

# NORTHERN UGANDA

## UNICEF HUMANITARIAN SITUATION REPORT – JULY 2005

Armed conflict between the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), particularly since the resumption of major hostilities in 2002, has perpetuated a severe humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda, marked by blatant violations of human rights – including the rights of children and women to basic health services, water, primary education and physical security.

In the past three years, the number of vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the conflict-affected districts (Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira, Apac, Soroti, Katakwi and Kaberamaido) is estimated to have risen from 550,000 to 1.4 million due to insecurity and fear. 80 percent are children and women.

Out of an estimated 25,000 children abducted by the LRA since the conflict began, approximately 7,500 are girls with approximately 1,000 having conceived children during captivity. Each night, an estimated 40,000 children (and some adults) in Gulu, Kitgum and Kalongo towns abandon their homes for the relative safety offered by urban centres and centres of the larger IDP camps, in a striking community response to insecurity and in particular to the abduction of children by the LRA. The average journey for the "night commuters" is about 3kms, but some children are commuting – mostly on foot – up to 8kms each way.

### RESPONSE & IMPACT

UNICEF's accelerated humanitarian response is conducted in collaboration with the Government of Uganda, sister UN agencies, non-governmental and community-based organisations. The following highlights key activities implemented during the reporting period:

#### RIGHT TO HEALTH

- Immunized approx. 1,145 children under age-5 and 583 pregnant mothers; de-wormed 1,026 children under age-5; provided Vitamin A to approx. 1,474 children (6 months-6 years) in 9 IDP camps (*Apac District, with CESVI*)
- Provided 120 cartons of F100 therapeutic milk and oral rehydration salts to assist approx. 130 severely malnourished children admitted at 2 Therapeutic Feeding Centres (TFCs) in Kitgum and Pader (*Kitgum District, with St. Joseph's Hospital and IMC*)
- Provided F100 (20 cartons) and F75 (10 cartons) therapeutic milk to assist 23 severely malnourished children (9 girls) admitted at TFC (*Soroti District, with Soroti Hospital*)
- Provided F100 (114 cartons) and F70 (19 cartons) therapeutic, and BP5 biscuits (8 cartons) to assist 568 severely malnourished children in TFCs (*Lira District, with Lira Hospital, MSF and PAG*)
- Distributed mosquito nets to 3,000 pregnant mothers and mothers with children under age-5 in 17 IDP camps (*Lira District, with UPHOLD*)
- Distributed chloroquine (453 tins), fansider (141 tins) and homapaks (32,000) to community-based health volunteers in 16 IDP camps (*Lira District, with CCF*)
- Supported HIV/AIDS Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) services for 115 displaced people (46% women) and sensitization sessions on HIV/AIDS for 240 people (*Apac District, with CESVI*)
- Supported home-visits to 29 people living with HIV/AIDS, to provide counseling service and emergency shelter and household items (*Pader District, with CARITAS*)
- Supported "health talk" session on HIV/AIDS for 210 pupils, in primary 5 to 7, of Otwal temporary learning centre (*Apac District, with CESVI*)

*Squalid conditions in the IDP camps have led to cholera outbreaks in Gulu including in Pabbo, Jengari, Parabongo and Atiak camps. Global and Severe Acute Malnutrition rates for under-5 children in the conflict-affected districts are estimated to range between 2-6 percent and 0.5-3 percent, respectively. Therapeutic Feeding Centres are reporting a general improvement in cure rates of 76-84 percent. HIV prevalence rates in the northern sub-regions are estimated to range between 4-10 percent for women and 4-8 percent for men, with women aged 20-49 (7-12 percent) being the worst affected.*

*UNICEF equips more than 2,300 community-based health volunteers (in 70 percent of IDP camps) with first-response medicines to treat up to 300,000 children for fever, malaria, respiratory infections, diarrhoea*

and other diseases. UNICEF supplies therapeutic milk to 11 Therapeutic Feeding Centres in the conflict-affected districts, and supports the twice-year “Child Days” to provide Vitamin A, de-worming programmes and catch-up immunizations for under-5 children in the IDP camps. Priority actions in 2005 include immunization and treatment of under-5 children, provision of adequate nutritional care, the prevention of malaria in newborns through targeted distribution of insecticide-treated nets and the development of cholera response plans for the conflict-affected districts.

