

# NUTI Northern Uganda Transition Initiative

Quarterly Report July-September 2008

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The overall goal of USAID/Uganda's OTI program is to encourage and support the voluntary return of displaced northern Ugandans by increasing their confidence in the government and in the ongoing transition process. To support this goal, OTI will focus on the following objectives:

- Enhance the capacity of the Ugandan media, particularly in northern Uganda, to research, inform and report on issues relevant to peace, recovery and development.
- Increase the visibility of, and confidence in, all levels of government through the delivery of targeted strategic interventions.

USAID's total obligation to NUTI stands at \$6,374,873. In addition to the initial \$3,000,000 obligation, on September 30, 2008, NUTI received an additional incremental obligation of \$3,374,873. The incremental obligation included \$1.9 million from the USAID/Uganda Mission, \$400,000 additional TI funding for fiscal year 2008 and \$500,000 in forward TI funding for fiscal year 2009.

## COUNTRY SITUATION

### Security

The situation in Northern Uganda is still fragile as the Lord's Resistance Army is yet to sign the final peace agreement with the government. Despite this, the government of Uganda maintains that it is unilaterally implementing the peace process with the ongoing efforts to compensate and re-integrate rebels into the communities as a part of the amnesty process. In related development, six former LRA rebels underwent a cleansing ceremony in Gulu marking their official acceptance back into the Acholi Society.

People in Northern Uganda are particularly worried about the failure of the signing of the peace agreement in Juba and the fact that the LRA has been reported active in some parts of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. On the ground however, the security in Northern Uganda continues to remain calm with a few insignificant incidences of criminal gangs and burglaries in Gulu town and Pader and Kitgum districts. The Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) army is on alert and continues to assure the population that all is well. There are emerging fears about the likely invasion of Pader district by the Karamajong in their search for pasture and water for their animals since Karamoja itself is currently hit by drought.

### Lord's Resistance Army Movement

Recent UN and media reports indicate that the LRA abducted over Seventy (70) Children in Sudan and DR Congo. The LRA, through their Spokesperson, David Nyekorach Matsanga vehemently denies these reports. According to UN run radio Okapi, this has led to displacement of over 75,000 people who have fled their homes in DR Congo to Southern Sudan. In a related incident, The GoU issued stern warnings to NGOs operating in Northern Uganda against providing assistance to the LRA.

## OTI HIGHLIGHTS

### A. Narrative Summary

Following the successful first quarter of the NUTI program, the NUTI team focused activities from July through September 2008 on getting the permanent offices up and running and developing and implementing grants. Building on the solid foundation laid during the first quarter, the NUTI field team continued to work closely with the OTI/USAID staff both in Uganda and Washington and C&A Headquarters staff in Alexandria.

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Between July and September 2008, OTI cleared 13 NUTI grants. NUTI has developed and is implementing grants which employ a variety of approaches that contribute toward NUTI's program goal and objectives. The major areas of interventions include rehabilitation of government buildings and infrastructure, government outreach and public information interventions including radio programs, peace and reconciliation activities, interventions to support agricultural production and closure of the IDP camps. NUTI awarded most of the grants cleared during the quarter to local government bodies at the district and sub-county levels. The local governments' play key roles in the implementation and monitoring of grant activities.



This picture was taken at the Lalogi Farmers Forum grant signing ceremony

## B. Grants Activity Summary

To date NUTI has committed US\$547,365 toward 14 activities. Of these 14 activities, 13 were cleared in between July and September 2008. The commitment rate for the quarter was \$462,190.

	<b>New Grants in this Quarter</b>	<b>New Commitments</b>	<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>Total Committed</b>
<b>District</b>	<b>Grants</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>	<b>Grants</b>	<b>Amount(\$)</b>
Gulu	6	191,692	7	276,867
Amuru	4	170,278	4	170,278
Gulu & Amuru	3	100,220	3	100,220
	13	462,190	14	547,365

## C. Indicators of Success

Considering the level of grant activity over the last 3 months, it is apparent that the program has registered many successes. According to the program design, the program was meant to cover the Acholi sub-region, specifically Gulu, Amuru, Kitgum, and Pader districts. It was envisaged that during the start-up phase, the program would for this period only work in Gulu and Amuru districts. Considering the grants in their various stages, it is apparent that these grants are well represented in the two districts. For the 14 grants that have been cleared to date, four cover both Gulu and Amuru, six are exclusively in Gulu and three exclusively in Amuru. It can safely be argued that the geographical targets have been achieved as planned during this quarter.

