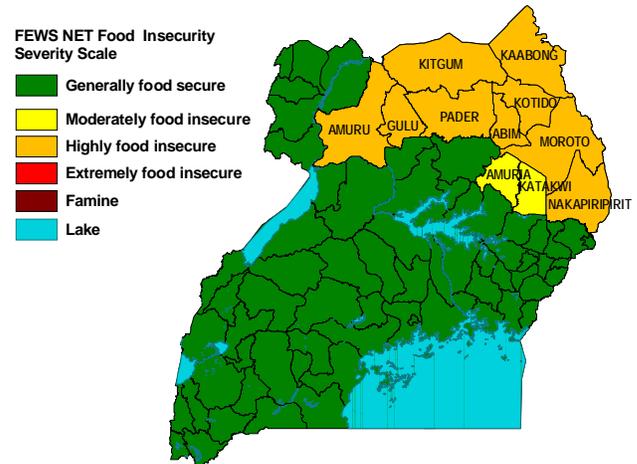


UGANDA Food Security Outlook

July to December 2008

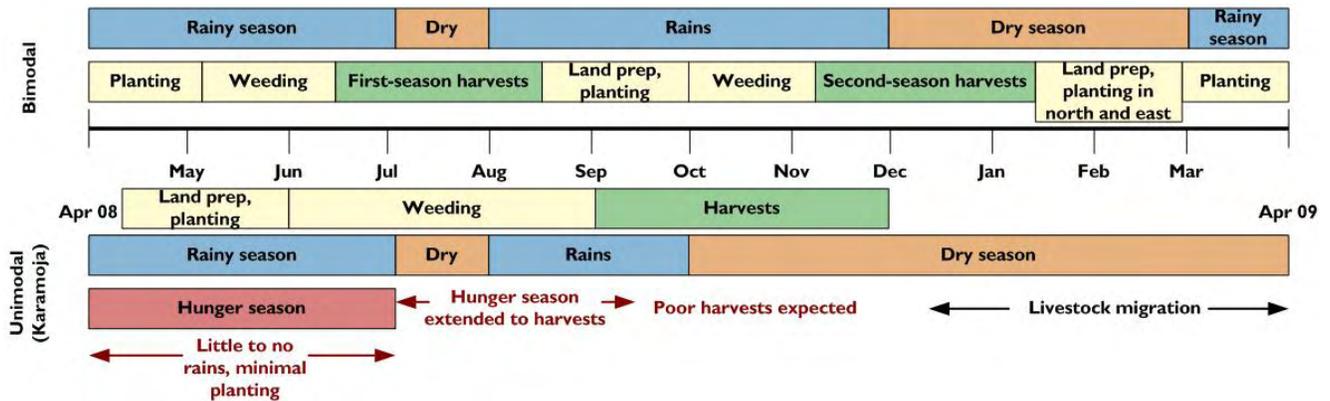
- About 2.1 million people in eastern, northern and northeastern Uganda are currently food insecure due to the impacts of floods in 2007, civil insecurity and displacements, and three consecutive seasons of poor agricultural performance, respectively (Figure 1). Food security in the Karamoja region of northeastern Uganda (Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit Districts) continues to decline. About 707,000 people (or nearly 80 percent of the region's total population) are currently moderately to highly food insecure due to depleted food stocks, low livestock production, and poor livestock/cereal terms of trade.
- In the most-likely scenario from October to December 2008, food security will improve slightly, with the number of food insecure decreasing to 1.7 million people. Food security conditions will remain stable in bimodal areas due to expected average second-season food harvests and increased food availability beginning in November. Conditions for households in flood-affected eastern districts will improve due to first-season harvests (June to August), off-farm food sources, and limited income opportunities. Sustained civil security and first-season harvests will also help improve the food security situation in northern Uganda. In Karamoja, the situation will continue to deteriorate, with hunger becoming more intense and widespread as a result of a poor September-November 2008 harvest. Even more of the 707,000 people requiring assistance will be highly food insecure in this scenario.
- In the worst-case scenario from October to December, a resurgence in civil insecurity, displacements, and a poor second-season harvest in the north will coincide with increased civil insecurity in Karamoja (livestock thefts, road ambushes) and below-normal production in the east to cause a higher prevalence of and more severe hunger affecting at least 2.2 million people in these areas.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, July to September 2008