### **RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

- Provided 386 desks to temporary learning centres in 4 IDP camps to benefit approximately 2,000 children (*Pader District, with CARITAS*)
- Provided 36 tarpaulin units as roofing material to 2 displaced schools, being converted into temporary learning centres by local communities, to benefit approx. 590 children (260 girls) (*Gulu District*)
- Provided construction materials to complete 8 Early Childhood Development sites in Awer IDP camp to benefit approx. 2,000 young children (*Gulu District*)

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.

UNICEF-supported education interventions aim to increase access to quality education for all children, in accordance with international humanitarian principles and the national IDP policy. Priority actions in 2005 include supporting the construction/equipment of 40 temporary learning centres and 200 ECD sites in relatively secure IDP camps, the development of catch-up education programmes for out-of-school children and the training of teachers in psychosocial support skills.

### **RIGHT TO WATER & SANITATION**

- Provided 10 mobile latrine units to Puranga IDP camp for use by approx. 300 people (*Pader District, with CARITAS*)
- Provided supplies for construction of motorised pump systems to provide safe water to approx. 46,000 people in 3 IDP camps (*Katakwi District, with Concern World Wide*)
- Provided supplies for repair of 44 hand-pumps to communities of IDP returns to provide safe water to approx. 13,000 people (*Soroti District*)
- Supported installation of 10 mobile latrine units in Ngetta Boys School (co-educational) for use by 1,300 children (630 girls) (*Lira District*)
- Mobilised approximately 5,600 pupils on hygiene and sanitation issues, using videos, posters and group discussions, in temporary learning centres in 11 IDP camps (*Apac District, with CESVI*)



A child pumps water from a borehole, installed with UNICEF assistance, inside Bobi IDP camp, Gulu District

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. Priority actions in 2005 include construction of

200 five-stance latrines, 25 water systems, repair of 120 boreholes and drilling of 20 boreholes to enable the provision of 15litres of water per person per day. The construction of 5 motorised pumps, with UNICEF assistance, has benefited approximately 50,000 displaced people.

### RIGHT TO PROTECTION

- Facilitated reception/registration of 16 formerly abducted children (10 girls) from UPDF child protection units to civilian-operated reception centres (*Kitgum District*)
- Supported family-tracing and reunification of 14 formerly abducted children (8 girls) with families living in IDP camps (*Kitgum District, with KICWA and CPA*)
- Facilitated reunification of 15 formerly abducted children (9 girls) from Gulu, Kitgum and Kalongo towns with their families (*Pader District*)
- Supported follow-up of 204 formerly abducted children (76 girls) recently reunified with families in 9 IDP camps (*Pader District, with CCF and CARITAS*)
- Supported training of 159 teachers from 53 schools to acquire skills in managing psychosocial issues affecting children (*Lira District*)



A displaced child inside the Palenga IDP camp, Gulu

Assessments in Gulu indicate that as many as 25 percent of child “night commuters” are leaving their homes nightly due to family issues, rather than the specific fear of LRA abduction. High-risk coping mechanisms to secure livelihoods and personal security remain common, including transactional sex. There have been reports that hundreds of boys have been voluntarily recruited into the ranks of the Local Defense Unit (LDU) militia which operate under the UPDF. A recent evaluation at the Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO) reception centre for formerly abducted children (FAC) found that only 30 percent of the children passing through the centre have received comprehensive follow-up and monitoring, in addition to the basic healthcare and psychosocial counseling services available.

In supporting the reunification and reintegration of formerly abducted children, UNICEF aims to strengthen the community-level response to ensure that the children undertake the process in safety and dignity. Such a response must also reflect the unique challenges in the reintegration of formerly abducted girls, and strive to prevent them from adapting negative coping strategies (including transactional sex and underage military service). Priority actions in 2005 include identifying and responding to those most vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse, particularly children in the IDP camps; interventions to improve the situation of the vulnerable (eg., family tracing and reunification, livelihood support, basic skills training, community-based protection committees) and build the capacity of service providers (eg., training police and medical staff to respond to gender-based violence, training military officers on their protection responsibilities); supporting reception centers to provide interim shelter, psychosocial support and family reunification for formerly abducted children; and supporting the safety of “night commuters,” addressing the factors that push or pull children into “night commuting” and enhancing safety measures as they move.

