

Livelihoods in crisis:

A longitudinal study in Pader, Uganda (Inception Report)

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1. Introduction

This report covers the first phase of the Humanitarian Policy Group's longitudinal study of 'Livelihoods in Crisis' in Northern Uganda. This phase of the study was an inception period in which key collaborative partnerships were established, background information from literature was analysed, the study area and sample population were chosen and the first data was collected from the sample group to give an initial picture of their livelihoods during the previous 12 months.

Over the next three years, the study will produce an annual report that presents and analyses the changes that the sample households and their communities have experienced during the year. This first report is the starting point. It presents the first measure of the livelihoods of the households being followed, and provides an overview of the situation, to locate the study in the context of Pader District and Northern Uganda. This section introduces the study. Section 2 gives an overview of livelihoods in Pader, drawing on the existing literature. Section 3 presents the first analysis from the initial household economy data collected by the study, and thus provides a form of 'baseline' to which the study will refer over the next three years. The final section discusses some of the implications of the initial findings, and outlines the next steps for the project.

1.1 Background and rationale for the research

Most research and analysis in emergencies has been conducted on a single-study, snapshot basis, and affected populations have rarely been followed over time. Research in war zones is difficult, and emergencies are seen as inherently short-term in nature. In fact, of course, many emergencies extend over long periods, and with adequate planning and resources it should be possible to collect longitudinal data on a sample population.

Much humanitarian research is also focused on what aid agencies do, and consists of interviews with agency staff and reviews of agency documents. The views of people affected by emergencies are more rarely heard. Livelihoods and food security assessments are also usually conducted on a one-off basis. So, despite the growing sophistication of livelihoods assessment techniques, there is still very little sense of how livelihoods adapt over time during ongoing crises.

This project attempts to address this gap by following a small sample of households over time in Northern Uganda.

1.2 The study

The study will follow 30 households from two communities over a four-year period, to investigate the main economic, social and political issues affecting their livelihoods. Northern Uganda was selected because it is a major, long-running and neglected humanitarian emergency. Although peace talks are now being held, the outcome is still uncertain, and for the civilian population the next few years will be a difficult period. Humanitarian assistance will remain important, irrespective of whether there is a transition towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Key research questions to be explored through the project include:

Livelihoods and Political Economy

- What are the main sources of food and income?
- What coping and survival strategies do households engage in?
- How do markets function?
- How does relief assistance interact with the political economy of the conflict?

Conflict and Protection

- What is the impact of the conflict on livelihoods?
- What strategies do people use to try to protect themselves?
- Do relief actors have any protective impact?

Relief Assistance

- How significant a part of people's livelihoods is relief assistance?
- What access do people have to basic services and Sphere minimum standards for food, shelter, water and sanitation and health care?
- What are people's understandings of the relief aid system?
- How appropriately is relief targeted?
- Is relief corruptly diverted?

1.3 The methodology

The study will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the context and transforming structures and processes influencing livelihood outcomes. The individual household model (IHM¹) will be used to measure the economic status of the sample households every six months over the next three years. This will allow the study to measure income, assets and demographics.

Household economy information will be supported by detailed biographical/life history information for a subset of selected households. This will allow in-depth study of factors affecting individual and household access to land and other assets, resources and services that contribute to wellbeing and security. Local researchers will lead enquiries into clan and other social relationships, experiences of conflict, including abduction, gender, legal status and land access. Analysis relating to the broader social, anthropological and political context will look at the issues that influence household capacities and economic options – for example, in relation to land access or access to services, such as water supplies. This will be accomplished through qualitative research, using tools such as life history examinations, participative observation, monitoring local events affecting the community, livelihoods and agriculture production, key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

To gain a fuller understanding of the context, meso-level information (markets, infrastructure, private sector investment), will be collected through periodic district profiling, involving district-level ministry offices and aid agencies working in Pader. This will include the use of standard household economy analysis (HEA).² An HEA exercise will be carried out in September 2007, and will be updated later in the study to monitor changes across the wider area.

¹ The Individual Household Model (IHM) is a method of measuring and modelling individual household income. An account of the IHM can be found at www.evidencefordevelopment.com/furtherreading

² HEA is a method of describing household food access and predicting the effect of changes on shocks on different groups within a given population. See The Household Economy Approach, Seaman J et al (Save the Children Fund UK 2000)

2. Livelihoods in Northern Uganda: reviewing the literature

The conflict in Northern Uganda is protracted and many-layered. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has waged a brutal war against central government authorities, targeting civilians and children. The conflict has been characterised by major violations of human rights against civilians, destruction of infrastructure and reduced access to social services.³ It has also paralysed economic activity (Nannyonjo, 2005). These conditions have had direct and profoundly negative implications for livelihood security. A Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA) was signed between the LRA and the Government of Uganda in August 2006 but expired in February 2007 and the future is still uncertain. The UN appointed an Envoy on LRA-Affected areas who made substantial efforts to revive the peace talks which resumed in July 2007 in Juba. (IDMC 2007).

The conflict has displaced up to two million people, mostly from the three Acholi districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. Roughly 90% of the population of these districts has been living in camps as internally displaced persons (IDPs).⁴ Camp life has had a disastrous impact on the population. Mortality rates have soared (Ugandan Ministry of Health, 2005) and, deprived of access to their own land, the overwhelming majority of households have had to rely on WFP food for most of their survival needs.

Alongside the insurgency, Karamojong pastoralists and tribesmen raid and terrorise districts in the northern and eastern parts of Uganda (Nannyonjo, 2005: 1). The Ugandan military has carried out forceful disarmament operations in the Karamoja region, and these have been violently resisted by Karamojong warriors, resulting in further displacement and the reported deaths of scores of people (IDMC, 2007).

³ For a discussion of human rights dimensions see also *Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Watch, Vol 17, 12 (a), 2005 <http://hrw.org/reports/2005> and *Abducted and Abused: Renewed War in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Watch, June 15, 2003, <http://www.hrw.org/reports>. See also IDMC 2006 *Uganda: Only Peace Can Restore the Confidence of the Displaced*, 2nd Edition

⁴WHO, IRC and the Ugandan Ministry of Health: 'Internally Displaced Persons Health and Mortality Survey' (Ugandan Ministry of Health, 2005). This survey indicates that in the year before the 2006 peace talks, there were 1.2 m displaced people in the Acholi region (Gulu, Kitgum and Pader); within Pader, there were 320,000 displaced people. Mortality rates were extremely high, with an estimated 1000 excess deaths/week across the district.