The NUTI team developed a draft M&E plan which will be discussed and finalized in October with input from OTI's M&E Advisor. This plan will be a useful framework for monitoring and evaluating the outputs, outcomes, and impact of the NUTI small grants program. The M&E plan will be presented and modified during the forthcoming strategic visioning meeting.

The OTI activities database is functioning well. NUTI staff received training and are now well acquainted with how it operates and are inputting data daily. The OTI activities database is being used to monitor the progress of the grant activities. The database creates a transparent mechanism for the NUTI staff to account for the work they do. So far some of the key indicator outputs presented according to NUTI's objectives as shown in the matrix below:

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Objective	Key output indicators	Progress
Enhance the capacity of the Ugandan media, particularly in northern Uganda, to research, inform and report on issues relevant to peace, recovery and development.	The number of journalists trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One meeting has been held with 14 radio presenters and 7 radio managers in Acholi sub region to map out some of their key areas of interest, their challenges and needs (Moses to provide the number of journalist who attended).</li> <li>A grant to do SWOT analysis for the key radio stations has been cleared to help identify areas for capacity building support is being planned. The SWOT will determine the capacity gaps that will inform the plan to support radio stations</li> </ul>
	The number of pieces of equipment provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SWOT analysis grant for the radio stations has been cleared and is still in progress</li> </ul>
	The number of radio spot programs funded and aired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 Talk shows have been planned for Hepatitis E campaign. The schedule for the radio presentation has been developed.</li> <li>28 talk shows have been planned on 'no land violence campaign'. The talk show radio presentations are still ongoing for the next 4 months.</li> </ul>
Increase the visibility of, and confidence in, all levels of government through the delivery of targeted strategic interventions.	The number of trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of 200 VHTs in the management of Hepatitis E in Patiko and Paicho sub-counties</li> </ul>
	The number of community outreach items distributed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been handover of 280 goats and certificates to camp leaders</li> <li>In Odek construction items have been distributed to assist the communities to obtain building materials for the administration offices. These were handed over to the LC3 chair person</li> <li>Distribution of items during the Hepatitis E campaign in the sub-counties of Patiko and Paicho. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200 pick axes</li> <li>300 hoes</li> <li>30 bicycles</li> <li>2 megaphones</li> <li>50 cartons of aqua safe</li> </ul> </li> <li>Equipment handed over to the farmers forum in Lalogi sub-county: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 ox ploughs</li> <li>10 ox rakes</li> <li>45 gumboots</li> <li>45 rain coats</li> <li>45 overalls</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	The number of government buildings rehabilitated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rehabilitation of Odek sub county administration block is 45.9% to completion.</li> <li>Signed a contract for the rehabilitation of Purongo sub-county administration offices</li> </ul>

**Speed** – The NUTI team has developed the capacity to respond quickly to new opportunities and emerging priorities. In September, NUTI developed and executed a media-related grant in one week from idea through grant execution. Through this grant NUTI worked with a new grantee, the Northern Uganda Media Club, to convene a stakeholders

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meeting with journalists and management staff from radio stations throughout northern Uganda to brainstorm on the state of the media in northern Uganda and what can be done to improve the quality of reporting.

**Re-targeting/Flexibility**—NUTI continues to closely monitor the implementation of its grants and draw lessons that inform grants under development. For example, during the implementation of a grant which supported the phasing out of IDP camp management structures and restoration of the LC1 structure, the lowest level of local government, NUTI realized that the camp commandants had not been adequately consulted about the tokens of appreciation they were to receive to thank them for their role in managing the camps. This resulted in some of the camp commandants using the handover ceremony, which USAID’s Mission Director attended, to lodge public complaints that the tokens of appreciation were not enough.

When NUTI began developing a grant to support a similar activity in Amuru District, the staff shared the experience in Gulu with the Amuru District Officials. The Amuru District Officials recommended that they carry out a series of consultation meetings with the camp commandants prior to the handover ceremonies. NUTI provided support to these meetings and hopes that this will ensure beneficiaries understand the purpose of the activity and reduce the chances for protests.