### RIGHT TO SHELTER

- Provided approx. 1,000 tarpaulin units for use as temporary roofing by households affected by storms in Pabbo IDP camp (*Gulu District, with NRC*)
- Provided emergency shelter and household items (including blankets, mattresses, clothes, cooking utensils) to 342 child-headed households in 14 IDP camps (*Lira District, with TPO/CCO*)
- Provided emergency shelter and household items to benefit 1,044 households in 2 IDP camps (*Apac District, with COOPI*)
- Provided emergency shelter and household items to reception centre to benefit approximately 190 formerly abducted children (*Pader District, with CCF*)

*A March 2005 interagency assessment in Lira found that while a substantial portion of displaced households had sufficient emergency shelter and household items (non-food items or NFI) for basic needs, the extremely vulnerable families – approximately 20 percent of the IDP population, or some 14,000 households – did not have enough. Kitgum, Pader and Lira have witnessed some unplanned movements of families out of the municipal camps to those in the districts where UPDF units are present, and while this may have led to increased access to family land for some IDPs, risks such as fires, epidemics and violence against IDPs outside the camps remain. The limited availability of fuel and construction materials is a principle cause of IDPs taking risks in venturing away from main camp locations.*

*Level of demand for emergency shelter and household items is expected to rise in relation to voluntary relocations by displaced families to areas closer to their communities of origin. Spontaneous IDP returns are already occurring in some areas – notably in the eastern districts – and are likely to progress depending on political and security developments. Priority actions in 2005 include the provision of shelter and household items to displaced households, “night commuters,” formerly abducted children and Therapeutic Feeding Centres.*

### **ACCESS & CAPACITY**

UNICEF operates Zonal Offices in Gulu, Kitgum and Lira; the Pader Zonal Office is scheduled to open during the second half of 2005 (UNICEF staff are currently based in the district, using borrowed local government offices). UNICEF has deployed 1 armour-plated vehicle each in the Gulu and Kitgum Districts for use by all humanitarian agencies staff in improving access to displaced populations.

### **INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION**

UNICEF currently implements project agreements with more than 30 NGOs and CBOs (community-based organizations). UNICEF is grateful for the collaboration of District Local Governments, UN sister agencies and the following implementing partners: African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF), Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI), Caritas, Charity for Peace, Christian Children’s Fund (CCF), Concerned Parents Association (CPA), Cooperazione e Sviluppo Onlus (CESVI), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO), Human Rights Focus (HURIFO), Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo (ITEK), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Kalongo Hospital, Kitgum Concerned Women’s Association (KICWA), Lacor Hospital Gulu, Medair, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Mother’s Union, Noah’s Ark, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Rachele Centre, The Salvation Army, Save the Children in Uganda, St. Joseph’s Hospital Kitgum, Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO), The Kids League (TKL), Warchild Holland and World Vision.

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**“The fact that children are the main targets of this war is unconscionable.”**

UNICEF Executive Director, Ann M. Veneman, speaking in Gulu, 23 July

*[Left]* Executive Director Veneman visits with toddlers who are the children of girls or young women, formerly abducted by the LRA, at the UNICEF-assisted GUSCO reception centre.

Ms. Veneman was visiting northern Uganda, 22-23 July, to review relief efforts and initiatives on behalf of vulnerable children and women.