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET Uganda

Current food security conditions (July to September 2008)

Well below normal and declining food security is reported in Karamoja, northeastern Uganda, where about 707,000 people (or nearly 80 percent of the region's total population) are currently moderately or highly food insecure. This deterioration in food security conditions follows the depletion of food stocks from lower than normal harvests in the previous two agricultural seasons/years, households' reduced access to livestock products due to inadequate access to pasture and water, and limited access to alternate food sources in part due to the depletion of natural resources (fuel wood for sale, hunting and gathering, etc), limited income opportunities, poor livestock body condition and the resulting poor livestock/cereal terms of trade, and therefore low purchasing power for households with livestock. Households in Amuria and Katakwi Districts in Teso Region in the east continue to face moderate levels of food insecurity following floods in 2007, with limited improvement from early first-season harvests (July-August). Food insecurity remains high in northern Uganda, due to continued civil insecurity, although conditions are gradually improving. Other parts of Uganda are generally food secure.

The hunger season in Karamoja, which started in February 2008, two months earlier than normal, is further deepening. Extensive dry conditions this year delayed the onset and establishment of the April to September rainy season and hindered crop cultivation in the region's single cropping season (April to November), with exception of a few locations in Abim and Nakapiripirit Districts. Consequently, District Agriculture Officers report that this has caused poor crop germination, stunting and generally poor crop development. With no rains by July, there is no chance for any meaningful harvests this year, adding yet a third consecutive season of poor agricultural performance in the region (following lower than normal harvests in 2006 and 2007) and heightening fears for the population's food security. Given prospects for the current harvest this quarter, it is likely that high levels of food assistance will be required until the next harvest in September/October 2009.

Over the past several years, Karimojong households have seen an increased frequency and impact of hazards, and their resilience to such hazards has thus continued to decline. Recent assessments of the region conducted by USAID Uganda, FEWS NET and the World Food Program (WFP) in June, along with information provided in other assessments and data sources, confirm the steady decline in food security conditions in Karamoja and increasing levels of chronic food insecurity, malnutrition, morbidity, and mortality, as well as an increased frequency of hazards and diminishing coping mechanisms. In particular, the overexploitation of natural resources for income and food is preventing households from fully accessing a coping mechanism and critical food security buffer as in years past. In the short term, humanitarian response must focus on meeting the immediate food needs of the Karimojong while also paying due attention to medium- and long-term responses aimed at restoring their core capacities, combating malnutrition, the restoration of infrastructure and natural resources, supporting and enhancing income generation opportunities and market support mechanisms, investing in water, soil, and livestock management, and improving overall civil security.

Since the third quarter of 2007 to June 2008, cereal prices (mainly sorghum) have increased by between 20 and 65 percent above normal for this time of year in parts of Karamoja, while bean prices have generally been more than 60 percent above normal. These rising food prices, as well as declining livestock prices observed in the region since the third quarter of 2007, have eroded livestock/cereal terms of trade and reduced households' purchasing power for those households owning livestock. This has only exacerbated food security conditions in Karamoja as households now have to sell more livestock to procure a given amount of food compared to previous periods. The high incidence of livestock diseases, mainly due to poor livestock body conditions, crowding at limited grazing and watering places, and weather conducive to the spread of disease, has also diminished household income and coping capacities. Specifically, *Peste des Petits Ruminants* (PPR), a fatal viral disease, continues to affect sheep and goats and has resulted in the death of an estimated 550,000 animals - or nearly 25 percent of the region's estimated small ruminant population - since it was first detected in early 2007. This loss mainly affects poorer livestock keepers, and a few cultivators, who mainly keep small ruminants as a means for quick sale to meet household needs. As a result, livestock losses due to PPR are impacting them the most as it deprives them of alternative food sources and income. In June, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) procured 500,000 vaccine doses for use in controlling the disease, which until then had gone unchecked. An additional 500,000 doses are expected in the coming months, to be administered in Karamoja's border areas to prevent the further spread of the disease, alongside the implementation of other control strategies.