2.1 Livelihoods, displacement and insecurity

There has been little systematic data collected in Northern Uganda that purposefully links insecurity with livelihoods and poverty (Annan et al., 2006). What is known is that, prior to the conflict, most of the population lived in homesteads, and reared livestock; agricultural production was the predominant economic activity. Today, nearly all the livestock have been killed or stolen and people are unable to access their agricultural lands or grow food and cash crops.

Stites et al. (2006) have documented shifts in livelihood and protection strategies in Kitgum district. According to this report, traditional agricultural practices within semi-settled Acholi villages mitigated or reduced risks through collective systems and shared outputs, but this has broken down as people have been forced from their land and into camps.

The camp system was intended to protect people, but residents have been constrained in terms of their livelihoods and their security. The army has maintained a curfewed security zone around the camps, allowing residents out for only a few hours each day (Stites et al., 2006: 4). Those who ventured beyond the security zone or violated the curfew ran the risk of being attacked by the LRA, or accused of being a rebel or a rebel collaborator by the Ugandan military (Bøås and Hatloy, 2005). Residents were not adequately protected from LRA attacks, which involved killings, rape, theft of animals and the malicious destruction of property. One response was the 'night commuting' of children to town centres. Insecurity in the camps has also been attributed to ethnic clashes among the Langi and Acholi in Lira district, and further violence is possible (Nannyonjo, 2005:5).

Food production in and around the camps is inhibited by the lack of access to land, and IDPs have been heavily reliant on external assistance (IDMC et al, 2006). The camps have been the main conduit for humanitarian assistance (RoU, no date), but food aid has not always reached the more isolated or insecure camps (Bøås and Hatløy, 2005: 29).

WFP has delivered food aid, mostly in the form of a general individual food ration and a ration to 'extremely vulnerable individuals', a category that accounts for more than 60% of the basic food needs of the population. WFP estimated in

November 2006 that the 'food gap' for IDPs in Northern Uganda was still 60% of daily needs. Citing funding shortfalls, WFP in April 2007 reduced the ration to only 40% of daily needs (WFP, 2007).

Stites et al. (2006) found that few households were able to protect consumption against additional shocks such as drought, illness, family death or the loss of assets. Families lack cash savings, food reserves or livestock to fall back on in times of need, leaving them highly vulnerable. Few people are able to access credit and remittances are almost unheard of, other than as a one-off gift from visiting relatives (Stites et al., 2006: 5). Bøås and Hatløy (2005) state that few IDPs have relatives outside of Northern Uganda, as the Acholi diaspora is relatively small and fragmented.

Bøås and Hatløy (2005: 26) also report that, in the reference month of their study, two out of three adults had no income at all. They found the situation in Pader to be the worst, with 75% reporting no cash income and only 6% having an income of more than \$18 in the previous month. Stites et al. (2006) argue that lack of household labour reduces the capacity to pursue productive livelihood options, either through employment or own-crop production. Annan et al.'s 2006 study of youth in Kitgum and Pader found youth employment high and wages low. A third of their respondents had not had a single day's employment in the prior reference month.

Higgins (2006) identifies a gap in data concerning the earning capacity of women in Northern Uganda. One of the few specifically documented options open to women is sex work in the camps. This market is mostly sustained by government soldiers and members of Local Defence Units (LDUs) (Bøås and Hatløy, 2005: 32).

Diversification – critical to rural livelihood strategies – is not easily achieved within IDP camps (Amnesty Commission, 2006: 12). Cash-crop production has been de-prioritised as scarce land and inputs are allocated to sustaining household food needs (FAO, 2006: 14). Many households engage in petty trading, particularly of firewood and charcoal during the dry season, and wild greens and seasonal fruits during rainy seasons (Stites et al., 2006: 5). Other livelihood options include brewing and stone-quarrying (FAO, 2006: 18).

Box 1: Livelihood activities in Lira Palwo, Pader District

Agriculture is the main productive activity in the district, with 90% of the population involved. According to the 2006/2009 District Development Plan, 97% of the farmers in the district use hand hoes, and less than 1% of families use ox ploughs. Use of tractors for cultivation was limited. Crops include legumes (beans, pigeon peas, soybean, cowpeas, green grains and ground nuts), root crops (sweet potatoes and cassava), cereals (finger millet, maize, rice, epuripur, sorghum and sekedo), oil crops (sunflower and simsim), vegetables (Amaranthus, hibiscus marakwang and local low peas) and two cash crops (cotton and tobacco). However, production has been extremely limited since 2002, and most food produced is for home consumption, and is in any case far less than needed to provide a basic income. This has also meant very limited demand for agricultural labour on other people's land. Livestock and poultry are also kept, but rearing is on a very small scale because of raids by Karamojong cattle-keepers and LRA rebels.

Many other activities are pursued, some of them traditional and some of them stemming from the new opportunities and needs arising from camp life. Increased freedom of movement and movement to transitional resettlement sites has improved both agriculture opportunities and opportunities for other economic activities. As security has improved, people have been able to resume wild food collection, hunting and fishing, all of which were important livelihood activities.

Markets have been severely affected by the conflict and the range of products coming into or going out of the district has been reduced. Some former large-scale traders shifted to petty trade. Farmers also took up petty trade as it was one of the few available income sources. Petty trade mainly involves small retail shops and road-side stalls in the camps.

There is a high demand for fuel, either charcoal or dry wood, although demand is falling as improved security increases people's freedom of movement outside the camps. Brick making is another livelihood source, and demand for thatching is increasing. Beer brewing and distilling is a significant activity carried out by women in the displacement camps and transitional resettlement sites. Prostitution has increased. According to Pader district officials, young girls are particularly vulnerable. The increase in prostitution is leading to high rates of HIV and AIDS.

In some camps, population density has exceeded 1,700 people per hectare (CSOPNU, 2006). Such congestion has led to extremely high levels of excess morbidity and mortality, and extremely low levels of access to basic services (especially water, sanitation, health care and education) (CSOPNU, 2006). Overcrowding also reduces opportunities for small garden cultivation around huts, where women traditionally produce malakwang (a green leaf vegetable) (Bøås and Hatløy, 2005: 14). In areas where the security situation has improved, IDPs are able to access gardens and engage in subsistence production, petty trade, firewood collection, grass-cutting and casual labour. However, tensions are beginning to rise between IDPs, refugees and host communities concerning access to land. The increased pressure on the environment and natural resource base has caused considerable concern.

