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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

UGANDA – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2006

April 26, 2006

Note: The last situation report was dated October 14, 2005.

BACKGROUND

Since 1986, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, has waged an insurgency in northern Uganda, using camps in southern Sudan as a base for attacks on civilians and government forces. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), LRA attacks and Government of Uganda (GOU) counter-insurgency measures have resulted in the displacement of nearly 95 percent of the ethnic Acholi population in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts. LRA tactics against civilians include murder, looting, burning houses, torture, mutilation, and abduction of children for the purposes of forced conscription, labor, and sexual servitude. GOU counter-insurgency measures have led to the relocation of rural communities and limitations on freedom of movement. In 2002, improved relations with the Government of Sudan (GOS) led the GOU to launch Operation Iron Fist, sending Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) to destroy LRA base camps in southern Sudan. Escalating civil conflict and violence, combined with looting and cattle raids by Karamojong pastoralists in eastern Uganda, have resulted in a humanitarian crisis spanning two decades. The GOU has yet to declare a state of emergency in northern and eastern Uganda, limiting the ability of district governments to provide support to the affected population.

The U.S. Government (USG) estimates the conflict has displaced 1.5 million Ugandans, 80 percent of whom are women and children. The internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in more than 200 camps without adequate food, protection, water, sanitation facilities, and health care. Conflict continues to threaten food security, even in normally productive agricultural areas. Continued insecurity also hinders the ability of relief workers to provide humanitarian assistance and deliver relief supplies. The U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimates that the LRA has abducted 25,000 children since the conflict began, with nearly 12,000 abducted since 2002. Nearly 20,000 Acholi children remain night commuters, traveling each evening from vulnerable rural communities to spend the night in the perceived safety of urban centers.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
IDPs	1.5 million	USG, April 2006
Night Commuters	19,200	UNICEF, April 2006
Abducted Children	25,000 ¹	UNICEF, October 2005
Refugees in Uganda	269,000	UNHCR ² , December 2005
Ugandan Refugees	7,700	UNHCR, December 2005

Total FY 2006 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Uganda	\$1,699,430
Total FY 2006 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Uganda.....	\$37,215,630
Total FY 2005 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Uganda	\$11,841,219
Total FY 2005 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Uganda.....	\$67,367,954

CURRENT SITUATION

Increased restrictions on relief agencies. On April 7, the Ugandan Parliament passed legislation imposing tighter licensing and permit rules on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), raising concerns among international relief organizations that GOU officials are seeking to curb some agencies’ information collection and advocacy efforts on behalf of IDPs in northern Uganda. While passage of this legislation is worrisome, how the law is ultimately implemented will be key. Access to displaced populations for purposes of assessing needs, documentation and analysis of protection problems, design and implementation of assistance programs, and evaluation of projects is

essential to saving lives in northern Uganda. The USG continues to work to foster dialogue between the GOU and the international NGO community in Uganda.

Overall improved security. According to the 2006 U.N. Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), limited improvements in access to IDP camps in Gulu District have occurred, with 18 of the 53 IDP camps accessible without armed escort. Most camps in Lira District are accessible without military escorts, with the exception of food convoys. However, access remains restricted in Kitgum and Pader districts, where armed escort is required to access all camps but those in Kitgum town.

¹ The figure represents the estimated number of children abducted between 1986 and 2005. An unknown number of abducted children have escaped or have been captured by UPDF forces during the conflict.

² The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees

Despite overall improvements in access, LRA combatants continue intermittent attacks on civilians and UPDF forces. In addition, OCHA recorded more than 60 abductions in February and March.

Night commuters. As a result of improved security in Gulu, district authorities and humanitarian partners have agreed to phase out night commuter centers. According to OCHA, a task force has been formed to manage the phase out process, which will emphasize confidence-building activities between rural communities and the UPDF. The issue of closure of night commuter shelters has not been formally discussed in Kitgum or Pader districts, although two centers have voluntarily closed.

Camp fires. In the dry and windy period of January and February, numerous fires broke out in IDP camps throughout northern Uganda, affecting several thousand households in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, and Lira districts, according to OCHA reports. However, in late February, the number of fires diminished, partly due to increased rain, with only 600 households in Gulu District affected. Most camp fires are caused by negligence and the close proximity of huts in camps.

IDPs continue to return home in Lira District. Numerous IDPs in many areas of Lira District are returning home due to improved security. In January, the IDP population in urban camps was approximately 13,300, down from 80,000 at the height of displacement, according to OCHA. However, returns in northern Lira District remain limited due to ongoing insecurity. In May, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) is planning to supply a three-month return ration to an estimated 35,000 IDPs resettling from three camps. IDPs that have not yet returned home are spending considerable time in their villages of origin. USAID/OFDA is working to facilitate this movement through food security and livelihoods programming.

GOU camp decongestion. To increase IDPs' access to farm land, the UPDF is promoting the establishment of decongestion camps where security permits in northern Uganda. In Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader, the UPDF has begun the process of site selection and in some cases camp construction. OCHA reports that in Gulu District available insufficient land and water are hindering hut construction and will undermine program sustainability. In Pader District, IDPs have begun building huts in 11 of the 18 sites approved for decongestion. In Kitgum District, 24 proposed sites await approval from the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC).

