to shocks. Preliminary impact assessments on the performance of the APFS have shown that participants raise healthier livestock; produce, harvest, sell and stock more food, resulting in higher incomes and improved household food security.

Under this project, members of the APFS will be provided with an assortment of farm implements including seeds, tools and post harvest equipment. Multiplication of key food security crops in the green belt of the region will be undertaken to enhance the availability of important varieties of crop planting material. In the agro-pastoral zones, the programme will support the Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) system through building their capacity to carry out regular disease surveillance. In addition, FAO in collaboration with the National Livestock Resources Research Institute of NARO together with the Department of Livestock Production and Marketing of MAAIF will undertake the rehabilitation of 630 acres of dry season pasture belts and establish fodder tree nurseries in 15 sub counties to promote fodder tree planting in the region towards improving animal production.



# EC, FAO, IFAD and WFP

join forces on food security and nutrition

## New strategic framework of cooperation signed

FAO/2011/R. NANDELENGA



*The EU ambassador, accompanied by officials from Government and FAO in the field. EC, FAO, IFAD and WFP have joined forces on food security and nutrition*

On 27 June 2011, the European Commission (EC), FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) signed a new Strategic Framework of Cooperation to increase the capacity of the international community to deliver effective, coordinated, timely and sustainable support to food security and nutrition.

By joining forces, the four partners are seeking to achieve higher collective impact on the world's food security. The Strategic Framework of Cooperation defines the complementary roles of the three Rome-based UN Agencies, putting emphasis on the coherence of their comparative advantages and core mandates, enhanced through strengthened coordination and collaboration.

The Strategic Framework of Cooperation highlights the key priorities for food security and nutrition where all four partners will work together particularly on the basis of their converging objectives and mandates.

Finally, it will increase global awareness and visibility of the partnership between the European Commission and the three Rome-based UN Agencies in the fight against hunger.

The four partners are unanimously committed to an adequate monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Framework of Cooperation to ensure that it will genuinely lead to increased efficiency and more importantly to improve the economic and social well-being of the one billion people who live in chronic hunger.



# Livestock livelihoods in Emergencies

## FAO carries out first-ever training in Karamoja

FAO carried out the first ever Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) training in Karamoja in March 2011. The activity is part of an EU funded project - *Regional Support Programme for Co-ordination and Technical Assistance to Drought Risk Management in the Horn of Africa*.

LEGS are a set of international guidelines and standards for the design, implementation and assessment of livestock interventions to assist people affected by humanitarian crises. They are based on livelihoods objectives that aim to provide rapid assistance to protect and rebuild the livestock assets of crisis affected communities.

The aim of the training was to build capacity to support the saving of lives and livelihoods among livestock own-

ing communities affected by disasters. Up to 24 participants involved in livestock-based interventions in disasters drawn from district local governments and NGOs operating in Karamoja attended the training.

Speaking at the training, the Resident District Commissioner Moroto, Mr. Nahaman Ojwee emphasized the importance of the appropriateness of livestock related interventions as key humanitarian response for Karamoja.

The FAO Representative in Uganda, Mr. Percy Misika said the training was timely because it responds to one of the most pressing needs, which is to improve livestock relief programming with communities who rely heavily on livestock for their social and economic well-being such as the Karimojong.

*A farmer takes his shoats to a vaccination centre. FAO carried out the first-ever Livestock in Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) training in Karamoja.*

# EU supports adoption of food security classification system in Uganda

Since 2007, funding from EU has contributed significantly to supporting the production of the bi-annual Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) maps and synthesis reports that show the state of food security in the country.

The IPC is a standardized tool that aims at providing a “common currency” for classifying food security.

According to Stella Sengendo, FAO’s Food Security Analyst in Uganda, this information guides decision makers and