2.2 Return processes

Since the August 2006 ceasefire, there has been a process of ‘decongestion’ in which new camps, known as transitional resettlement sites (TRS), have been established closer to people’s villages of origin. The resulting increased freedom of movement has had positive impact, with some cultivation in the latter part of the year. For some people, this was their first harvest in many years.

If the peace process is successful, the movement of people to the TRS and back to their original villages will undoubtedly continue, but their livelihoods will go through a transition. They will not return to the situation as it was before displacement. Five years of living in camps has changed people’s social networks and altered relations within the community. New households have been established and many have died, through disease, war injury or old age. Indeed, those who have developed successful new livelihoods in the camps will now be weighing up the chances of maintaining what they have in the camp area against having to re-establish their former way of life if and when they move.

2.3 Social and economic consequences of the conflict

The conflict has transformed normal social and economic relations within households and across the community. This has left many individuals without protection or economic support, creating new categories of very poor or destitute individuals. The processes leading to this

breakdown at household and community level, and the means by which affected groups and individuals regain social status and economic security, will be studied in the course of this project. The following section describes some of the consequences of the conflict for different population groups.

2.3.1 Abduction and youth employment

The Survey of War Affected Youth (SWAY) is an extensive project examining the lives of young people in Northern Uganda. SWAY has found that economic opportunities available for this group are very limited, both inside and outside of the camps (Annan et al., 2006). Crop cultivation would have traditionally been a primary activity. However, in camps young people have had limited access to land and tend to rely on casual labour and small projects (*leje leje*), which are sporadic and unprofitable. Few young people choose to leave the region for work as they tend to have weak contacts and limited resources, and lack the necessary language skills. There are also strong socio-cultural ties to the region. Annan et al. (2006: 35) estimate that on average young people in Northern Uganda have just seven days’ work a month, at wages of just 55 cents per day. Income tends to be invested in schooling and vocational training. Many young people have turned to military service as a more profitable livelihood.

Abduction is a feature of the conflict in Northern Uganda, with kidnapped children and young people serving as porters, foot soldiers, servants and sex slaves for the LRA. Fear of attack and abduction was a motivation for thousands of the ‘night commuter’ children who sought refuge in the towns each night. Throughout 2006 the number of night commuters appeared to decrease (IDMC et al., 2006: 27), and the situation has improved since the peace agreement. One result has been the break-up of families, an increase in the number of street children in towns and the erosion of cultural and moral norms, all of which are cause for concern.

Abduction has robbed young people of time and freedom, as well as accumulated productive and supportive assets, and can be a major barrier to accumulation once they return (Annan et al., 2006: 38). Returnees tend to engage in lower-skilled work with lower daily earnings (on average 24% lower) than their non-abducted counterparts. In particular, they have had fewer opportunities to learn livelihood skills and gain the education necessary for entry to higher-end activities. They

have been held in captivity and, in some cases, suffered serious injury and trauma. It is often assumed that former abductees are more likely to join the military than other young people, spurred on by grudges against the LRA. However, Annan et al. found that former abductees are as likely, not more likely, as other young people to join the military.

Income generation and economic productivity are critical to the psychological and social reintegration of former combatants, and the need to establish a new and positive identity for themselves is critical. Even when families are willing to accept ex-combatants back, they often face financial constraints to doing so (Amnesty Commission, 2006: 15). Keeping people busy and non-violent requires encouraging productive economic opportunities and supporting sustained participation in local and national markets (*ibid.*: 15).

2.3.2 Child health and orphanhood

Close to half of the children in Kitgum district are stunted (CSOPNU, 2006: 37). Half of IDPs are under the age of 15 (*ibid.*: 17). Children under the age of five account for 41% of all deaths in the camps: over 400 children under the age of five die each week from preventable diseases, and more than 10,000 are estimated to have died between January and July 2005, most of them from malaria/fever and coughs (*ibid.*: 15).

A quarter of children over ten years of age have lost one or both of their parents. The Ugandan government (2004) argues that orphans are the most affected in these situations, though some cope better than others (Bøås and Hatløy, 2005: 18). There has been a large loss of adult males aged 20–29 as a result of the conflict, and 12% of females aged 30–44 are widows – twice the national average (CSOPNU, 2006). Annan et al. (2006: 43) find that children and young people that have lost a father are likely to earn 25% less on average than others, particularly if the loss is recent. It therefore appears that earnings pick up over time as alternative sources of financial support are found. Surprisingly, the loss of a mother correlates with 20% *higher* average earnings, although why this is the case is not explored.

2.3.3 Sexual and gender-based violence

A number of authors identify sexual and gender-based violence as a significant problem in the

camps (Akumu et al., 2005; Stites et al., 2005). Domestic violence is rife but underreported (Stites et al., 2006). Women are vulnerable as they search for firewood or water away from their homes, or work in fields on the outskirts of the camp. Attacks are also perpetrated by soldiers tasked with protecting camp residents, who demand sex from women and girls in exchange for food, shelter and protection (Akumu et al., 2005: 9). Frequent beatings leave women with physical injuries – most commonly broken and dislocated arms and legs and cuts to the face, neck and upper body. Victims are often prevented from seeking medical care (Stites et al., 2006).

Violence against women has been linked to the changing social and economic roles of men and women. Women's traditional roles, including fetching water and firewood, preparing meals, cleaning, washing, child care and managing small plots and gardens, have continued during displacement, while men have been prevented from carrying out many of their normal roles (Bøås and Hatløy, 2005: 16). Men are still active, but Stites et al. (2006) observe that they have been less successful in creating new economic opportunities.

Male 'idleness' (linked to high alcohol consumption), inverted power relations (particularly where women are becoming chief providers), food insecurity and lack of money generally (hence the need to leave the camp to forage, or the bartering of sex for food and other goods) have been linked to increasing domestic violence (Akumu et al., 2005: 9). Stites et al. (2006) found that the cultural challenges presented by the context of displacement, changing household structures and gender roles, the promotion of women's and children's rights by outsiders, are all cited as reasons why violence against women has increased. Women report male drunkenness, coupled with strict patriarchal customs dictating subservient behaviour among women, as factors in the violence against them (Stites et al., 2006).

2.3.4 Chronic ill-health and disability

Injuries and illness can seriously affect people's capacity to undertake physical labour and therefore employment. One-third of injuries among young people surveyed by SWAY were reportedly caused by the LRA (bullet wounds, shrapnel, back and chest pains caused by beatings) (Annan et al., 2006: 43).