**Resource Leveraging** – This quarter, NUTI staff actively participated in monthly coordination forums between donors and the Gulu and Amuru District governments, including the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) meetings, security meetings, and important cluster (sector) meetings. As a result of this close coordination, NUTI has been able develop grants that leverage the limited resources obligated to the program. For example, NUTI awarded a grant to UNHCR to continue and expand an important IDP information radio program. NUTI resources will pay for the radio programs to air on local stations covering Gulu and Amuru and UNHCR will contribute its resources toward expanding the radio programs to Kitgum and Pader. Until NUTI offered support, UNHCR had not been unable to extend the radio programs for IDPs to Kitgum and Pader. These radio programs are intended to assist IDPs to make informed decisions about returning home.

There continues to be regular dialogue and consultative meetings between the district politicians and NUTI staff. For instance one of the completed grants was on camp management phase out in Opit and Patiko (sub-counties) where NUTI provided 280 goats for the outgoing camp managers. UNHCR provided transport logistics and prepared the certificates and AVSI provided the tents. This ceremony was also attended by the new USAID Mission Director, the District Vice Chairman, the Deputy CAO in charge of disaster management who also doubles as the Chairperson of the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC). In Lalogi sub-county NUTI provided ox ploughs which NAADS simultaneously supplemented by providing the draft animals (oxen). NUTI monitors and analyzes the UNHCR generated figures on returns from the camps to identify trends in population movements.

**Policy Leveraging** –NUTI has responded to the complaints among politicians and government officials in northern Uganda that little USG support works directly with the local government structures. One of the central aspects of the transition underway in northern Uganda is the rapid phase out of international and non-governmental organizations providing direct assistance to communities and the restoration of government social services and infrastructure. To respond to this aspect of the transition to date most NUTI grants have been awarded directly to the local governments.

NUTI staff continue to consult with the local government officials in order to generate ideas for grant activities that are relevant to the government priorities. Local government officials and politicians are given an opportunity to take the lead in generating ideas which are discussed with NUTI team and developed further for clearance. This unique approach and positive response it is receiving from the local government officials likely influenced the USAID Mission’s decision to obligate an additional \$1.9 million of Mission resources toward the NUTI contract.

## PROGRAM APPRAISAL

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The NUTI program has had a successful quarter demonstrated by the efficiency in the process employed to develop, clear, and implement grants. This success has largely been due to the groundwork that was accomplished during the previous quarter. This included the staffing, setting up offices and acquisition of the required resources for running the program.

NUTI has excellent program and operations teams that work collaboratively to achieve the program goal. The team is very enthusiastic and innovative in identifying relevant problems for grant focus as well as generating ideas as to how to address such problems using NUTI grant opportunities. NUTI has also maintained a seamless working relationship with the OTI/USAID representatives in Uganda in terms of planning and taking decisions related to the conceptualization, clearance, and implementation of grants. NUTI has also continued to work with the OTI/USAID country representatives to address day-to-day challenges that would have otherwise negatively affected the success of the organization.

NUTI enjoys good working relationships with the district technical personnel and politicians. All the grant activities address some of the core areas of the government's PRDP initiative as well as other national priorities such as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan. Apart from the media-related grants, all the grantees are local government departments. Grant ideas are generated in consultation with local government authorities and support government priorities and programs. For instance most of the current grants are based on the recommendations of the Durable Solutions Assessment that the local governments of Gulu and Amuru Districts are carrying out. Local government authorities have also approached NUTI with many grant ideas which are considered for funding. This fulfillment has increased local government participation in the grants and this in way legitimizes NUTI's visibility in the local government plans. More importantly, through these grants the local government efforts are increasingly visible to and felt by the communities benefiting.

## OPERATIONS

The operations team focused activities this quarter on finalizing staffing, acquiring equipment for the office, establishing administrative and financial systems to support rapid grant making, and securing premises for both the office and the Chief of Party's residence.

### **Staffing**

- C&A has filled all full-time positions for the agreed staffing structure, with the exception of one driver. NUTI's third driver will be hired in October in anticipation of the receipt of the third vehicle NUTI is procuring. C&A also recruited one intern to serve as the NUTI receptionist and one STTA ICT Consultant. The Information, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Xavier Nsabagasani, reported for duties on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008.
- C&A advertised for the NUTI driver position. A shortlist has been sent and interviews will be conducted in the second week of October 2008.