## CONTRIBUTIONS MADE IN 2005<sup>1</sup>

PROGRAMME & ACTIVITY	DONOR	FUNDS RECEIVED	APPEAL TOTAL	SHORTFALL	% FUNDED
<b>Right to Health &amp; Nutrition</b>					
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2004	Finland, Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	692,000			
Vaccination in 8 Districts Affected by Armed Conflict	French Committee for UNICEF	262,792			
Support to Emergency Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	1,007,400			
Support to Humanitarian Aid Activities 2005	Netherlands	260,000			
Priority Humanitarian Response 2005	United Kingdom	250,000			
Nutrition Response to Emergency	USAID/OFDA	92,274			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>2,564,466</b>	<b>8,484,999</b>	<b>5,920,533</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>HIV/AIDS &amp; Rights to Self Protection</b>					
Support to Emergency Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	366,900			
Support to Humanitarian Aid Activities 2005	Netherlands	240,000			
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals 2004	Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	685,000			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1,291,900</b>	<b>5,173,454</b>	<b>3,881,554</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Child Friendly Basic Education and Learning</b>					
UNICEF Relief Operations in Uganda	Finland	150,000			
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2004	Finland, Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	1,000,000			
Support to Emergency Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	2,118,400			
Support to Humanitarian Aid Activities 2005	Netherlands	200,000			
Priority Humanitarian Response 2005	United Kingdom	150,000			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>3,618,400</b>	<b>8,279,375</b>	<b>4,660,975</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>School &amp; Community Water &amp; Environmental Sanitation</b>					
Emergency School & Community Water Supply, Sanitation & Hygiene for IDPs in Camps	Belgium	588,373			
Emergency Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	2,305,600			
Support to Emergency Water & Sanitation	Japan	18,938			
Support to Humanitarian Aid Activities 2005	Netherlands	360,000			
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2004	Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	536,300			
Priority Humanitarian Response 2005	United Kingdom	240,000			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4,049,211</b>	<b>9,352,273</b>	<b>5,303,062</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Rights of Children in Armed Conflict</b>					
Prevention & Response Mechanisms for Survivors of Sexual Violence and Protection of Night Commuters	Canada	321,191			
Protection of Vulnerable IDP Children in Northern Uganda	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office	489,028			
UNICEF Relief Operations in Uganda	Finland	120,000			

<sup>1</sup> In USD, as at end-July 2005

PROGRAMME & ACTIVITY	DONOR	FUNDS RECEIVED	APPEAL TOTAL	SHORTFALL	% FUNDED
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in Support of Activities in Northern Uganda	France	110,000			
Contribution for child protection activities in Uganda – Kitgum, Pader & Gulu districts.	German Committee for UNICEF	209,983			
Emergency Assistance Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	2,306,420			
Reduction of Adolescent Vulnerability in Conflict-Affected Areas: Skills Training & Catch-up Education in Uganda	Netherlands	1,185,584			
Support to Humanitarian Activities in Northern Uganda	Netherlands	445,791			
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2004	Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	803,303			
Demobilisation & Reintegration of Child Soldiers in Northern Uganda	South Africa	9,825			
Priority Humanitarian Response 2005	United Kingdom	400,000			
ARCWNU-Child Protection Officer	United Kingdom	201,956			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6,603,081</b>	<b>7,790,680</b>	<b>1,187,599</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Cross Sectoral &amp; Operations</b>					
Emergency School & Community Water Supply, Sanitation & Hygiene for IDPs in Camps	Belgium	59,221			
Reinforcing Prevention & Response Mechanisms for Survivors of Sexual Violence and Protection of Night Commuters	Canada	36,486			
Protection of Vulnerable IDP Children in Northern Uganda	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office	54,336			
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in Support of Activities in Northern Uganda	Finland	28,706			
Humanitarian Support to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2004	Finland, Norway, Sweden, US Fund for UNICEF	342,031			
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in Support of Activities in Northern Uganda	France	12,238			
Vaccination in 8 Districts Affected by Armed Conflict	French Committee for UNICEF	29,199			
Contribution for child protection activities in Uganda – Kitgum, Pader & Gulu districts.	German Committee for UNICEF	20,000			
Support to Emergency Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Northern Uganda	Japan	484,824			
Support to Humanitarian Aid Activities 2005	Netherlands	167,310			
Priority Humanitarian Response 2005	United Kingdom	120,000			
Nutrition Response to Emergency	USAID/OFDA	10,000			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1,364,351</b>	<b>1,328,000</b>	<b>-36,351</b>	<b>102%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>19,491,415</b>	<b>40,408,781</b>	<b>20,917,366</b>	<b>48%</b>