In response to declining food security in Karamoja, WFP has been providing emergency food assistance to the 707,000 people in need since April 2008, marking a substantial increase from the initial 300,000 beneficiaries prior to that time. About 376,000 people determined as the most in need receive a ration covering 70 percent of their daily energy requirement until September/October 2008, while the remainder are receiving rations amounting to 50 percent of their daily energy requirement. Given prospects for another poor harvest this quarter, however, additional food assistance will be needed through the next harvest in September/October 2009.

In the east of the country, in Amuria and Katakwi Districts in Teso Region, about 30,000 households (approximately 200,000 people) lost 2007 first- and second-season harvests due to floods and remain moderately food insecure. With poorly distributed rainfall during a large part of the 2008 first season, early indicators show lower than normal harvests expected to begin in early August, thus hampering households' ability to replenish stocks and improve their overall food security. Currently, opportunities to generate additional food or income are too few to provide any sizeable improvement, with households remaining moderately food insecure. With limited off-farm income opportunities, and many households remaining displaced due to civil insecurity related to livestock rustling and high competition for resources (e.g., land, water, pasture), livelihoods and coping mechanisms have deteriorated over time, leaving households vulnerable to minor hazards. As in Karamoja, food assistance continues to address the short-term needs of food-insecure households in these districts, but medium- to long-term responses are imperative to reduce their vulnerability and mitigate the increasing frequency of hazards. The poor first-season harvests this quarter imply that any significant improvements in food security in the region now hinge on good second-season production and harvests, due in November/December 2008.

Northern Uganda continues to experience uncertain but stable civil security despite continued delays in the signing of the Juba Peace Accord between Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels and the Ugandan government. An estimated 1.2 million people remain highly food insecure, and include the internally displaced or in transit, as well as those who have recently returned to their homesteads. In general, internally displaced persons (IDPs) continue to move gradually closer to their homes – to "transit camps" – while others have returned to their original homes. Current estimates comparing previous IDP camp numbers (early to mid-2007) to those living there now indicate that about 50 percent of the population has left the camps and are now either in transit camps or their villages of origin. That said, the rate of return varies by district. Resettlements are expected to continue over the next several months, although maintained civil security is a prerequisite for a return to normality in the region. While food security remains uncertain, increasing access to and

Table 1. Scenario assumptions and indicators

Most-likely food security scenario

- Despite peace accord remaining unsigned, relative stability continues in northern Uganda, enabling further resettlements and ability to harvest 2008 first-season crops.
- Food security improves in 2007 flood-affected Amuria and Katakwi districts as they harvest first-season crops; income opportunities enable household access to food from markets.
- Depleted household stocks intensify food insecurity in Karamoja.
- Malnutrition levels could increase in children under five, mainly in all the population groups in Karamoja, including pastoral and agropastoral households due to reduced access to livestock products as livestock production also declines or they move away from homesteads in search of pasture and water.
- Food stocks remain adequate in most bimodal areas, as a result of average 2008 first-season harvests.

Worst-case food security scenario

- Civil insecurity worsens in northern Uganda, causing new displacement.
- Reduced IDP access to food stocks at home and in the field, undermining gains made in their own food security.
- Poor first-season crop production and limited supplies cause further food price increases in flood-affected Amuria and Katakwi districts, restricting household access to food.
- Increased civil insecurity in Karamoja restricts movement, crop supplies and access to markets, where prices are higher than normal, limiting access to alternate food sources.
- Lower than normal seasonal performance limits livestock access to pastures and water, leading to a further deterioration in body conditions and productivity. This results in a reduction in pastoral income and food sources, and further deterioration in terms of trade and purchasing power.
- *Pest des Petits Ruminants (PPR)* is endemic and intensifies in Karamoja, further reducing households' livestock and income.
- Food security remains normal in bimodal areas.

cultivation of land and the beginning of harvests are helping many households improve their food security. However, these households still require WFP food assistance to augment their food stocks. On average, WFP continues to provide a ration of 50 percent of daily energy requirements to food-insecure households in the north.

