

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION UGANDA

DONOR UPDATE 28 SEPTEMBER 2004

URGENT NEED FOR HEALTH, WATER AND SHELTER ITEMS TO EASE IMPACT OF CONFLICT ON NORTHERN UGANDA'S CHILDREN

- IDP population at staggering 1.6 million (80% children and women)
- UNICEF seeks for some US\$ 7.8 million for immediate action to sustain 2004 Appeal response
- Water and sanitation sector remains inadequately funded; other shortfalls threaten delivery of life-saving interventions in health

1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The violence, displacement and poverty attendant to the 18-year armed conflict between the Government of Uganda (GoU) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continue to exacerbate the already strained humanitarian situation of children and women in northern and northeastern Uganda.

In the eight districts worst affected by the conflict¹, the current number of internally displaced people (IDPs) is 1.6 million, of which 80 per cent are children and women. The LRA has abducted an estimated 12,000 children in the northern districts, with at least 3,000 forcibly taken from their homes between October 2003 and June 2004. The abductions continue, with children taken to serve as child combatants and sex slaves. At the time of reporting, the number of child "night commuters" (children primarily in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts who leave their families each night to sleep in urban centres for fear of LRA attacks and abductions) stood at approximately 44,000.

Signs of an attenuation in the conflict have emerged recently. Incidents of low-to-mid-rank LRA commanders being captured by or surrendering to the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) are higher this year relative to the past two years. Despite such developments, however, there are no clear indications of a swift resolution to the conflict. Military engagements between the LRA and UPDF continue (including in southern Sudan), as do brutal attacks by small pockets of LRA members against civilians in IDP camps, villages and on roads.



2. UNICEF'S RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

UNICEF's accelerated humanitarian response is conducted in close coordination with the local governments in the eight conflict-affected districts, and WFP, OCHA and NGO implementing partners. The GoU has primary responsibility for emergency prevention, security, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

¹ Gulu, Lira, Kitgum, Pader, Apac (north); Soroti, Katakwi, Kaberamaido (east)

Right to Health

UNICEF continues to provide emergency medicines to an estimated 300,000 children in the eight conflict-affected districts and has supported the training of about 1,400 community-based volunteer resource persons (CORPs) living in the IDP camps. Each CORP treated an average of 150 children per month totaling 660,000 disease episodes over the reporting period.

Two new Therapeutic Feeding Centres (TFCs) were opened in Lira and Soroti Districts in July, bringing to 11 the total number of UNICEF-assisted TFCs in the conflict-affected districts. Over 5,500 children were newly admitted to the TFCs over the period January 2004 to August 2004, with approximately 1,700 new admissions recorded in August alone. Cure rates increased from 74% in January 2004 to 89% in August 2004 while deaths decreased from 15% to 7% during the same period. UNICEF is supporting the GoU's Ministry of Health to strengthen the TFC and Supplementary Feeding Centre (SFC) reporting systems and to review the TFC guidelines. SFC guidelines are being developed in collaboration with WFP, GOAL, MSF-Holland, MSF-France and *Action Contre la Faim*.



A former LRA combatant, nursing a wound sustained during his captivity, performs his chores inside the UNICEF-supported GUSCO reception centre for formerly abducted children
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UNICEF, through its implementing partner, Concern Worldwide, provided menstruation management supplies for distribution to 35,000 women residing in seven IDP camps in Katakwi and Soroti in August. So far, approximately 3,300 girls and women of child-bearing age have been trained and equipped for effective menstruation management in Soroti.

Right to Education

UNICEF is supporting 18 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in Kitgum, Gulu and Apac Districts. In July and August, UNICEF facilitated the training of about 120 ECD caregivers to oversee about 5,400 children in ECD centres in 18 IDP camps in the three districts. Support for ECD projects continues in the conflict-affected districts through training of caregivers and distribution of play and learning materials to the centres. In Katakwi and Kaberamaido Districts, UNICEF distributed tents to 10 temporary learning centres to serve an estimated 1,000 displaced children. UNICEF has further supported NGO implementing partners to distribute scholastic materials for 27,000 primary school pupils and 175 teachers in 27 learning centres and facilitated a Girls' Education Movement (GEM) training for 60 girl-pupils, 30 boy-pupils and 30 teachers in Apac.

Right to Water

UNICEF and its partners have supported the drilling of 28 boreholes in IDP camps in Gulu, Kitgum, Lira and Pader Districts. Three motorized water systems were completed in three IDP camps, with another being finalized at a fourth camp in Gulu. Part of the installations were conducted as part of ongoing efforts to de-congest the largest IDP camp in Gulu District. It is estimated that the systems will serve 120,000 IDPs.