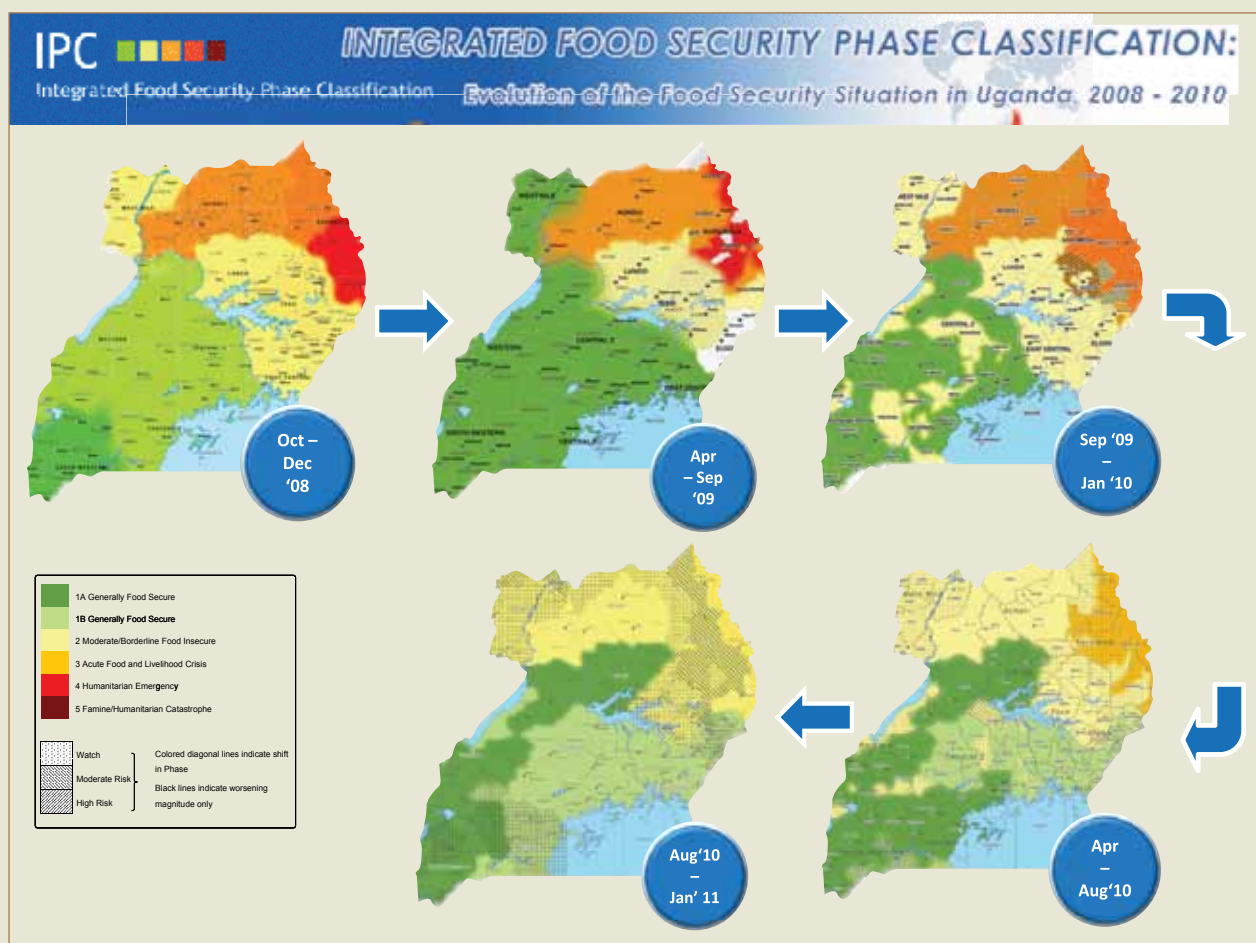
other stakeholders to come up with appropriate responses and interventions to tackle immediate and underlying causes of the issues that are highlighted.

In developing the IPC products, FAO works with a cross section of stakeholders to undertake meta-data analysis based on various study reports and assessments done by different institutions such as the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Department of Meteorology, Makerere University - Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Ministry of Agricultural Animal Industry and Fisheries,

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Environment, Office of the Prime Minister, Save the Children, UNICEF, WFP, ACF, ACTED and World Vision,. This information is supplemented by rapid assessments and district reports done before each analysis event.

So far, five maps have been produced revealing an improvement in the food security situation of the country between 2008 to 2010.

*More information about IPC can be accessed from a website - [www.ipcinfo.org](http://www.ipcinfo.org)*



Maps showing the evolution of the food security situation in the country. Since 2007, funding from the EU has contributed significantly to supporting the production of bi annual IPC maps



# Disaster Risk Reduction: Helping communities to cope with drought

During the long drought in 2008, 60 year old Achaya Irwata's main income generating activity was cutting trees to burn and sell as charcoal in order to provide for her grandchildren. As a result, she was unknowingly contributing to the vicious cycle of environmental degradation.

In line with its Strategic Objective on "Improving preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies", FAO's approach to Disaster Risk Reduction anchors on a livelihood enhancement holistically blending mitigation and emergency responses with long term development efforts. FAO has been part of three consecutive ECHO funded Regional Drought Decision (RDD) playing the pivotal role of coordination and technical backstopping of the various stakeholders including government, NGOs, communities and individuals to be better prepared against potential crisis and strengthen the DRR/DRM strategies.

Working with stakeholders and partners, good practices like Agro/Pastoral Field Schools, Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) system, Early Warning Systems, Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) and Watershed Management among others have been mainstreamed and harmonized in the region. This has enhanced synergy and led to more responsive interventions addressing key vulnerability factors. In support to

the ongoing district contingency planning process, FAO in collaboration with the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) is spearheading the mainstreaming of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction in the overall Agro Pastoral Field School curriculum to ensure that hazard analysis and profiling becomes an integral component of the farmer groups' action planning process. This will ensure that the district contingency plans are dynamic and have direct involvement of the communities. Capacity building for the respective District Local Governments and NGOs in Karamoja targeting 150 staff has been ongoing since February 2011 within the framework of the ECHO funded Regional Drought Management Project.

To enhance coordination FAO has been supporting the respective District Local Governments and Partners to map out productivity infrastructure, dry season migration routes and distribution of interventions by stakeholders. FAO has just concluded a comprehensive mapping exercise to enhance planning and coordination by providing the geo-spatial distribution and status of the existing CAHWs and Veterinary drug shops in the region. As part of the ECHO funded project a DRR website [www.disasterriskreduction.net](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net) hosted by FAO has been set up to provide an innovative platform for everybody involved in DRR in the region of East and Central Africa to share and access information.





## Community-based integrated watershed management introduced to Karamoja

Using funding from the ECHO, FAO conducted the first of a series of training events in Karamoja region on Community-based Integrated Watershed Management from 4th to 10th April, 2011 in Moroto district.

Watershed management is the integration of appropriate technologies and strategies within the natural boundaries of a cut-off point for optimum development through conservation, regeneration and judicious utilization of all resources - land, water, animal and human, taking into account the linkages between the upstream and downstream areas (or less technically between the uplands and lowlands). Up to thirty one participants, drawn from the seven districts of Karamoja, Kaabong, Kotido, Abim, Napak, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Amudat attended the training.