Stites et al. (2006) found that disabled-headed households, as well as female- and child-headed households, fared the worst in accessing the limited amount of land available in the camps. In the few semi-settled villages or in those few camps located very near original villages, collective systems of labour were preserved and were thought to be more inclusive of vulnerable households.

2.4 Pader District: an overview

Pader is a new district, created in 2001. Under Uganda's decentralised governance system, the district has an important role to play in creating the conditions for future development and growth. The study will therefore periodically review specific development initiatives and investments made at district/meso level, and assess their impact on livelihoods (for example, through new opportunities for employment and trade, improvements in services and the rehabilitation of infrastructure).

2.4.1 Current budgets and initiatives

During the 2006 financial year (FY2006), the district budget amounted to 17 billion Ush, around 75% of which came from central government, and about 25% directly from donors (UNICEF is the biggest, followed by DANIDA, WFP and international NGOs). Only a small amount, 1–5%, is raised in the district itself (source: interview, Pader District planner, Jan. 2006). Allocations to the various departments, which are agreed at district level, are shown in Table 1 (figures are for FY2006).

Table 1: Sector allocations at the district level

Department	Share
Roads	34%
Education	19%
Community Services	16%
Finance and Planning	11%
Production	10%
Health	10%
Total	100%

As Table 1 shows, production and health receive the smallest budgetary allocations. Production's 10% share is split among eight sub-sectors, including agriculture, veterinary, entomology, trade and industry, cooperatives and fisheries. The district planner, interviewed in February 2007, attributed the sector's small allocation to the fact that people in camps have limited access to land, and so do not need agricultural extension services. This situation is changing rapidly, and shifts in the allocation and use of the production budget will be monitored during the course of the longitudinal study.

Other national projects impacting on production, trade and livelihoods include the Programme for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) and the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). The PMA allocated over 6m Ush for Pader district in 2006. This study plans to assess the impact and reach of PMA investments (which include wood lots, seed multiplication projects and farmer training) over the next three years. Similarly, the study will be looking at the impact of NAADS, a national programme which supports the commercialisation of agriculture. NAADS began operations in Pader in 2006, but is currently operational in only four of the District's 18 sub-counties. There are plans to roll out agro processing and agro marketing components during the course of 2007. Trade is also supported through a district Cooperatives and Marketing Department.

Other agencies supporting commercial activities in the agriculture sector include DUNAVANT, an NGO involved in the production and purchase of cotton, supplying seeds and purchasing directly from producers, and Nile Breweries. Nile Breweries have distributed white seeded sorghum (epuripuri) used to make Eagle lager. Whilst these projects have been disrupted by the conflict, the district cooperatives and the district's marketing department is working to restore them as communities resettle. Their impact will be followed in the course of this study.

Finally, trade in food aid and locally produced food crops clearly makes a major contribution to the local economy – although estimating its scale was beyond the scope of this report. The trade brings second-hand clothing, farm implements, fish and non-consumables into the district.

Alongside these activities, rehabilitation of roads will of course play a critical role in opening up

markets and stimulating trade, both within and outside the district.

2.4.2 Social services

Health

The health crisis that faces Pader district and the whole of Acholi region is powerfully documented in the 2005 WHO/IRC/Ministry of Health report. There are currently 119 health service providers in the district, working in established health units. The district local government employs one qualified doctor and the NGO hospital employs four. The doctor-to-patient ratio is 1 to 326,648, and the nurse-to-patient ratio 1 to 13,108. This compares with the national doctor-to-patient ratio of 1 to 18,600 and nurse-to-patient ratio of 1 to 2,870.

Poverty continues to play a major role in the health status of the people of the district, which is one of the poorest in the country. The average household income is less than a dollar a day, which cannot sustain basic health requirements.⁵ Most of the common diseases in the district are associated with poverty and are preventable. These are malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory infections including tuberculosis, skin infections, leprosy, STDs/HIV and AIDS and malnutrition. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS is high, with rates almost twice the reported national average (11.9% as compared to 6.2%).

Education

Schools have also been adversely affected by the conflict, and many teachers have been lost. There are 1,560 teachers in the district, down from 1,752. Until February 2007, when schools started to open in the transitional settlements, all the district's primary schools were operating from 52 learning centres in IDP camps. Many school structures have been badly damaged and their rehabilitation is a major challenge for the resettlement process.

Water

Access to water is a major problem, both in the main camps and in the transitional camps, where pressure on available resources is overwhelming. Up to 2006, 461 boreholes and 86 shallow wells had been drilled, and eight high-yielding springs had been protected.

⁵ Pader District Development Plan

3. Initial findings

The initial findings from this first round of data collection confirm many of the key observations of earlier livelihood studies: the critical need for access to land, the importance of household labour availability, the importance of access to water and the crucial need for food assistance until more sustainable livelihoods are achieved. The first section of this chapter lays out how the study has selected the sample frame and some of the key elements of the main methodological tools being used, before presenting an analysis of the initial findings in the second section. The final section presents some of the households that the study will follow⁶ over the next three years to help demonstrate the reality of life in the study area and give the reader a personal view of what people are experiencing in making a livelihood in Pader district.

3.1 Selecting the study households

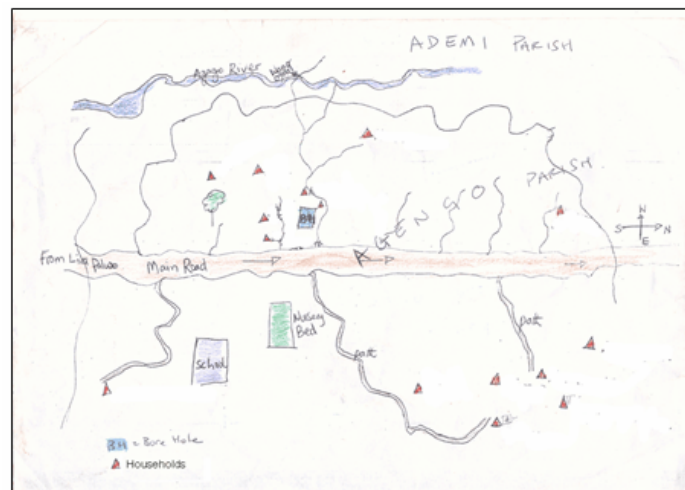
The sample was selected from the population of two Villages (Wards), Aringo Pee and Awee Keyo, located in the adjacent parishes of Agengo and Ademi. This population is now split between a large IDP camp in Lira Palwo and a Transitional Resettlement Site, Obolokome. By using the 'home' villages of the currently displaced population as the basis for selection, follow-up over a period of return should be facilitated. The villages were selected after a discussion with LC1⁷ Chairmen of all villages in Agengo and Ademi parishes.