### **Acquisition of Equipment**

#### *Vehicles/Motorbikes*

- Two (2) vehicles were delivered and are currently in use by NUTI. These are Hilux double cabin pick-up registration number UAK 202Z and Toyota Prado, UAJ 389Y.
- The third car Land cruiser hard top arrived at Toyota Uganda and is undergoing the clearance process. It is expected to be delivered by third week of October 2008
- With two of NUTI's vehicles delivered, C&A has reduced the number of hired vehicles to one, a Discovery UAJ 996J and its driver.
- C&A procured three Honda XL motorbikes from Sed Autostores and Supplies, Ltd. in Kampala. These are undergoing registration which should be completed on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 and thereafter delivered to NUTI. At the moment NUTI has hired one motorbike for use by the STTA Engineers and hires vehicles on an as-needed daily basis for grant activities.

#### *Computer and Communications Equipment and Internet Connectivity*

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- All computer equipment is functioning well except one time capsule, one computer and the VSAT that were damaged by a power surge during an electrical storm. Staff are currently using USB/wireless GPRS modems for internet connectivity until the VSAT connection is restored. NUTI placed an advertisement in the local papers and on Gulu Google Group to solicit proposals from competent individuals/firms to assess the wiring and earthing of the NUTI office premises, ascertain the cause of the power surge, and make recommendations for what changes must be made to protect from future damage. No responses were received by the closing date, so the Operations Manager is working through contacts to identify an individual who can carry out the required assessment.

## *Residence for the COP*

- The residential house for COP is near completion and will be ready on/about November 1, 2008. The COP has moved out of Acholi Inn into a house rented by Internews.

## **JULY STAFF MOVEMENTS**

- Start up Manager Donna Kerner departed from Uganda on July 20.
- Curt Schaeffer returned on July 21<sup>st</sup> to fill in during the COP's absence.
- Amanda Willett departed Uganda on July 22 to pack out.
- Senior Program Advisor Jessica Davey facilitated team building workshop from July 9–20.
- Program Advisor Jason Kearns facilitated team building workshop from July 10–20 and will act as Deputy Country Representative from August 1-25.

## **AUGUST STAFF MOVEMENTS**

- Deputy Start up Manager John Gattorn scheduled to leave Uganda to pack out in the US on August 1.
- Curt Schaeffer, C&A Senior Technical Advisor and OTI Program Manager left Uganda on 6 August 2008.
- Amanda Willett, NUTI Chief of Party returned to Uganda on 13 August 2008.
- Jason Kearns, OTI Program Advisor, departed from Uganda on 26 August 2008.
- John Gattorn, NUTI Deputy Country Representative, returned to Uganda 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008

## **SEPTEMBER STAFF MOVEMENTS**

- Joel Hirst, NUTI Country Representative, was in Gulu during the weeks of 9 and 22 September.
- Amanda Willett, NUTI Chief of Party, traveled to Kampala on 26 September to procure household furniture and equipment.

## **NEXT STEPS/IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES**

In general, NUTI will continue to work to ensure that all the grants that have been cleared are effectively implemented and adequately monitored. The following are some of the priority activities for the October-December 2008 quarter.

### **Grants**

The pace of implementation and spending on cleared grants will increase in the next quarter. NUTI anticipates moving five priority grants from pending to cleared and expedite their implementation:

- CAS021 Camp Clean Up Exercise
- CAS022 Production of Legal Documents for Gulu District Officials
- CAS023 Opaya Primary School Water Point Rehabilitation
- CAS024 STTA for the district Engineer and TORs for the STTAs
- CAS025 Furniture for Odek Sub-county Administration Offices

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## **Program Planning, Targeting, and M&E**

The NUTI team from both Uganda and Washington will participate in a two-day strategic visioning session to more clearly define the programs target groups, interventions, sectors, and geographical area. The NUTI team is in the process of reviewing the data available about IDP returns and will also carry out a perceptions and media survey in Gulu, Amuru, Kitgum, and Pader Districts. The data review and survey results will enable NUTI to choose which sub-counties to target. The NUTI team will also conduct a budget projection exercise to determine a ballpark figure of the number of grants the program will award in each sub-county and if and how many additional staff to hire with the funding available. The M&E plan will also be finalized in the next quarter and is expected to serve as a framework that the NUTI team will use to evaluate the program's outputs, outcomes, and impact.

## **Donor Coordination**

Continuing to work with existing USAID- and other donor-funded programs, NUTI will strengthen the existing networks to enhance impact and leverage resources in a way that creates a strong synergy between the government and its donor partners. NUTI had initial discussions with the USAID mission to agree on how to approach the programming for and timing of truth and reconciliation activities that the USAID mission has given NUTI funding to implement. The NUTI team anticipates meeting every month to six weeks to discuss and review truth and reconciliation activities.

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