Karamoja is one of the regions suffering the impact of climate change and environmental degradation.

According to Dr. Kennedy Igbokwe, the Climate Change consultant at FAO Uganda, current efforts to

address these twin problems have been largely piecemeal, sectoral and uncoordinated without due consideration to an integrated programme approach that takes into account land and water linkages within a natural ecosystem - watershed.

“A resilient watershed ecosystem can strengthen drought or flood preparedness and mitigation efforts and increase the adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities”, he said

The training was aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skill of district local government and NGOs to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate community based integrated watershed management projects and programs.

Consistent with this understanding, FAO plans to work with World Food Programme, District Local Governments and other development partners to pilot communitybased integrated watershed management interventions in Karamoja.

FAO/2011/R. NANDELENGA

*A typical watershed in Moroto. FAO plans to work with WFP and other development partners and the local governments to pilot community-based watershed management interventions in Karamoja*



# Livestock-based herding

## *An important livelihood option for Karamoja*

With support from ECHO, FAO carried out a baseline Household Economy analysis (HEA) in Karamoja early last year followed by a seasonal assessment at the end of the cropping season. The analysis in the report was conducted on the basis of existing livelihood evidence and secondary information, the livelihood (household economy) field research and backed up by five complementary studies. The HEA report accentuates the importance of livestock-based herding both for income maximization and for resilience to the people in Karamoja.

The report calls for support to existing livestock strategies, in particular to animal health and marketing.

“This would raise both incomes to levels above those of households in many parts of Uganda and increase resilience, making the even small herds owned by the poor sufficient to support food security (from livestock sales) without depleting herd sizes”.

According to both the HEA and seasonal assessment, it was apparent that although crop harvests are unreliable in most of Karamoja,

households that are able to rely on semi-nomadic herding as a main livelihood strategy are able to cope with such crop failures.

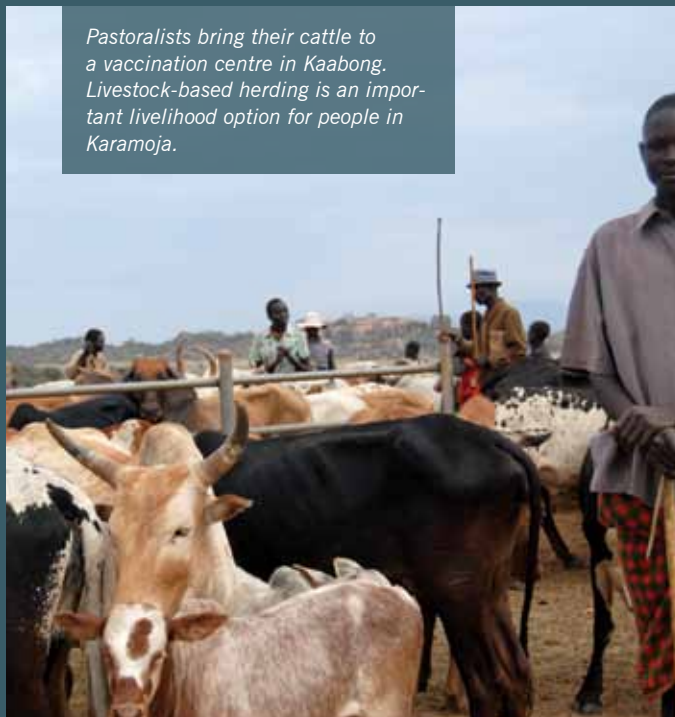
A number of suggestions to improve the livelihood of the people in Karamoja are given in the reports including supporting herders to gain a better share of the final retail value of their animals, rangeland management, conflict management and long-term Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and development support instead of repeated short term or protracted humanitarian relief. “Support could be given to complementary livelihoods, largely based on exploitation of the rangeland, which are compatible with existing ways of life”, the HEA report reads in part.

### **Overall recommendations**

1. Livestock-based livelihoods remain a significant economic mainstay of households in Karamoja.
2. Karamoja needs

Support to the settlement of agro-pastoral and pastoral households may be counterproductive, if the objective is to improve their food security.

*Pastoralists bring their cattle to a vaccination centre in Kaabong. Livestock-based herding is an important livelihood option for people in Karamoja.*



FAO/2011/R. NANDELENGA

long term DRR support and long term development support; those households who cannot cope need social protection systems, rather than protracted humanitarian relief.

This support should focus on providing animal health services, improving freedom of movement, supporting livestock marketing and supporting the complementary livelihood strategies which are already being pioneered by the local population.

3. A longer term economic transformation of Karamoja seems to require that land tenure, land access and land rights issues be adequately addressed.
4. Humanitarian and development actors need to ground the interventions they support in Karamoja in a coherent strategy, based on a thorough analysis of livelihoods – including the socio-cultural, political and legal aspects of livelihoods

### **Other complimentary studies**

- Climate Change and Adaptation Options in Karamoja
- Study on Disaster Risk Management and Environment for the Karamoja region
- Markets for Livestock and Food crops in the Karamoja sub region
- Opportunities for alternative livelihoods in Karamoja
- Social Management of Rangelands in Karamoja

# Four years after devastating floods, Teso communities back on their feet



*Farmers supported by FAO prepare to harvest sweet potatoe veins. Using funding from ECHO, FAO supported communities that were affected by floods in Teso with vegetative planting materials and seeds.*

**T**he Teso sub-region has fertile soils which provide great opportunities for farming. However, the region is also prone to environmental hazards like flooding and drought. In 2007, the region received one of its worst cases of floods and water logging. A history of instability caused by conflicts in the neighbouring Acholi region and raids from the Karamoja region had already left the people vulnerable to food insecurity. The floods led to acute crop failure and significant loss of harvests, affecting more than 300,000 people most of who are small scale farmers. The floodwaters displaced and isolated communities in Amuria, Katakwi, Kumi, Bukedea and Soroti.

