

BACKGROUND

In Uganda, over twenty years of conflict have eroded the country's socio-economic position and resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. The signing of a ceasefire agreement in August 2006 between the Government and the Lord's Resistance Army strengthened prospects for peace in Uganda. Continued improvement in the security situation throughout 2006 encouraged the return of an estimated 200 000 IDPs to their homes and renewed the hope of the 1.4 million IDPs who remain in camps.

Despite these positive changes, however, the search for long-lasting solutions is ongoing. Overcrowding in camps, human rights violations, inadequate provision of basic social services and frequent outbreaks of epidemics have heightened the vulnerability of IDP households. As a result, simultaneous emergency and recovery assistance are needed for both those remaining in the camps and those returning to their homes.

CHALLENGES FACING FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Food insecurity in northern Uganda is primarily the result of limited access to land for IDP and refugee households, low productivity of land, poor market infrastructure, civil conflict and recurring droughts. Access to markets for sale of produce varies according to the location, as does the availability of income generating opportunities. Continued provision of food aid at 50 percent of the standard food ration, coupled with widespread food crop seed distributions, have undoubtedly been major factors explaining the continued low rates of malnutrition in most of the camps in 2006. As the security situation continues to improve, greater numbers of individuals are expected to commute between the camp and their home areas, accessing more land and increasing cultivation.

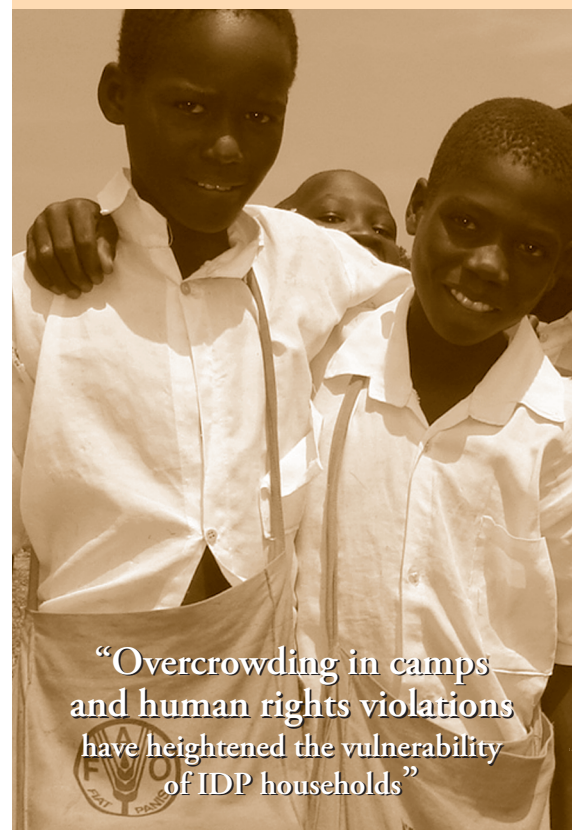
Returning populations will need support to re-establish production and farming systems. Most of the immediate technical and economic constraints to agricultural and livestock productivity and marketing are the same, including shortage of planting materials and seeds, shortage of livestock, poor market infrastructure, weak or absent extension support and the threat of cassava virus. A recent FAO mission to northern Uganda confirmed the lack of basic statistics on key variables such as crop production and prices. The report found that agricultural planning and programming are seriously constrained by lack of reliable agricultural statistics.

The improved security can also be expected to have a positive effect on opportunities for market access and diversification of income sources. However, there will continue to be households in camps which are unable or unwilling to move to home areas and this group will require targeted food assistance and agricultural interventions in 2007.

KEY FACTS

- Population: 28.2 million
- GDP (PPP) per capita: US\$1 800
- Population below poverty line: 35%
- Labour force by occupation: agriculture 82%, industry 5%, services 13%
- Total land area: 236 040 sq km, bordering Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, the Sudan, and Tanzania
- Total arable land: 21.6%
- Life expectancy: male: 52 years, female: 54 years
- Literacy rate: male: 79.5% , female: 60.4%
- Human Development Index: 144/177

(Source: UN; World Bank)



FAO IN UGANDA

FAO expanded its activities in Uganda in 2006, reaching over 500 000 beneficiaries, including IDPs and HIV/AIDS-affected households. Support was provided to diversify income and livelihoods. Activities included training together with the distribution of seedlings, food processing equipment, and livestock. A land access study using satellite imagery was also completed.

FAO RESPONSE

FAO's activities in 2007 for returning IDPs will focus on enabling these households to resume agricultural activities through the distribution of seeds and tools. In addition, FAO will seek to provide appropriate equipment and training to improve post-harvest processing and storage, thus ensuring an increase in the availability of key produce for sale and consumption. Project proposals include training in animal traction to enable more land for agricultural production. The distribution of small ruminants to returnee households and beneficiaries together with training in animal husbandry, livestock disease control and nutritional requirements, is also planned.

