

UGANDA PROGRAM SUMMARY

USAID/OFDA Assistance in Northern Uganda

CURRENT SITUATION

Since 1986, protracted conflict between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda (GOU) has displaced an estimated 95 percent of the ethnic Acholi population in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts of northern Uganda. Approximately 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) reside in overcrowded camps where mortality rates remain above emergency levels, largely as a result of inadequate water availability, poor sanitary conditions, and the spread of diseases. However, in 2006, improved security and significant progress toward a negotiated settlement to the conflict encouraged an estimated 350,000 IDPs to move closer to their areas of origin. Movements out of IDP camps continue in 2007 and are expected to dramatically increase if a peace accord is signed. The lack of a consistent message regarding when and where IDPs may return home is hindering the return process.

From November 26 to December 10, a USAID/OFDA assessment team, including USAID/OFDA's Deputy Director and Regional Coordinator, visited northern Uganda to assess current humanitarian conditions. The team met with implementing partners, local government officials, and IDPs in Gulu and Pader districts. According to the assessment team, sustained support for water and sanitation programs and a decrease in IDP populations have led to improved camp conditions. The team also noted that meeting both the emergency needs of the displaced and early recovery needs of returnees is straining the recently introduced U.N. cluster coordination system.



Children in Pader Camp use hand washing sites installed with OFDA funds (Jack Myer, USAID).

CURRENT USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE

In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$12 million for humanitarian programs to assist vulnerable populations in Uganda. In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA is maintaining emergency assistance to IDPs in camps while expanding programs for newly returned populations.

Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation conditions remain a critical challenge in the conflict-affected region. However, targeted USAID/OFDA programming has achieved significant progress in the past year, including increasing daily water supply in camps, reducing lines at water points, and expanding hygiene education. In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$5.8 million to eight implementing partners for essential water and sanitation projects serving IDPs and returnees in five districts in the north. As a result, USAID/OFDA program beneficiaries have access to an average of 12 to 18 liters of water per day and experience a wait time of under 15 minutes at water points, compared to an estimated 8 liters per day and an average 2 hour wait in FY 2005. Ongoing program activities include drilling and

rehabilitating boreholes, installing water tanks and taps, constructing latrines and hand washing facilities, and distributing hygiene kits.

Health and Nutrition

The provision of adequate health care remains limited in northern Uganda, where high morbidity and mortality rates persist. Malaria, respiratory tract infections, diarrhea, intestinal worms, and skin infections continue to represent the leading causes of morbidity in the region. In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$2.4 million to four relief organizations to conduct health and nutrition activities in the region. USAID/OFDA health and nutrition interventions include supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers and mobile health clinics.

Agriculture and Food Security

Improvements in security conditions have prompted IDPs to re-establish production and farming systems in areas of origin. Additionally, IDPs in camps continue to be confronted with the challenge of limited access to land for farming. In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1.4 million to agriculture and food security programs. In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA is providing more than \$1.3 million to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). USAID/OFDA programs aim to increase access to agricultural inputs and improve farming technologies.

Coordination

Increased humanitarian demands have expanded the need for coordination among relief agencies. In FY 2006, USAID/OFDA provided \$1.8 million to support improved U.N. agency coordination and information management. USAID/OFDA supports the appointment of the recently designated Humanitarian Coordinator and will continue to work with the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to strengthen coordination capacity.