Using funding from ECHO, FAO and carried out an assessment that revealed a looming food crisis. To help urgently restore food production capacity and contribute to the food security of the affected farming households, ECHO responded by contributing Euros 500,000.

The funds enabled FAO and implementing partners to immediately scout and source planting materials, especially cassava cuttings and sweet potato vines, for distribution and immediate planting in highland areas in November 2007 in order to help out bail out farmers in the first season of 2008. In addition, farmers were trained and provided with cereal and vegetable seeds.

Residents of Amolo village in Wera Sub County, Amuria district are among those who benefited from the assistance.

Grace Apolot is the chairperson of Ongoloria Farmer Field School (FFS); one of the groups

that received the assistance in Amolo village, in Amuria district. Like many people in her village, Apolot lost her groundnuts, cassava, millet and sorghum to the floods. Because she now lacked seeds from the first season and because floods we still continuing, she missed the planting of the second season and was facing an impending famine.

“I am happy because the assistance really lifted us from where we were,” Apolot said.

“We got cassava stems, green grams, cow peas, orange flesh potatoes and groundnuts seeds for planting,” Apolot said. “And the beneficiaries were equipped with skills in improved agricultural practices that enabled them to improve our lives even better than they were before,” she added.

David Abeku hopes that he can one day extend his six acre farm to a large plantation which he will be proud to pass on to his children. But his dreams were almost shattered by the floods that swept Amolo village in 2007. “It was heartbreaking to watch most of the harvest we had got perish because of the rains,” he said, “Crops like green grams simply rotted in the fields.”

But thanks to ECHO’s timely contribution, Mr. Abeku is fast on the track to achieving his plans again. “The training I received through Pole FFS was very important in helping me take my farming activities to the next level,” Abeku said. “We learnt weeding, row planting and spacing and this makes it easier to weed and water the garden,” he added. “Grafting is another important practice we learnt and now most of us have orchards. We don’t even go to the market to look for buyers anymore, traders





FAO/2009/R. NANDELENGA

# Cassava Revival

Cassava is a vital food and cash crop for small scale farmers across Uganda contributing significantly to their basic food requirements.

It is one of the most important root crops grown in the central, eastern and northern regions of the country. Because of its numerous advantages such as flexible harvest period due to long ground storage, ability to grow on poor soils and drought tolerance, it is also a principal foodstuff throughout Africa. It is estimated that each person on the continent eats around 80 kg of cassava per year.

However, years of the devastating Cassava Mosaic and now Cassava Brown Streak diseases have had devastating effects on cassava production, causing massive crop losses to farmers throughout the Great Lakes region and threatening the food security of many households.

FAO thus embarked on a campaign to boost the capacity of individual countries in the region and launched the *“Regional Cassava Initiative in support of vulnerable smallholders in Central and Eastern Africa”*, a project that was funded by the EC to a tune of Euros 3.3 million in 2009.

This is enabling the multiplication and distribution of virus-free planting material to 330,000 farmers in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. In Uganda, FAO in collaboration with NARO, District Local Governments and partners in Uganda are establishing 300 hectares of nuclei multiplication gardens with cassava varieties resistant to Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMB) and tolerant to Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD) for distribution to vulnerable smallholder farmers in northern Uganda. The project covers Kitgum, Lamwo, Gulu, Agago and Pader districts.

The objective of the project is to restore cassava yields by reinforcing the capacity of the most insecure subsistence farmers to prevent, mitigate, prepare for and respond to cassava related diseases and therefore contribute to protecting and improving the food security status of vulnerable subsistence farmers. The project has entered its second year of implementation in Uganda and is expected to run for three years.

come and book our oranges just before the harvest,” said Abeku.

In addition to the training and seeds, Pole FFS received four oxen and two ox ploughs which helped them expand the acreage they till. The oxen plough the group’s four acre garden first, and then do rounds in the group member’s individual gardens. They also have a grinding mill and cassava chipper which helps members add value to the produce and enables them to store large quantities away.

These communities in Teso sub region may not be in control of nature to prevent any future floods or hazards but they are in control of their livelihoods again, thanks to support from the EU.



A cassava garden. With funding from EU, FAO is multiplying 300 hectares of clean planting materials of cassava in northern Uganda

FAO/2009/M. MUGISHA



# Farmer groups in Lamwo district find new hope in cassava growing

Tiching Ber Farmer Field School has 26 members, 17 of whom are women and nine men. When the group started in 2005, its members were still living in the Internally Displaced People's Camps (IDPs) in Kitgum. "We were still receiving rations from World Food Program and although we were about to leave the camps for home, we had nothing to revive our livelihoods with," said Rwoch Leboga.

When they finally settled back in Kaliro village, they were provided with disease-free cassava cuttings. They now have five acres of improved MM4271, a disease resistant variety.

To avoid further spread of the disease, FAO provided training on disease identification and management practices.