The first season harvest that has started in other bimodal areas is replenishing food stocks and improving food availability, and helping to lower prices and enabling household access to food. Crops currently being harvested include leafy vegetables, maize, millet, banana, beans, cassava, peas, and sweet potatoes, among others. Households in these other bimodal areas are generally food secure.

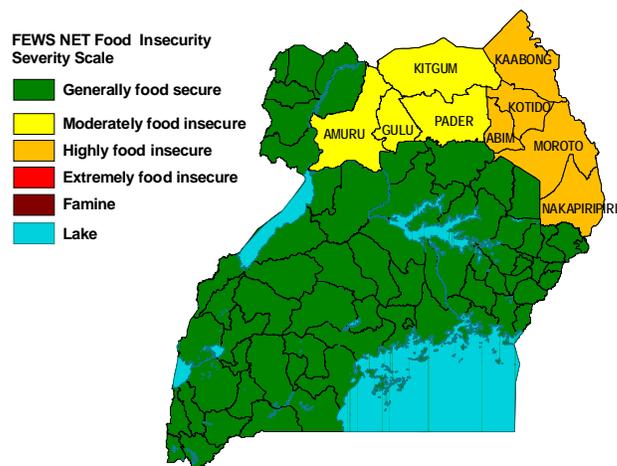
Currently, about 2.1 million people face varying levels of food insecurity, ranging from moderately to highly food insecure, mainly in eastern, northern and northeastern Uganda. The unplanned and increasing needs in Karamoja – up from 300,000 people in March – continues to strain WFP’s Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) pipeline that provides assistance to the region, as well as flood-affected populations in the east, IDPs in northern Uganda, as well as refugees and targeted populations for school feeding, supplementary and therapeutic feeding. This has caused delays in delivery of food aid, hampered partly by breaks in the pipeline. The agency forecasts commodity deficits of 54,725 MT (equivalent to about USD 44 million) between July and December 2008 and is urgently seeking new resources to bridge the gap to cover these populations.

Most-likely food security scenario (October to December 2008)

In the most-likely scenario from October to December 2008, the incremental combination of 2008 first-season crop harvests, off-farm food sources (e.g., fishing), and limited income opportunities will improve food security conditions in flood-affected eastern districts of the country, to the extent that they will be generally food secure. With sustained civil security and near normal growing conditions expected, own-production from first-season harvests in northern Uganda will improve conditions to a situation of moderate food insecurity. On the other hand, widespread hunger will continue in Karamoja, northeastern Uganda, with even more people considered highly food insecure. Elsewhere in the country, food security conditions will remain stable in bimodal areas due to expected normal food harvests and availability (Figure 2).

In Karamoja, household stocks will be completely exhausted during this fourth quarter and many households will be forced to resort to more severe coping mechanisms, including: having one smaller-than-usual meal a day; limited or no variety in food intake; adults skipping meals some days; households traveling further in search of wild foods (e.g., hunting animals, wild berries, fruit, and honey); consuming alcohol dregs, where available; and/or trying to sell labor, fuel and wood, among other activities. Low food stocks, limited inflows from neighboring districts due to continued civil insecurity, and therefore high demand will maintain cereal prices in the region above average throughout the fourth quarter. Even households with livestock will be impacted, as the onset of the dry season will decrease pasture and water availability, affecting both livestock body weight and overall conditions. As a result, livestock prices will be less than current levels and livestock/cereal terms of trade will continue to worsen, further limiting pastoralist and agropastoralist access to cereals per livestock sold. Nonetheless, with vaccines procured, some control measures are expected to be instituted against *Peste des Petits Ruminants*, stemming the continued loss of small ruminants in the region which has seriously eroded household coping capacities. Given such a deterioration in conditions overall, however, rates of child malnutrition and morbidity will likely increase, due to reduced food availability including access to livestock products given production declines and/or their movement away from homesteads in search of pasture and water. Food insecurity will remain high in the region, with more households transitioning from moderate to highly food insecure. At least 707,000 people will continue to require food assistance.