3.1.1 Characteristics of the two parishes and selection of sites

The selected villages are separated by the Agago River (see Map 1). Aringo Pee (Agengo parish) is on the same side of the river as the Lira Palwo and Obolokome trading centres, and is known for the good quality of its soil. Awee Keyo has the disadvantage of being at a distance from the trading centres, having poor infrastructure (there is no bridge across the river) and suffering from relatively poor soil. Access to health and education services has historically been limited in Awee Keyo, with few children attending school. The impact of their respective locations on

resettlement, including the reach of humanitarian and other programmes, will be explored during the course of the study.

Map 1



3.1.2 Wealth groups

Thirty households were identified for study: 15 from Aringo Pee and 15 from Awee Keyo. A stratified sample of 15 households from each of the two villages was made based on 'wealth group' criteria. To establish the characteristics of 'wealth groups' in the study communities, focus group discussions were held with community leaders and other well-informed members of Lira Palwo camp. This work was carried out during the scoping visit of November 2006 (see trip report, Annex 1). Members of the focus groups were asked to explain what made a household 'better off' or 'worse off'. This was cross-checked during further group interviews. Findings are given in Table 2.

The main asset differentiating the very poor from the poor is their labour. Very poor households have limited labour resources, and a low capacity to undertake agricultural and other casual work. Poor households are able to diversify their income from a range of labouring work, as well as activities such as petty trade and brewing.

A public meeting with LC1s and camp leaders was held to reiterate the purpose of the study and the plans, emphasising in particular that the selection of participants or villages would have no direct benefit to them, and that no one in the area would be disadvantaged by not participating in the study.

⁶ The names have been changed to protect their privacy.

⁷ The LC1 (Local Council 1) is the lowest level of government in Uganda. The Chairman is the elected representative and has lists of household members within his Ward (Village).

Table 2: Characteristics of wealth groups

Very poor (<i>luchan</i>) 20%	Poor (<i>ladyere</i>) 65%	Better off (<i>tyemaber</i>) 15%
Collect firewood, cut grass, fetch water for brick-making, collect wild fruits for sale. Not able to do agricultural work for others	Can do farm work, charcoal, brick-making, brewing, fishing Groups share rent of small plots: grow sweet potatoes, beans, groundnuts	Have income from employment (eg teachers, health workers, petty traders) Can access land for cultivation Cultivate around 3 acres
Elderly, chronically ill, child-headed HH. Depend on food aid	Sell some food aid	Sell food aid
No assets, no land or livestock, 'only cultivate small plots'	Some chickens	Have livestock: goats, cows Have radios, beds, can buy clothes
4 to 5 people in HH	8+ in household	8+ in household

Discussions were held with the LC1 chairmen of the two study villages, one of whom had been present at the original focus group discussions in November (the other had been represented by a deputy). The characteristics of wealth groups were confirmed with the chairmen, who were asked to identify households from their village that fell into the 'better off' and 'worse off' categories. Each chairman had an enumeration list of his village, and with the better-off and worse-off households identified, the whole village could now be identified by wealth group.

However, whilst the characteristics of wealth groups were consistent with the first round of discussions, the distribution in each village was quite different. A higher number of much better-off households, which included teachers and civil servants, was identified in Aringo Pee than in

Aywee Keyo. This was unsurprising given Aringo Pee's close proximity to Lira Palwo and its road connections. In view of the objectives of the study, it was decided to focus on the 'middle-poor' and 'poorest', randomly selecting two households from the better-off category, four from the worst-off category, and nine from the 'middle poor'.

3.1.3 Data collection for the Individual Household Method

The Individual Household Model (IHM) is based on analysis of data collected for a defined reference period (usually the last complete agricultural year). In Pader, the year starts with season 1 planting from mid-March, so the reference year selected was April 2006–March 2007.

The data set includes information on

- household demography by age and sex (Figure 6a). For this study, additional demographic information was recorded on:
 - relationship of the individual to the head of household (to identify orphans, defined as children of 18 years and under who had lost one or both parents (Figure 6b);
 - education level of children still at school, and final school grade of all other household members;
 - any adults who were unable to work, and reason for incapacity;
 - number of months spent outside the household in the reference year (this corresponded with the last agricultural year ie April 2006–March 2007).
- Area of land owned, and area of land cultivated in the last agricultural year (including the household's 'own' land and rented or borrowed land). Distance of plots from place of residence.
- Other main productive assets, including livestock, tools and bicycles.
- Income as food, including WFP relief food, own production, gifts, wild food and school meals (Figures 4a and 4b).
- Cash income, including a month-by-month record of employment, remittance and other cash gifts (Figures 5a and 5b).
- Quantity and frequency of purchase of basic items, including paraffin, soap, clothes and school uniforms. A note was also made of any major 'unpredicted' expenditure items, e.g. hospital treatment.

Changes in all these variables will be analysed over time, as the sample households will be visited every six months between March 2007 and September 2009. Information on household demography, access to and exploitation of land and other economic activities will be recorded, together with information on main items of expenditure listed above. In addition to this, an annual Household Economy Assessment (HEA) will be carried out, to provide an understanding of changes in the wider economy, including trade and access to national and regional markets.

3.2 Analysis

Of the 30 households, 22 are included in the analysis that follows. A further eight households were revisited to follow up data that was incomplete. The analysis in this paper describes a household's economic activities over a period of one year (from April 2006 to March 2007) in terms of disposable income per adult equivalent.

'Disposable income' is defined as the cash remaining to the household after it has met its total minimum food energy needs,⁸ calculated according to the age and gender of each member of the household, using international reference values⁹.

This disposable income is expressed in terms of 'adult equivalents'. The number of adult equivalents in each household is calculated from the total food energy requirement of the household, divided by the food energy requirement of a young adult.

This allows the household's capacity to access basic food and non-food needs to be assessed, and for direct comparisons to be made between households, with the limitation that there will be some remaining differences in the quality of food produced and consumed by different households. In most locations poor households eat a cereal-based diet supplemented by small amounts of pulses, and the actual distortion is small. There is no

assumption that better-off households do in fact consume this minimum diet. In most instances it may be assumed that better-off households use some of their disposable income to purchase additional food items¹⁰.