Although the DDMC has emphasized the need for all decongestion sites to meet minimum humanitarian requirements—including access for the delivery of assistance and availability of sufficient land and water—many selected sites do not meet these standards. The decongestion policy also raises numerous questions about whether adequate security would exist at the new locations, whether freedom of movement would be

assured, and whether further decongestion would actually inhibit return of IDPs to their original land.

UPDF escorts may discontinue for non-food humanitarian activities. In April 2006, UPDF forces announced plans to cease providing military escorts to convoys delivering non-food assistance. Despite improved security, most NGOs continue to depend on military escorts to access remote areas of northern Uganda. These relief agencies argue that recent security improvements are no guarantee of continued safe travel. Following discussions between the UPDF and U.N. officials, the UPDF will continue to provide military escorts for program activities to most camps outside Kitgum town and all camps in Pader District, although this will not continue indefinitely. In Gulu District, recent reductions in military escorts are already affecting program activity, according to OCHA reports. The UPDF and U.N. have concurred that 25 IDP camps in Gulu no longer require escort, and this may result in improved escort availability to the more insecure areas.

USAID assessment mission. In January 2006, a USAID/OFDA assessment team traveled to northern Uganda to review current conditions and programs as well as to assess the appropriateness of food security approaches for IDP camps. Team members witnessed improved access to camps for NGOs since the October 2005 insecurity, along with significant progress in water and sanitation systems in camps where USAID partners are working. However, the overall water and sanitation situation remains poor and requires continued USAID support. USAID/OFDA is focusing future interventions on new camps where IDPs have spontaneously relocated from older congested camps, and where the new camps have little access to clean water and sanitation facilities.

The USAID/OFDA team found that IDPs remain tentative about accessing land adjacent to camps. Although the UPDF generally agrees to protect a 2 km radius around the camps, this varies and is dependent on individual UPDF commanders. The assessment team concluded that agriculture interventions need careful analysis to ensure IDPs are not significantly exposed to additional risk. Not only is land limited, but repeated use of the same land is beginning to degrade the areas surrounding camps. Ideal interventions include shorter-term crops, improved seed varieties, and training in improved practices in marginal areas where land is either borrowed or rented.

Drought conditions. Drought conditions are present in numerous districts of northern Uganda. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), rainfall totals in 2005 were considerably lower than in previous years. Drought conditions affect parts of Kitgum and Pader districts and the neighboring Karamoja and Teso sub-regions. Drought conditions have exacerbated water shortages in numerous Kitgum and Pader IDP camps.

GOU rejects findings of July 2005 mortality survey. In March 2006, the Oxfam-led Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda published a report with the

results of a July 2005 interagency survey that revealed among the displaced population a child mortality rate of 3.18 deaths per 10,000 people per day and a crude mortality rate of 1.54 deaths per 10,000 people per day, figures above emergency thresholds of 2 deaths per 10,000 per day and 1 death per 10,000 per day, respectively. The Ugandan Ministry of Health, a key participant in the mortality survey, has since officially rejected the findings. However, USAID/OFDA health experts have examined the study and concluded that the survey is methodologically sound, professionally proficient, contains reliable data, and arrives at credible conclusions. In April, a USAID health expert further examined health conditions in the north, closely reviewed GOU concerns about the study's approach, and also concluded the survey was conducted in a valid fashion.

Protection issues. During the past year, USAID has conducted two assessments of protection issues in northern Uganda, including a March 2006 assessment led by the USAID/OFDA Senior Advisor on Internal Displacement and Protection. A 2005 demographic survey funded by USAID found that 60 percent of northern Uganda's IDPs regard their camp as unsafe. Some 40 percent report that they are afraid to use their camp's water point. More than 40 percent of IDPs state that living in a camp is as dangerous, or more dangerous, than returning home. Although LRA activities have diminished, LRA combatants reportedly remain in the vicinity of many IDP sites, and residents are fearful that attacks and atrocities could resume. Assessments found that while IDPs appreciate security provided by UPDF soldiers and government-supported local defense units, mistreatment of camp residents by some of those same security personnel remains a problem. Human rights abuses are inconsistently addressed by military and civilian authorities.

The U.N. has chosen northern Uganda as a prime location to introduce one of the humanitarian reforms launched in 2006 with an enhanced emphasis on protection issues. This reform, known as the "cluster leads strategy," is intended to improve predictability and accountability in the U.N. humanitarian response.

Refugee update. In January 2006, more than 10,000 people fled fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the majority seeking refuge in Kisoro, western Uganda. UNHCR relocated the refugees to Nakivale, a refugee camp further away from the border.

In March 2006, the GOU, the GOS, and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement concerning the repatriation of Sudanese refugees residing in Uganda. Due to insecurity from LRA incursions and the slow pace of rehabilitation efforts in southern Sudan, refugee repatriation did not begin in 2005 as anticipated. According to WFP, planning is underway to repatriate the first 4,000 refugees of the estimated 230,000 refugee population.