FAO's support to the IDPs remaining in the camps in 2007 will focus on seed provision through a seed vouchers-for-work scheme, the creation of farmer field schools in IDP camps to ensure knowledge transfer and the introduction of new agricultural practices and fish production activities. In Karamoja, the poorest region in Uganda and subject to recurrent drought and endemic insecurity, FAO will focus on developing an emergency livestock fund and providing seeds to drought-affected households.

FAO continues its food security coordination work in partnership with WFP and local governmental institutions. A comprehensive food security strategy developed by FAO and WFP will be released at the end of 2006. The FAO will also work with partners in establishing a periodic and systematic agricultural data generating mechanism in order to strengthen the coordination of food security actors and interventions in emergency and recovery situations through a better informed response.

PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE

Funding required: US\$15 325 000

Provide the capacity to farmers to make rational crop management decisions through the creation of 20 farmer field schools for IDPs

Objectives: To combine the supply of agricultural inputs with the transfer of agricultural knowledge between farmers and to children in order to introduce new improved agricultural practices and labour-saving technology.

Activities: FAO will establish FFS in order to build the capacity of IDPs to acquire improved production skills, diversify their production system and increase sources of income. In order to support the training activities, FAO will provide agricultural packages, composed of selected seeds and tools or labour saving technology inputs, to IDP members of farmer groups with access to land. This will enable them to implement the acquired knowledge and increase their food production. The inputs will vary according to the activities selected by the FFS group members.

Beneficiaries: 4 000 farmers (100 farmer groups) and 7 000 pupils (10 secondary schools) from IDP camps in Gulu, Kitgum, Amuria, Kaberamaido and Katakwi districts.

Implementing partners: Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (MAAIF), NGOs, UN agencies, district/local authorities.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$405 000.

Establishment of income generating activities for the IDPs through fish production

Objectives: To increase animal protein intake and diversify cash income sources through fish production for at least 90 continuing IDP groups.

Activities: FAO will support the establishment of 90 community-owned fish and breeder ponds by providing improved fish fry, feeds (cereals and cotton seed cakes), harvesting material (nets and harpers) and digging equipment (pick axes, shovels and wheelbarrows), along with comprehensive training and sensitization programs regarding the management of fisheries production. Prior to the establishment of the ponds, a rigorous training and sensitisation programme will be conducted for the selected beneficiaries who envisage remaining in the camps in the future.

Beneficiaries: 4 000 IDPs (women and child-headed households, handicapped, elderly and people living with HIV/AIDS) in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Apac, Amuria, Soroti, Kaberamaido and Katakwi districts.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, NGOs, district/local authorities and the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS).

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$608 000.

Post-harvest activities: storage and processing of agricultural products for IDPs

Objectives: To reduce storage losses and increase added-value of marketable agricultural products to increase food security.

Activities: Provision key inputs, including packing materials for crop storage; low-tech, low-cost processing machines; Neem seedlings and Lorena stoves. In addition, sensitization activities will be conducted on the advantages of improved storage facilities and their construction, using locally available materials, and on use of Neem as an insecticide.

Beneficiaries: 15 000 IDPs in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Apac, Amuria, Soroti, Kaberamaido and Katakwi districts.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, Natural Resources Institute (NRI) UK, NGOs, district/local authorities and NAADS.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$1 275 000.

Improving seed availability and infrastructure for IDPs through private sector enhancing seed voucher schemes

Objectives: To revive seed systems and improve local infrastructure through a ‘seed voucher-for-work’ scheme.

Activities: Develop a voucher system with local retailers and seed distributors; mobilize IDPs; organize programmes of work and develop monitoring and evaluation systems. The project will support a vouchers-for-work scheme to increase the purchasing power of beneficiaries, while giving them access to improved agriculture inputs of their choice. The vouchers will be redeemable at local retail outlets thus stimulating the private sector and seed suppliers. The nature of the work will be decided by the IDPs, but should ideally focus on community development and environmental conservation.

Beneficiaries: 4 000 IDPs and seed suppliers in Gulu, Apac and Pader districts.

Implementing partners: Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), OPM, MAAIF, NGOs, UN agencies, district/local authorities.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$468 000.

Distribution of starter kits to returnees in Acholi and Lango regions

Objectives: To enable returnee households to cover their food needs from crop production and generate some cash income.

Activities: Provide an agricultural package, composed of selected seeds and tools, to those IDPs returning voluntarily to their places of origin. The package composition will vary according to agroclimatic areas and the food preferences of the population and will include seeds for two seasons. It will include short- and medium-cycle crops, which will enable returning IDP households to ensure their food production and cover part of their cash expenditures. In addition to the traditional staple and marketable cereal, pulses, oil and vegetable seeds provided in 2006, the project will offer new choices of high-value crops, such as upland rice and vegetative planting material, including locally promoted mosaic resistant cassava and highly nutritious sweet potato varieties.