UNICEF, together with her implementing partners, has supported the installation of over 1,600 latrines to serve an estimated 80,000 IDPs in Gulu, Kitgum, Lira, Katakwi, Soroti and Kaberamaido districts. Among the beneficiaries is a night commuter centre sheltering 6,700 children (3,200 girls, 3,500 boys) in Gulu. In addition, three hand washing facilities and two 10,000-litre water storage tanks were installed at a primary school serving 850 children in Gulu.

Right to Protection

UNICEF supported the return, reception, registration and follow up assistance for 124 children (ranging from two weeks to 19 years) and young adults from LRA captivity in southern Sudan back to Gulu District in August. It collaborated with other NGO partners to provide chartered air transport and assorted resettlement kits and tents for the formerly abducted children, to facilitate their transfer to various NGO reception centres for rehabilitation and reunification with their families or home communities. In Pader District, UNICEF supported the reception of 38 formerly abducted children, including seven girls and 18 child mothers, at an NGO reception centre in August. UNICEF continues to lobby the UPDF to ensure that all returnees are rapidly processed into reception centres for counseling, monitoring and family-tracing.

Demobilisation of children and prevention of their recruitment into the armed forces remains a high priority for UNICEF, which succeeded in demobilising five children from a UPDF training centre in Gulu District in July. Mechanisms were further established to monitor the ages of recruitment into the armed forces through dialogue with UPDF personnel in Gulu.

A joint UNICEF-Gulu District initiative established a mechanism in July to monitor minimum standards for shelters that assist the district's estimated 15,000 child "night commuters" with a view to replicating the mechanism in other affected districts. In Lira, UNICEF supported the drafting of inter-agency guidelines for the care and protection of vulnerable and separated children within the framework provided by the district authorities in July.

UNICEF is supporting an inter-agency project on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation (SGBV) in Gulu District's biggest IDP camp, home to an estimated 48,000 children and women. The project started with operational research into SGBV in the camp in an effort to develop recommendations upon which to base future interventions. In addition, UNICEF facilitated training for 40 persons, including 26 women, on the management and referral of domestic violence in Lira District, as well as the training for Birth and Death Registration trainers in Kitgum District, in coordination with the local authorities and the Ugandan Ministry of Justice in August.

UNICEF, in collaboration with two major corporate sponsors, has supported the first official competitive games for disadvantaged children in Gulu District, in a league replicating a successful model based in the capital, Kampala. Together with its corporate partners, UNICEF remains committed to supporting the Gulu children's league after a successful first season that attracted up to 500 children weekly in mid-September.

Right to Shelter

UNICEF supported implementing partners to distribute a range of emergency non-food items (NFIs) for 200,000 IDPs in 10 rural camps in Lira District, and the provision of emergency NFI Family Kits to over 3,200 displaced families in Gulu and Pader Districts. Each Family Kit contains tarpaulin, 2 blankets, 2 jerry cans, 2 basins, 5 plates, 5 cups, 2 cooking pans and soap. GUSCO reception centre for formerly abducted children was provided with 490 mattresses, 4 tents, 2,000 blankets, 1,000 basins, 500 plastic plates and cups, 500 cartons of laundry soap, 1,000 units of mosquito nets and 6 bales of children's clothing. UNICEF further provided 10,000 jerry cans, 4,000 units of tarpaulin, 500 cartons of laundry soap, 10,000 blankets, 15,000 plastic cups and plates, 10,000 cooking pans, 8,000 basins, and 50 bales of children's clothing to the Anaka Hospital. It supported the distribution of 30 units of tarpaulin to ECD centres in a Gulu IDP camp, and provided 2 tents to a Pader NGO to accommodate child mothers. In Katakwi, UNICEF supported the construction of 10 temporary four-compartment bathing shelters to serve approximately 800 girls and women in one IDP camp. UNICEF continues to pre-position and deliver emergency shelter materials and NFIs, and is preparing a broader plan for comprehensive response to address non-food issues for the internally displaced population, in coordination with other stakeholders.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

UNICEF is grateful for the close collaboration of District Local Governments, UN sister agencies and the following NGO implementing partners with whom it continues to work: Action Against Child Abuse and Neglect (AACAN), *Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale* (AVSI), Caritas, Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Concerned Parents Association (CPA), Concerned Women's Association (KICWA), Concern Worldwide, *Cooperazione Internazionale* (COOPI), Forum for Africa Women Educationalists (FAWE), Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO), Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo (ITEK), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Kalongo Hospital, Lacor Hospital Gulu, Medair, *Médécins sans Frontières* (MSF), Noah's Ark, Norwegian Refugee Council, Rachele, Rural Focus Uganda (RUFUO), Save the Children-Denmark, Save the Children in Uganda, Save the Children-Norway, St. Joseph's Hospital Kitgum, Straight Talk Foundation, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization and World Vision-Kitgum.