GOU humanitarian plans. In March 2006, GOU authorities, in consultation with bilateral and multilateral

partners including the USG, prepared an "Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Interventions in LRA-Affected Areas of Northern Uganda" and designated a Joint Monitoring Committee with representatives from several donor countries to set performance benchmarks. The Emergency Plan pledges intensified GOU efforts to end the northern conflict and lays the groundwork for reconciliation and ex-combatant reintegration. The Action Plan commits the GOU to enhance protection of IDPs and improve camp conditions through increased funding for interventions identified in the Action Plan.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

U.S. Chargé d'Affaires William Fitzgerald redeclared a disaster in response to the ongoing complex humanitarian emergency in northern Uganda on October 31, 2005. In FY 2005 and FY 2006, through partner NGOs and U.N. agencies, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$13.5 million to support activities in water and sanitation, health, nutrition, income generation, food security, and coordination. In FY 2005, USAID/OFDA allocated nearly \$2.8 million for health and nutrition programs; more than \$7.9 million to improve sanitation conditions and access to potable water; nearly \$500,000 to support income generation, food security, and agriculture interventions; and \$500,000 to enhance coordination efforts among the relief community. In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$1.7 million for ongoing water and sanitation and health interventions, as well as support small-scale food security programs to enable camp residents to produce limited amounts of food.

In FY 2006, USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) has provided 55,010 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance valued at more than \$33 million. This is in addition to 79,630 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at more than \$47.5 million, provided in FY 2005. Distributed through WFP, USAID/FFP assistance consists of cereals, corn-soya blend, vegetable oil, and pulses. USAID/FFP contributions primarily target IDPs in northern and eastern districts, drought-affected families in the Karamoja sub-region, and refugees countrywide.

In FY 2005 and FY 2006, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) continues to support the needs of refugees and victims of conflict in Uganda by providing more than \$10.4 million in assistance. State/PRM provided \$4 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for conflict-affected populations in northern Uganda; \$4.8 million to UNHCR and WFP to support refugee assistance and feeding, and more than \$1.6 million to support gender-based violence prevention and response activities, HIV/AIDS prevention activities and health and water and sanitation services to refugees. This assistance is in addition to nearly \$90 million in unearmarked funds to UNHCR and \$67.4 million in unearmarked funds to the ICRC in FY 2005 and FY 2006, portions of which support programs in Uganda.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2006

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
Food for the Hungry	Water and Sanitation; Food Security and Agriculture	Pader	\$561,330
IMC	Health and Nutrition	Kitgum and Pader	\$600,000
AAH/USA	Nutrition	Northern Uganda	\$500,000
Admin		Countrywide	\$38,100
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$1,699,430
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE²			
WFP	55,010 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$33,016,200
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$33,016,200
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
UNHCR	Multi-sectoral Refugee Assistance and Protection		\$2,500,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$2,500,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2006			\$34,715,630
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2006			\$37,215,630

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amounts as of April 26, 2006.

² Estimated value of food assistance.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE			
AAH/USA	Nutrition	Gulu, Lira, Pader	\$722,073
AVSI	Water and sanitation	Kitgum, Pader	\$1,361,705
CARE	Water and sanitation	Gulu	\$987,279
CCF	Income generation	Lira	\$199,291
CESVI	Water and sanitation	Pader	\$468,844
COOPI	Water and sanitation	Kitgum, Gulu, Pader	\$1,013,830
CRS	Water and sanitation	Gulu	\$831,828
GOAL	Health	Pader	\$1,271,377
IMC	Health, Nutrition	Kitgum, Pader	\$799,396
IRC	Water and sanitation	Kitgum, Lira, Pader	\$1,232,941
LWR	Relief supplies, water and sanitation	Adjumani, Katai, Karamoja	\$850,000
MEDAIR	Water and sanitation	Pader	\$925,412
UN FAO	Food security and agriculture	Countrywide	\$250,000
UNICEF	Nutrition, health, water and sanitation	Countrywide	\$250,000
OCHA	Coordination	Countrywide	\$500,000
USAID Kampala	Food security and agriculture	Pader, Kitgum, Gulu	\$163,243
Various	Administrative		\$14,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA			\$11,841,219
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE³			
WFP	79,630 MT in PL 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$47,589,100
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA			\$47,589,100
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
Ambassador's Fund for Refugees	Health infrastructure improvement	Ikafe settlement, Arua	\$20,000
ICRC	Conflict victim assistance	Northern Uganda	\$4,000,000

IMC	Refugee gender-based violence prevention and response	Countrywide	\$317,635
IRC	Refugee HIV/AIDS	Countrywide	\$250,000
IRC	Refugee gender-based violence prevention and response, refugee assistance	Kiryandongo, Ikafe	\$1,050,000
UNHCR	Refugee assistance	Countrywide	\$2,000,000
WFP	Refugee food assistance	Countrywide	\$300,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$7,937,635
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005			\$59,430,319
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005			\$67,367,954

³ Estimated value of food assistance.



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