Already members of the group can't wait to practice what they have learnt in their individual gardens.

"I plan to plant cassava just as we have done here in our group field because I have seen it thrive successfully," said Irene Adong a member of the group. "We will sell the tubers, make flour or make cassava chips out of them." "Hopefully, I will then be able to provide for my children all their school fees and medical fees," she added. The farmers were



*Cassava tuber. Farmers in Lamwo district have embraced cassava growing*

also taught farming as a business enterprise and started contributing to their Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) account in 2010.

One group that has already started to reap benefits from the cassava project is Rwot Omiyo Farmer Field School in Labong Amida Sub County, Kitgum district. The group sold cassava worth USD 300 and as their savings accumulate they hope to purchase oxen and ox ploughs- and maybe even a tractor in future to expand their acreage.



# Digital Pen technology eases data collection and processing on Cassava

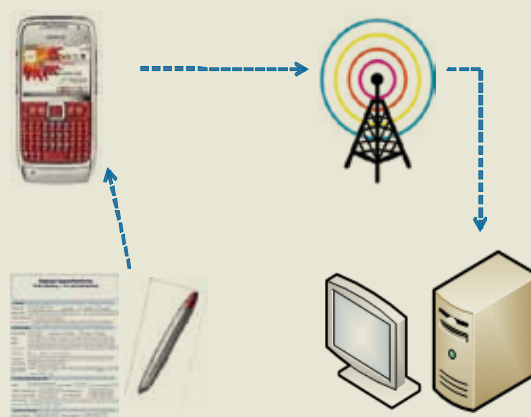
As part of an ongoing EC funded cassava multiplication project in Kitgum, Gulu, Pader, Lamwo and Agago districts, data is collected digitally using the an electronic pen to capture real time geospatial information on various parameters of the fields under cassava multiplication.

The electronic pen or digital pen is a type of hand-held technology which simplifies electronic data capture and automated processing. It therefore allows rapid collection, transmission and processing of data. It's convenient and ideal for use on site, where conditions are not always suitable for carrying bulky and fragile laptops. Data captured using the digital pen and paper is secure and fully traceable to that single page, making it ideal for sensitive data. Once a page has been completed one can also leave the hard copy with the client.

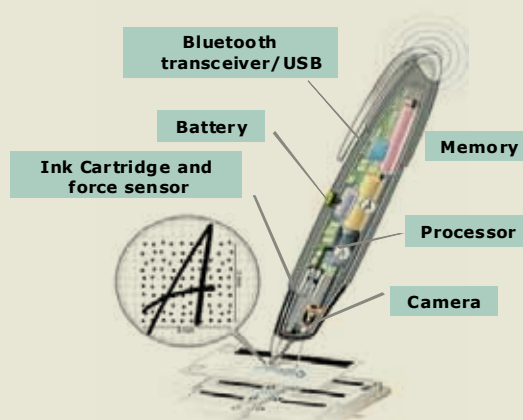
## How it works

Digital pens look and work just like an ordinary pen but capture handwriting and drawings from paper forms. The pen provides handheld data for up to 1.3 MB (approximately 20 A4 pages). The electronic data capture system provides the user with an exact image of the handwriting and data form and also translates the handwriting to text which can then be used back in the office. In case there is no network coverage, data in the cell phone can stay for up to six days with no loss.

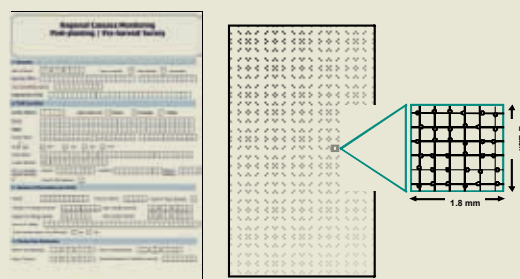
## How does it work?



## Digital Pen



## Printed Form



# EU Recovery Project boosts local economy in early phase of return



FAO/2011/A. MUHUMUZA

*Farmers sell fish and vegetables in a market. The EC funded project in northern Uganda enabled FAO to rebuild infrastructure to facilitate the return process.*

The Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Project ALREP(1) was conceived as a transitional project intended to bridge a period that was moving fairly rapidly from an emergency and relief mode to one of development.

With a budget of Euro 3.85 million provided by the European Commission FAO rolled out the project – one of the first ones to support rehabilitation, return and resettlement in northern Uganda in July 2007.

The intention of the project was that communities should determine their own needs, for example build their own roads, develop their drinking water sources, and plant and manage their own woodlots and, with the vouchers they would receive as payment for this, buy agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools, ox-ploughs and chemicals that they needed. The use of these inputs was anticipated to increase agricultural production and productivity.

Rather than hand-outs, the project was based on people engaging in paid work then deciding (within a limited range) how to spend their wages.

FAO collaborated with Uganda National Agroinputs Dealer's Association (UNADA) and Appropriate Technology(AT) to identify potential stockists, mentored and trained them on keeping basic business records.

Participants redeemed their vouchers at designated UNADA stockist shops or through seed and livestock fairs.

A private sector led input distribution system was kick-started and the capacity of traders and stockists to supply essential inputs was sustainably strengthened in the targeted sub counties in Gulu and Pader districts of northern Uganda. Twenty three stockists were operational at the sub county level during the period of the stockist-led input distribution system and two





distributors were established; one per district.

All the participants of the public works also benefited from agricultural extension services from AT Uganda. The rehabilitated infrastructure paved way for return of IDPs while at the same time stimulating agricultural production and market opportunities.