Implementation Constraints

The greatest challenge today to emergency response and protection interventions is the restricted humanitarian access, or total inaccessibility in some cases, to the internally displaced populations in areas affected by the conflict and insurgency. This has limited, complicated and slowed down emergency interventions, and restricted staff movement outside the main towns to a minimum. It is estimated that social service providers and humanitarian workers have access to only 20 per cent of the 210 IDP camps on a regular basis without heavily armed military escorts. Service delivery in conflict-affected areas has also been problematic due to additional factors that include the LRA's lack of predictability, a limited assessment of emerging needs and inadequate response systems.

UNICEF is utilizing all means to solve the issue of access, with reasonable assurance of security for humanitarian interventions, given the link between access and the gathering of more comprehensive data for designing specific interventions to improve the situation of children and women. One such measure, scheduled for implementation in October 2004, is the deployment of two armor-plated vehicles initially to the UNICEF Gulu Zonal Office, for use by UNICEF and partner UN and NGO staff.

3. 2004 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

In May 2004, the consolidated appeal requirements were reviewed based on the added IDP load and insecurity, and on the contributions thus far received. The table below includes the revised requirements for activities until the end of 2004.

TABLE 1: 2004 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING BY SECTOR AS OF 15 SEPTEMBER 2004				
Sector	Target (US\$)	Funded (US\$)	% Funded	Unfunded (US\$)
Education	2,600,000	866,466	33.3	1,733,534
Health and Nutrition	4,316,000	788,139	18.2	3,527,861
Adolescents' Rights to Self-Protection against HIV/AIDS	1,693,650	438,778	25.9	1,254,872
Rights of Children in Armed Conflict	2,148,154	3,239,805	150.8	-1,091,651
Water and Sanitation	3,570,000	1,232,245	34.5	2,337,755
Total	14,327,804	6,565,433	45.8	7,762,371

The following table indicates the contributions received, by donor, for the Appeal. UNICEF is grateful for the generous contributions which continue to assist ongoing humanitarian interventions for the most vulnerable children and women in Uganda.

TABLE 2: FUNDS RECEIVED FOR 2004 APPEAL BY DONOR AS OF 15 SEPTEMBER 2004		
Donor	Contribution (US\$)	Purpose
ITALY	624,220	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
AUSTRALIA	427,214	Un-earmarked
NETHERLANDS	500,000	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
NORWAY	288,900	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
SOUTH AFRICA	7,599	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
SWEDEN	1,875,830	Un-earmarked
UK	1,865,670	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
USAID / OFDA	250,000	Emergency Nutrition
USAID / OFDA	659,000	Emergency WES
US FUND	65,000	Rights of Children in Armed Conflict
TOTAL	6,563,433	

4. IMPACT OF UNDER-FUNDING AND CURRENT PRIORITIES

In the past 12 months, UNICEF has expanded and accelerated its response in the areas of health, water and sanitation, education and HIV/AIDS prevention. More than 1,400 community-based resource persons (CORPs) for health have been trained, while an additional 270 will be trained by October 2004. The CORPs are responsible for managing fever, malaria, respiratory infections and diarrhoea at the community level, and are equipped with basic medicines. Funding shortfalls will block the necessary replenishment of supplies at the IDP camp level, interrupt services and increase the risk of death due to easily treated diseases.

The Ministry of Health, with the assistance of UNICEF and WHO, will implement "Child Days" for all under-5 children in the IDP camps in November to provide catch-up immunization, Vitamin A provision and de-worming. Failure to implement these activities risks a re-occurrence of measles disease and increased malnutrition.

Access to water and sanitation remains a major issue. Families living in the camps for the internally displaced have access to 4-12 litres of water per day, well below Sphere standards. Similarly, latrine coverage is low, both in the camps and in the temporary learning centres.

Incidents of LRA attacks against IDP camps and settlements, as well as outbreaks of fire in those locations have continued, resulting in increased numbers of people on the move, huts being destroyed, and the loss of already limited household utensils. UNICEF needs to replenish its stocks of non-food items to be able to respond efficiently and effectively as and when such incidents occur.



Children living in the Palenga IDP camp in Gulu. The younger child attends one of the three UNICEF-assisted Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in the camp.

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The table below outlines the most urgent priority requirements:

Table 3: PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 2004		
Project	Beneficiaries/Coverage	Amount Required (US\$)
Health and Nutrition	300,000 children below 5 years of age living in the IDP camps	1,600,000
WES	500,000 people living in IDP camps	2,000,000
Children in Armed Conflict	Shelter and NFIs for 10,000 IDP families and 10,000 new "night commuters"	800,000

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