Figure 2. Most likely food security scenario, October to December 2008



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

In northern Uganda, sustained civil security, despite continued lags in the peace process, will encourage more people to continue resettling, accessing and cultivating more land to improve their production and food security. As in previous periods, the maintained stability will enable the government and humanitarian organizations to improve and expand access to vulnerable populations, increasing the delivery of health, water, sanitation and other critical services and improving overall humanitarian conditions and proper food utilization. Such improvements will also allow households to increase their own food production, reducing their dependence on external assistance and improving their situation to one of moderate food insecurity. At the same time, it must be emphasized that such conditions will not be attained in the short-term, and that sustained, normal agricultural production levels into the second season (August to November), adequate access to clean water, health and sanitation and construction materials are all necessary to improve food availability, access and utilization. A combination of first-season production, increased off-farm food and income sources, as well as food assistance will enable the region to progress from the current situation of high food insecurity to moderately food insecure. This will require continued food aid, at reduced ration levels, as well as non-food assistance to address any remaining gaps in need. In the outlook quarter, October to December 2008, an estimated one million people will continue to require food assistance, at lower ration levels, in the region.

Average first-season harvests in July to August and increased availability of tubers, and access to off-farm food sources (including fishing) and income-generating opportunities will improve food security in flood-affected Amuria and Katakwi districts in the east. While normal harvests are not expected region-wide, the availability of off-farm income opportunities and social safety networks will compensate for gaps among those less fortunate. As a result, these districts will improve to ones considered generally food secure. Accordingly, food assistance in these eastern districts will decline and remain only in select targeted areas, if needed.

In other bimodal areas of the country, stocks from first-season harvests in the current quarter will sustain food security conditions into the last quarter of 2008. Prices will remain higher than normal for this time period, however, due to projections for sustained levels of high demand, both locally and in the region (e.g., urban consumers, educational institutions, food aid and relief markets, and export trade to regional markets in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania). Despite this, however, households will have average access to food during the period. The second-season rains (August to November) will also favor normal vegetative growth and development and water availability, providing livestock with adequate access to pasture, browse and water.

While there remains an urgent need for continued and increased assistance in Karamoja, with conditions improving and thus a reduced need for assistance in Amuria and Katakwi districts and in northern Uganda, overall there will be a reduction in the number of people food insecure and the amount of food aid required in the October to December 2008 outlook period. In all, 1.7 million people will continue to require food assistance, including approximately one million IDPs in northern Uganda and about 707,000 people in Karamoja. While the reduced number of beneficiaries in need will limit the burdens placed on WFP and the food aid pipeline in the current period, gaps will still remain and require replenishment.

Worst-case food security scenario (October to December 2008)

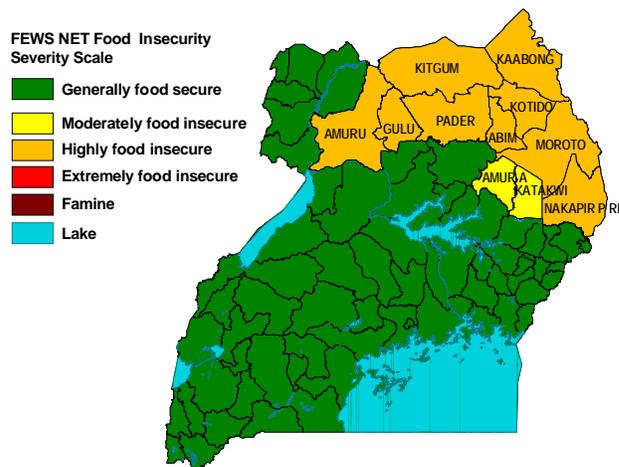
In the worst-case scenario from October to December 2008, civil insecurity and displacements would resume, and be compounded by low crop production following poor first-season production in the north and increases in livestock thefts and road ambushes in Karamoja Region. A much lower than normal season would also be recorded in the flood-affected districts of the east. These conditions would result in limited food availability, exorbitant price increases due to high demand, and thus deteriorating food security in the east. Although food insecurity levels would be similar to the current scenario, the severity and prevalence within each location would be higher and affect more people in this scenario (Figure 3).