A total of 42,679 households participated in public works during the ALREP programmes and received inputs. USD 2.5 billion was injected in the economy of Northern Uganda through the vouchers issued to the stockists and through the voucher system. About 618 km of roads rehabilitation were completed and 449 km handed over to the local government; 84 acres of woodlots were established; five springs protected; three fishponds and three cattle crushes built and four markets rehabilitated.



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## Road construction facilitates return and resettlement in Northern Uganda

"After the war ended, we were reluctant to leave the camps because there were almost no roads on which we could transport our materials to rebuild our homes," said Rwot Bosco Kweri.

"We couldn't access schools, medical health services or even markets. Also the lack of proper roads raised security concerns because in case of problems or attacks there would be no way security personnel or soldiers could quickly get to us," he added.

There had been abduction at a neighbouring primary school in 2005 and since it was still all covered with shrub and bush it was easy for the rebels to get away with the children. The villagers were still reeling with the memories of such events when FAO introduced the European Union funded Voucher for Work programme under Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Project (ALREP 1) to help rebuild the infrastructure and get the communities back on their feet. Olanya was one of the first participants when the Voucher for Work programme was introduced in Ongako Sub County in Gulu district.

"They provided us with vouchers for the work we did and with these we could buy farm implements and seeds," he said. "I bought a sprayer and vegetable seeds in the first phase and these produced good yields enabling me take care of most of my family's medical and domestic bills. After working in the second phase of the project, I bought livestock: a cow, some goats and pigs. If it hadn't been for the voucher payments I would never have been able to afford these because I had just returned from the camp with nothing," he added.

Olanya couldn't wait to share his good fortune with his neighbors and soon became one of the project's main mobilizers at the community level. "Whereas before we were stuck with our goods and produce after the harvest, we can now access the market using the road we constructed," he said. The road makes it easier for the people in Ongako to connect to the nearby town of Atyak.

*A young girl crosses a rehabilitated road. A total of 614km of feeder roads have been rehabilitated in northern Uganda.*



FAO/2009/M. MUGISHA

# Fighting deforestation, enabling better learning at School and access to services

**U**nder EC funded rehabilitation project - ALREP 1, woodlots of up to three acres were planted in each Sub County in Gulu district. One of the main beneficiaries of the woodlot project was Abugga Primary School that planted two acres of woodlot adjacent to it.

Abugga Primary School is a firsthand witness to the harsh consequences of deforestation. The school's classroom blocks which had stood out vulnerable and exposed after the surrounding area had been cleared were destroyed by strong winds and sandstorms in the past. The woodlot has therefore acted as a demonstration project and villagers, including parents of the pupils of Abugga, have planted trees in their homes and in the community.

"They have learnt to protect their homesteads from the harsh retaliation of a bruised and battered environment," said Angelo Opoka, the headmaster of Abugga primary school. The woodlot is also helping the students to learn to be environmentally conscious and it is nurturing nature-friendly practices from an early age. In future, when the trees have finally matured and can provide timber and building materials, the

school will have an additional source of income.

During the day, the trees also provide shade for the students from the sun's fierce heat. As more people return from the camps and settle in the area, the school is increasingly threatened by encroachers and the woodlot marks is important in marking the school boundary.

Abugga primary school also benefited from the rehabilitation of the road in Ongako Sub County. The school had been previously cut off as students would have had to beat their way through the shrub and narrow paths to get to school. Now, the new road makes the school more accessible and this has seen an increase in student enrolment.

"The health centre can now easily be accessed by students at school who may be sick or in case of an emergency," said Opoka. "Visits from health officials to give awareness and specialized sessions and sensitization on vital issues like sexual health and HIV/AIDS are easier and more frequent as the school is now easily accessible," he says. "Various organizations and developmental agencies can also easily access the school and this has lead to better welfare and development of the whole area," Opoka added.



*The school is now protected with trees that were planted under the EC funded project*



*Some school buildings were destroyed by a storm before the project*

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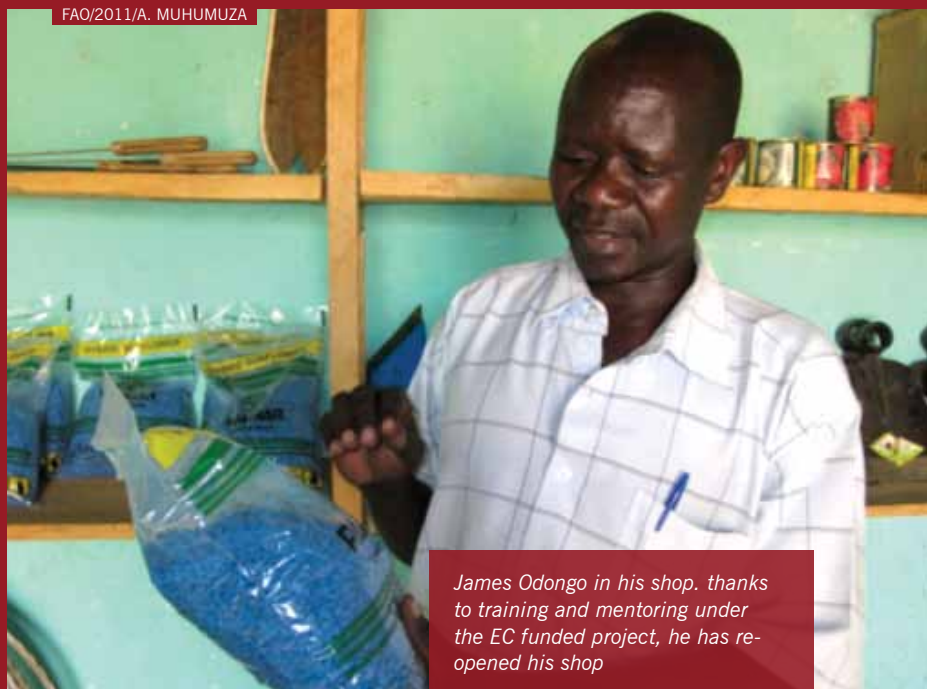