In the results which follow the diet used was 95% maize and 5% beans at the prices prevailing at the time of the study.

3.2.1 Basic food energy needs and standard of living

Figure 1 (see over page) shows the distribution of disposable income, from the poorest to richest households, expressed in terms of Uganda shillings (Ush) per adult equivalent per year. The three households below the x axis are not able to meet their basic food energy requirements (2,100kcal/adult equivalent/day), despite the WFP food ration distributions.¹¹ Those 'on the line' meet their food needs but have no surplus to meet non-food needs.

Operational agencies can use this information to a) assess the proportion of households in their project area that are in extreme need and are likely to break up without additional assistance; b) identify the demographic profile/s of these households; and c) identify other household characteristics that may be relevant to programming (e.g. health issues, high risk of HIV/AIDS exposure, problems with land access).

Information from the IHM analysis can thus help agencies working with the poorest of the poor to prioritise and target their interventions more effectively, building on specific strengths and assets, as well as responding to needs and vulnerabilities.

All subsequent figures are presented in the same household order.

Comparisons between households can also be made according to their ability to meet a 'standard of living threshold'. This is calculated as the cost

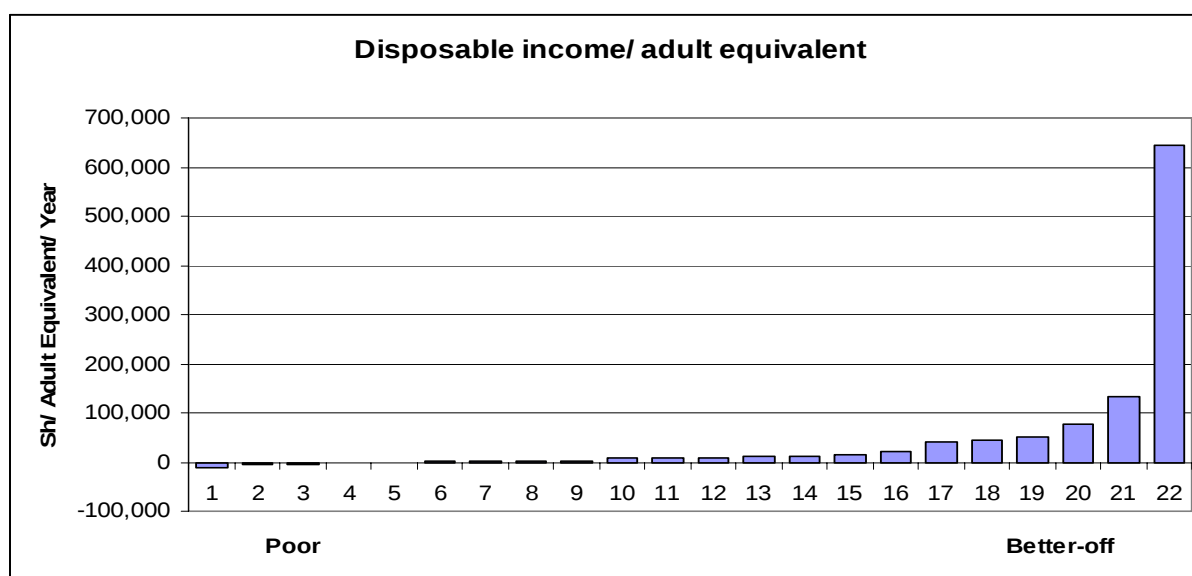
⁸ In most rural situations household income is obtained partly as food for consumption and partly as cash. In presenting the results of household budget surveys the difficulties arise are: (i) Not all of the food consumed e.g. wild foods, has a market price and it is not possible to express the cash value of this; (ii) The nutrient quality of the diet consumed varies between households e.g. some households may have access to milk or fruit, and others not.

⁹ WHO/FAO values for a representative population in a developing country (WHO 1985).

¹⁰ It is intended to address this in due course, by including a fuller nutrient analysis of food consumed in the calculation of household food requirement.

¹¹ Further analysis will establish why the poorest households have been unable to supplement the basic ration (supplying around 50% of most households' needs) through employment or gifts.

Figure 1



of a basket of goods including housing, fuel, clothing, soap, matches and other sundries, school costs and an allocation for health at local prices. These costs are again allocated to each household individually according to its demographics, e.g. school costs only apply to households with school-age children; fuel costs are calculated per household, soap costs are calculated per individual.

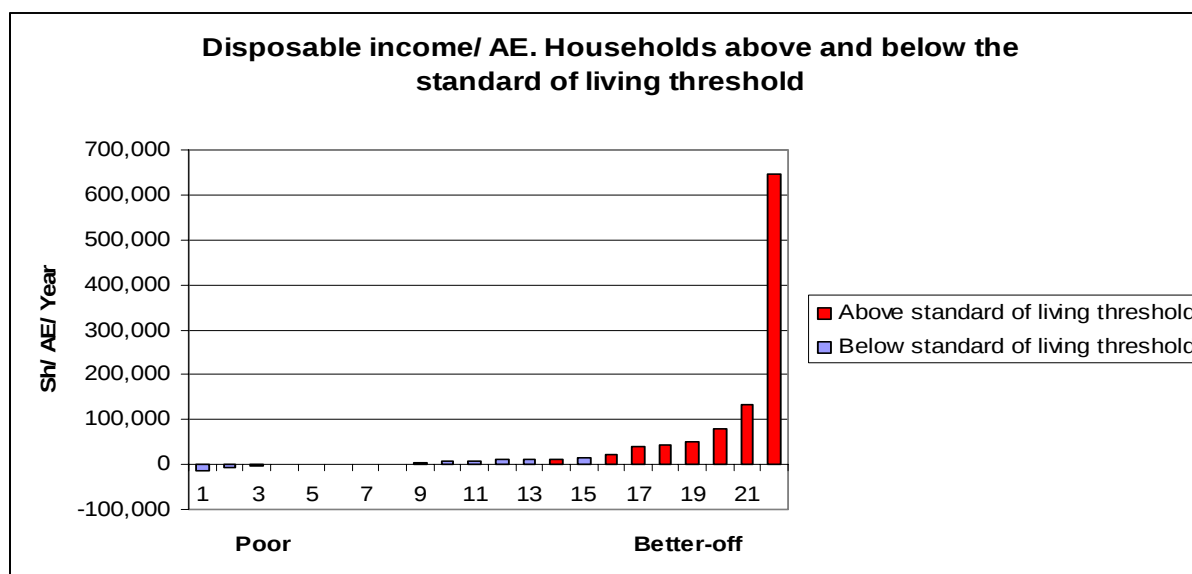
Table 1: Prices from Lira Palwo IDP Camp 06/07