Beneficiaries: 94 000 returnees in Lira, Apac, Pader, Amuria, Katakwi (Gulu and Kitgum) districts.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, UN agencies, NGOs, district/local authorities, NAADS and the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO).

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$5 390 000.

Support agricultural production and income generation for returning families through provision of livestock and animal traction

Objectives: To enable 9 500 returning families to unlock the potential of fallow land and to support 14 000 returnee households to build-up the household asset base.

Activities: Promote and train farmers in the use of animal traction to enable them to open larger areas for agricultural production and supply all inputs related to animal draught power.

Beneficiaries: 23 500 returnee households (women and child-headed households, handicapped, elderly and people living with HIV/AIDS) in Lira, Apac, Pader, Amuria, Katakwi (Gulu and Kitgum) districts.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, NGOs, district/local authorities and NAADS.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$3 035 000.

Agriculture, environmental and energy saving support to refugees – Joint project with FAO and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Objectives: To increase food and cash production by refugees with sufficient access to land, while protecting the natural environment in and around camps.

Activities: Provision of key inputs, including seed packages tailored to the agro-ecological and land access environment; small ruminants and energy efficient stoves. In addition, training in the use of the stoves will be provided. The project will engage with WFP on food-for-work environmental programmes, such as gully reclamation, vetiver grass and tree planting, and will broker negotiations between refugees and host communities on the joint management of resources.

Beneficiaries: 25 000 refugees/refugee hosting households in all districts of the West Nile region.

Implementing partners: UNHCR, OPM, MAAIF, NGOs, GTZ, district/local authorities, NARO and NAADS.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$975 000.

Emergency seed support to drought affected households in Karamoja

Objectives: To enable drought-affected households to produce their own food from June to December 2007, thus removing the need for food aid support after June 2007.

Activities: Distribution of seed kits to 40 000 households in the Karamoja region, with the kits varying according to the agro-ecology of the area concerned, and monitoring and evaluating the impact of the distribution by implementing partners.

Beneficiaries: 40 000 drought-affected households in Moroto, Kotido, Kabong and Abim districts.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, WFP, UNICEF, NGOs, district/local authorities.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$1 565 000.

Enhancing rapid livestock emergency response in Karamoja

Objectives: To contribute to decreasing the effect of external shocks to pastoralist livelihood systems in Karamoja, through strengthening the capacity to rapidly respond to livestock emergencies in a timely and appropriate manner.

Activities: Detailed participatory assessments. It is widely agreed that a lack of rapidly deployable resources is the primary factor preventing a timely response. A major component of the project will, therefore, establish a locally available livestock contingency fund to ensure a capacity for timely, appropriate and adequate response aimed at mitigating the impact of the country's recurrent livestock-related crises. In order to harmonize the approach to livestock emergency interventions, the project will establish guidelines for livestock emergency interventions and preparedness plans to enhance speed of collection of livestock data from the field, a pilot project will be initiated to test the digital pen technology (developed by FAO in southern Africa).

Beneficiaries: Pastoralists in the arid zones of Karamoja (all districts).

Implementing partners: OXFAM, Veterinaires sans frontieres (VSF) Europa.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$660 000.

Support to comprehensive emergency food security coordination and promote monitoring and evaluation of interventions

Objectives: To strengthen the coordination of food security actors and interventions in emergency and recovery situations.

Activities: Develop a comprehensive joint food security assessment tool with WFP; strengthen Food Security Committees at district and, eventually, regional levels; design agricultural census for Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions with MAAIF; implement common standards for monitoring and evaluation of agricultural rehabilitation projects; apply the IPC in Uganda; and maintain and improve regular coordination meetings and mechanisms, including dissemination of updated Dynamic Atlas and satellite imagery products, food security bulletins and food security group meetings at Kampala and district levels.

Beneficiaries: IDP, returnee, refugee populations and drought-affected households, humanitarian actors, governmental institutions and donors.

Implementing partners: OPM, MAAIF, UN agencies, NGOs and district/local authorities.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$424 000.

Support to the establishment of demonstration gardens, tree nurseries and wood lots in schools (joint project with WFP and FAO)

Objectives: To establish one acre school demonstration gardens and woodlots in 270 primary schools in Acholi and Lango sub-regions.

Activities: Support the environmental sustainability of school-based activities through wood lot creation, support the primary agriculture curriculum through establishing school demonstration gardens and support the capacity development of school structures, including School Management Committees (SMCs), PTAs and head teachers, to effectively manage the school projects.

Beneficiaries: 300 000 children (girls and boys) in the conflict and post-conflict affected districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Lira.

Implementing partners: Ministry of Education and Sports, Straight Talk Foundation, local government, SMCs.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$1 023 000 (WFP: US\$503 000; FAO: US\$520 000).