## Thanks to ALREP (1), I re-opened my shop, James Odongo

James Odongo participated in the European Commission funded Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Project (ALREP 1) from 2007 to 2010 as a stockist. He received vouchers that were issued to the farmers who worked on community projects during the “Voucher for Work” project and supplied them with agricultural implements and seeds. He sold more than 2600 hoes, 67 ox ploughs and 500 packs of tomato seeds throughout the course of the project.

Before the conflict in Northern Uganda, Odongo was a farmer and shop-keeper in Puranga, Pader district. When the war broke out, it disrupted his business and farming. His shop and garden were looted and the rebels broke into the granary and made off with his entire groundnut harvest.

When FAO started implementing the (ALREP 1), Odongo was one of the potential stockists who was identified, trained and mentored on basic business management. He reopened his



*James Odongo in his shop. thanks to training and mentoring under the EC funded project, he has re-opened his shop*

shop in Puranga and became one of the major distributors to the beneficiary farmers and he witnessed firsthand the impact of the project on his community.

“Through the project, the farmers were exposed to the benefits of improved seeds like hybrid maize which yields highly and drought resistant,” Odongo said.

“Even after the project had ended, the farmers continued coming back to buy seeds for replanting,” he added.

Odongo is in the process of stocking his shop in preparation for the coming rains which signal the planting season. Farmers are already starting to buy vegetable seeds so that they can simply transplant when the rains start.

## Women embrace business and investment

*Wawot Kimar Farmer Field School group*

Wawot Kimar Farmer Field School meets on Mondays and Fridays at 2:00pm, to plan for coming activities. In the last meeting, they discussed opening up land for the coming planting season and decided to cultivate a total of ten acres; four acres dedicated to maize, three to sunflower and three to soy beans. In this meeting, members also shared the benefits of the business training they received as part of a recently concluded EU funded project in Agago district.

### Christine Akidi

“I returned from the Internally Displaced People’s camp with nothing and didn’t know where to start,” said Christine Akidi. “The land which had been deserted for so long had become a mass of overgrown shrub and bush and didn’t seem cultivatable,” she added.

“When we came together in the FFS group, we were able



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to assist each other both physically, to clear the bush, and to share ideas to clear the complicated web of issues which had become our lives after the war.

After the agricultural and business training, I shared my ideas with other members and decided to start a food distribution business,” Akidi said.

She borrowed USD 25 and hired oxen to help plough her field open and hire hand labour to help her weed and maintain her garden. Akidi harvested four bags of soya beans from the three acre garden and sold two of the bags at shillings USD 50 paid back her loan and reinvested in her farm. “I kept one bag of soya to replant in the next season and the other to sell later,” Akidi said.

She kept investing in her business until she was able to buy grain in bulk during the harvest season, sell it in smaller portions later on, and supplies Patong Market. She also bought poultry and they started to multiply and she has 27 chicken and ducks.

“I have three children in primary school and being able buy for them the things they need and enjoy most gives me great pleasure,” she said. “I am still working hard so that in future I can build a brick house with corrugated iron sheets and also buy a motorcycle to help transport produce to the market easily,” Akidi added.

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## Margaret Auma

When Margaret Auma starts describing how she prepares food at her hotel, chuckles can be heard in the meeting room.

“Just thinking about how she prepares her food is enough to get us drooling,” one of the men in the group said, “She is the best in the village.” Auma opened a small restaurant in Patong market with initial capital of USD 25 that she borrowed from the grant FAO extended through the Farmer Field School group. She buys chicken from her FFS members to cook at the hotel.

From Patong market, she returns with onions which she for her eldest children to sell while she is away at the hotel.