No.	Item	Assumptions	Total cost (Ush)
1.	Salt	½ kg of salt per month @ 400 Ush for 12 months	4,800
2.	Cost of grinding	350 Ush per person x 1 person x 12 months	4200
3.	Soap	1 bar per month for 6 months. The rest of the years soap was distributed by NGOs	5,400
4.	Kerosene/Petrol	½ a litre for 2 months, through out the year @ 1,000 Ush	6,000
5.	Match box	1 box per month for 12 months @ 50 Ush	600
6.	School uniform	Average of 1,900 Ush per child for primary school	1,900
7.	School scholastic matierals (pencil, pen & books	Average 2 books, 1 pen & pencil per Child per year for primary school	900
8.	Parent contribution for WFP school feeding programme	1,500 Ush per child, per year for primary school children only	1,500
9.	Health	Government health care free of charge with exception of purchase of some drugs	2,000
10.	Clothes	1 Child 1 woman 1 man	1,000 2,000 3,000
11.	Water bill	200 Ush x 12 months per household	2,400

Table 3: Prices from Lira Palwo IDP Camp 2006/2007 shows the annual cost of a minimum set of non-food items that would be used by an ‘averagely poor’ household in the study population.

Figure 2 shows households above and below the standard of living threshold. The differences in household expense needs – e.g. the presence of school-age children – mean that, in one case, a household with a higher disposable income/adult

Figure 2



equivalent fails to reach the standard of living threshold, whereas a household with a lower level of disposable income/adult equivalent does achieve this income threshold. Overall, 63.6% of the 22 households fall below the standard of living threshold (i.e. they do not have sufficient disposable income to purchase the basic set of non-food items).

This is important contextual information for operational agencies, particularly those working in the social sectors. It shows that a majority of households will have to make trade-offs between, say, spending money on secondary schooling or on house repair, and spending money on soap, clothes or health care. Households below the 'standard of living' threshold would also have to make trade-offs in order to buy more costly food items with higher nutritional values, such as milk, eggs or vegetables. Nutritional education programmes will need to be aware of this problem, which may also affect individuals trying to comply with anti-retroviral treatment. This information also allows agencies to estimate the proportion of households that are significantly above the threshold, and have the potential to save and make major investments, and the proportion that are very close to the basic needs level, and have a more limited range of investment options.

3.2.2 Distribution of income and 'wealth group' classifications

The figures show that income is fairly evenly distributed, with most households surviving close to or below the basic minimum standard of living

(including food and non-food items). The only household rising significantly above this level is headed by a teacher and his wife (also a teacher).

The grouping by the community and LC1s of households into three categories correlates well with the findings, as the figures clearly show a small group of very poor households, a larger group of middle poor ones and a small group of the better off.

However, the three poorest households (i.e. households where food intake was below 2,100 kcals/person) did not correspond with the initial LC1 assessment. The poorest households in the sample were those in which opportunities to earn cash income were a) unexpectedly restricted due to the household's main earner being unable to work for part of the year (because of caring for a relative in hospital); or b) where some family members were not registered for WFP rations.

The LC1s classified households as 'very poor' on the basis of disability or old age. However, the additional rations given to 'Exceptionally Vulnerable Individuals' (EVIs) was, at least in the small sample we studied, providing additional help to the elderly and disabled. Two of the 'elderly households' identified by the LC1s as 'very poor' were in fact living as part of their extended family, eating together and sharing their WFP rations. Two of the 'disabled households' identified as 'very poor' were able to work despite their disabilities. These households were not in fact among the poorest.

This demonstrates the difficulty of relying on vulnerability indicators to identify those households most in need of assistance. By identifying the basic set of assets and capacities households need to survive in a given community, agencies may find that they have a more reliable proxy indicator of exceptional needs.

3.2.3 Demographics and caring for orphans

The study population provides a good ‘spread’ of households, including young, recently married couples, single and elderly-headed households and households caring for orphans and people with disabilities. A majority of households (16 out of 22 or around 73%) include children who have lost one or both parents. This figure corresponds with estimates made by community members during the initial focus group discussions in November 2006.

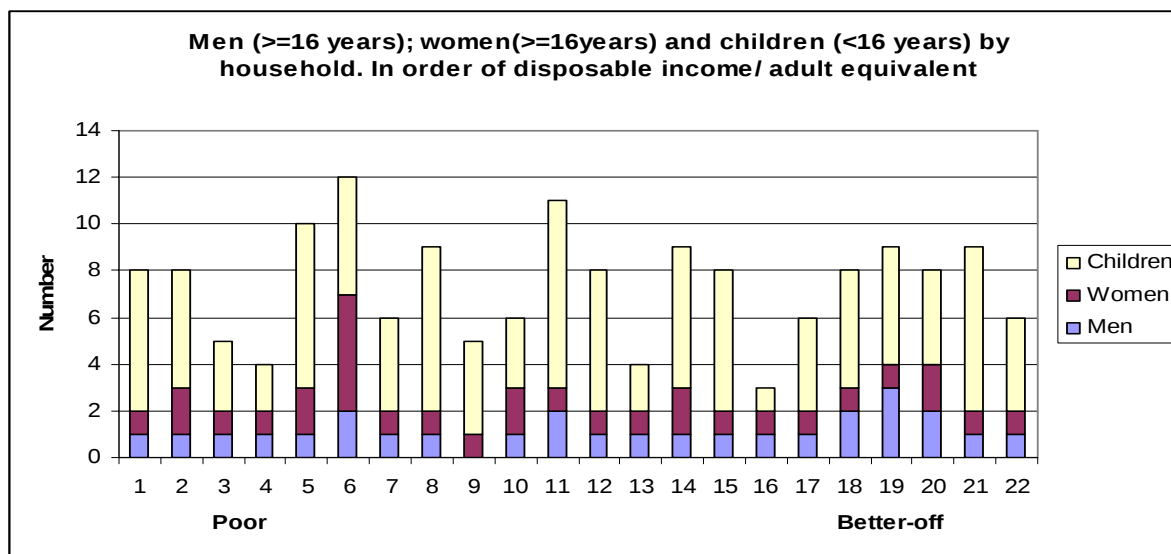
Figure 3 and 4 show household demographic characteristics. There are no obvious relationships within the population data. On average there is a slight excess of adult females (M:F 1:1.2). Household size and the dependency ratio (the ratio of adults to children under 16 years¹) are not related to income. There is also no

statistical relationship between income and orphan residence.