In northern Uganda, following the continued non-signing of the peace agreement, the Lord's Resistance Army would resurface, increasing civil instability and re-displacement. Many IDPs would return to camps, where they would be unable to access fields to harvest 2008 first-season crops, reducing their own food production. Although non-food services would still be available in the camps, the large influx of people in a short period of time would be overwhelming in terms of response capacity, resulting in inadequate provisions. This would result in renewed food insecurity and a deterioration in

humanitarian conditions during the fourth quarter of 2008. The total number of displaced households would increase rapidly, and the number of people facing high and more severe food insecurity would increase compared to both the current and most likely scenario, at 1.3 million people.

The worst-case scenario in Amuria and Katakwi districts in the east, affected by floods in 2007, would be characterized by below-average 2008 first-season crop harvests due to poorly-distributed rainfall during the season, especially in Katakwi, which would also experience normal to lower-than-normal rainfall. Reduced crop availability will limit households' own-production and lead to a rapid rise in food prices, reducing access to alternate sources for food, such as through borrowing and from the market. With limited crop production, labor opportunities would also contract, limiting poorer household's alternate income sources and therefore their access to markets as well. As the region already suffers from moderate food insecurity, with many households already depending on coping mechanisms to meet their basic needs, many of these options would be exhausted or not fully recovered enough to support the population. As a consequence, in the worst-case scenario, the severity and number of food insecure people would increase beyond the current 200,000 in these two districts, as early as October 2008.

Figure 3. Worst-case food security scenario, October to December 2008



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

In Karamoja, the dry season would be particularly severe given the lack of rains, and this would result in reduced pasture and water availability, leading to increased livestock movement to dry season grazing areas. These movements will expose livestock herders, disarmed as part of the government's ongoing disarmament program, to increased attacks by armed bandits. In addition, poor access to pasture and water would cause a further deterioration in livestock body conditions and productivity, causing livestock prices to plummet and preventing households from relying on livestock as a source of food and income. As a result, the purchasing power of pastoral and agropastoral households are expected to decrease. In this worst-case scenario, a delay in measures to control *Peste des Petits Ruminants* leads to its becoming endemic to the region and thus difficult to manage, and further reducing household livestock assets and productivity. With poor harvests from the current quarter, household stocks would already be exhausted and crop supplies in the region overall limited as well, while inflows from neighboring areas will be minimal due to poor road conditions and civil insecurity. This situation would lead to an increase in already higher-than-normal food prices, severely limiting household access to food in markets. Given these conditions, more households in Karamoja would be highly food insecure, and with higher severity than in the most-likely scenario for this region throughout the fourth quarter of 2008.

Food security in other bimodal areas of the country is expected to be normal even in the worst-case scenario, as the 2008 first-season harvests are projected to be average with only localized production deficits. Production levels would support household food availability as well as food access, with prices rising but stabilizing, throughout the fourth quarter of 2008. Any potential food deficits in this scenario would be covered through alternative means, including social safety net mechanisms and market purchases. Even in the worst case, there will be no increase in the incidence of crop or livestock diseases.

As a result of deteriorating conditions in eastern, northern, and northeastern Uganda, the number of food insecure people in this scenario would increase to over two million, including more than 1.3 million IDPs in the north, more than 200,000 people in Amuria and Katakwi Districts, and more than 707,000 people in Karamoja. Moreover, the severity and pervasiveness of food insecurity would both be higher than in the current and most-likely scenario. Additional resources would be required to provide assistance to these vulnerable populations to mitigate the increase in food insecurity, including food and non-food assistance, through the end of 2008 in most cases, and through the 2009 harvests in September/October for Karamoja Region. Given the resource shortfalls exhibited in the current quarter, WFP and other humanitarian agencies will continue to face resource shortfalls in meeting the food and non-food needs of these beneficiary groups.