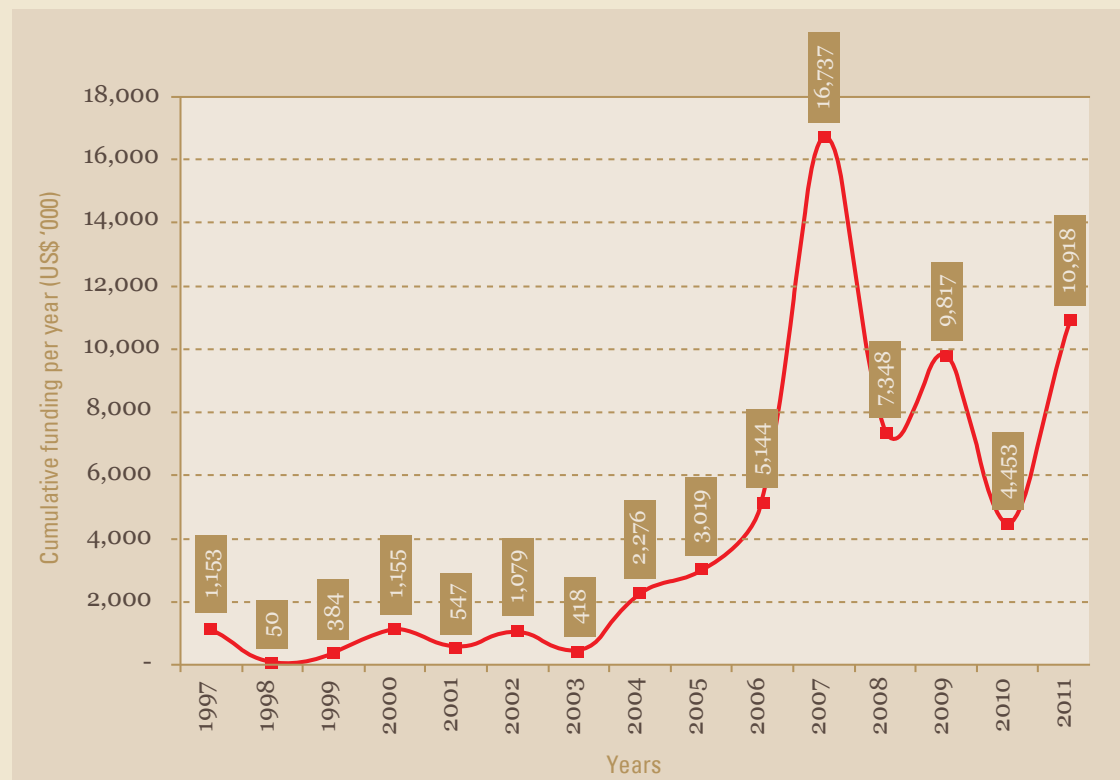
“My first born daughter is married, the second one is studying nursing in Gulu town and the third is in secondary school,” Auma said. “The rest are in primary school and I am determined to see all of them successfully complete school,” she added. Auma has gone a long way in reconstructing her life since she returned from the IDP camp in 2008 with her eight children. Like most of other ladies at the

meeting, Auma couldn’t see how she could start rebuilding her life as she had no training and no resources when she returned from the camp. The training, the loan and the agricultural inputs distributed with funding from the EU was invaluable to her.

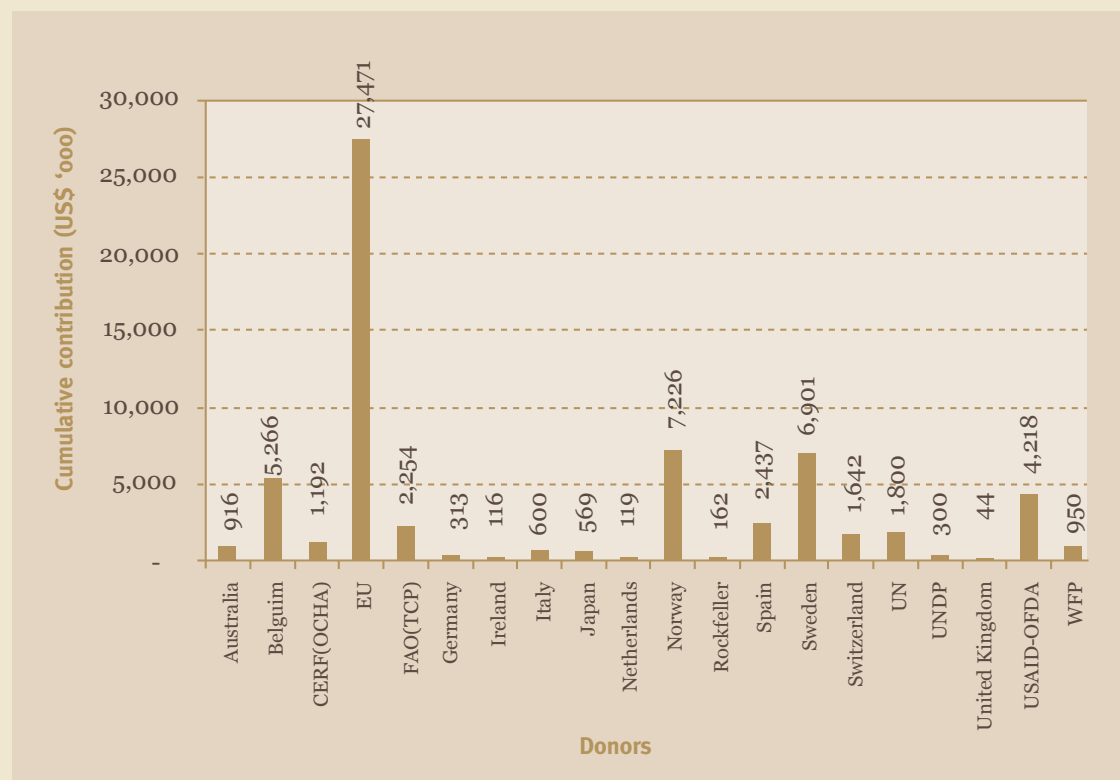
“I got a loan of USD 10 and bought three boxes of tomatoes which I sold for USD 16. I kept reinvesting the money that would come from the sale of each batch of tomatoes and boosted my business until I made profits of up to USD 60” said Auma.



## Cumulative funding for FAO activities in northern Uganda and Karamoja (2007 to 2011)



## Total contribution by different donors (2007 to 2011) to FAO's Emergency Rehabilitation and coordination programmes in Uganda





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**A publication of the Food  
and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations (FAO)  
Representation in Uganda**

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