There are seven orphans in households up to 11th poorest and nine orphans in the 11 remaining households. It would be misleading to label these households ‘better off’ and ‘worse off’ as the differences between households in the middle of the distribution are very slight. However, a distinction could reasonably be made between households that cannot meet minimum food needs (households 1–3) and households that are above the minimum standard of living threshold (households 14 and 16–22). At the bottom end of the distribution, households 1 and 2 both include orphans (single orphans in one case, double orphans in the other), although there are no orphans in household 3. At the upper end, households 16 and 18–22 include orphans; households 14 and 17 do not (there are a mix of single and double orphans).

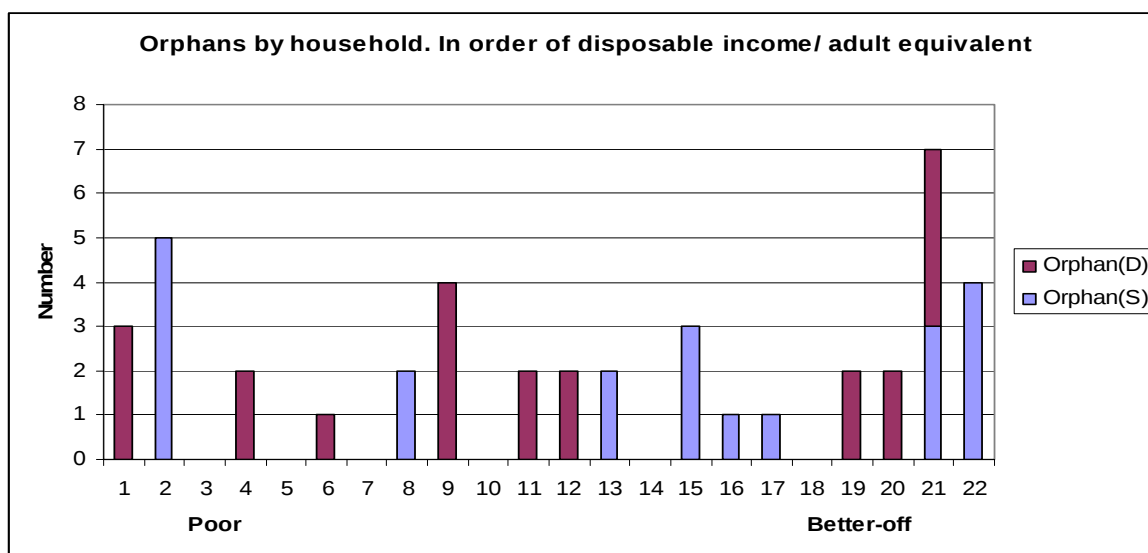
Thus, no clear trends can be discerned from the orphan data. As the study continues, it will be important to track changes in the distribution of households caring for orphans, and to analyse the possible impact of changes in the availability of food aid.

Figure 3



¹ 16 years has been taken as a realistic age to mark the cut off between adults and children, as young people generally take on adult responsibilities around this age. Very few young people remain in education beyond primary school and most have entered the workforce by the age of 16. The UN definition of an orphan as ‘a child under the age of 18 years who has lost one or both parents’ has been used to identify orphans

Figure 4



3.3 Sources of income

3.3.1 The importance of WFP rations

The findings clearly show that people have been highly reliant on WFP food rations, both the general household distributions and the school feeding programme. Figure 5 shows all sources of food including WFP, own production and gifts. Figure 6 shows disposable income/adult equivalent omitting food aid, but retaining school meals. This indicates that, without WFP general food rations, most households would not be able to achieve a basic standard of living.

Without WFP rations (but with school meals), even if households spent all of their income on food, 16 households (73%) would be unable to meet either their minimum food or non-food needs. The remaining six households would be able to meet both food and non-food needs. However, of these households, three remain close to the standard of living threshold.

Figure 7 shows all sources of cash income. For purposes of presentation, the income of the richest household has been omitted. This is a household with two teachers, where the income is around 650,000 Ush (the next-richest household has a disposable income of around 100,000 Ush).

Figure 5

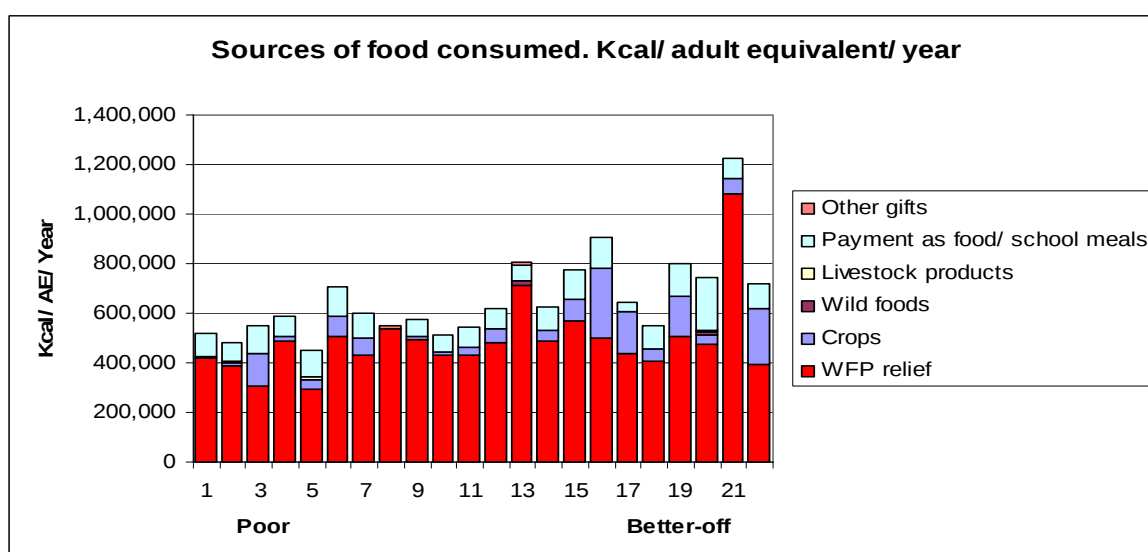
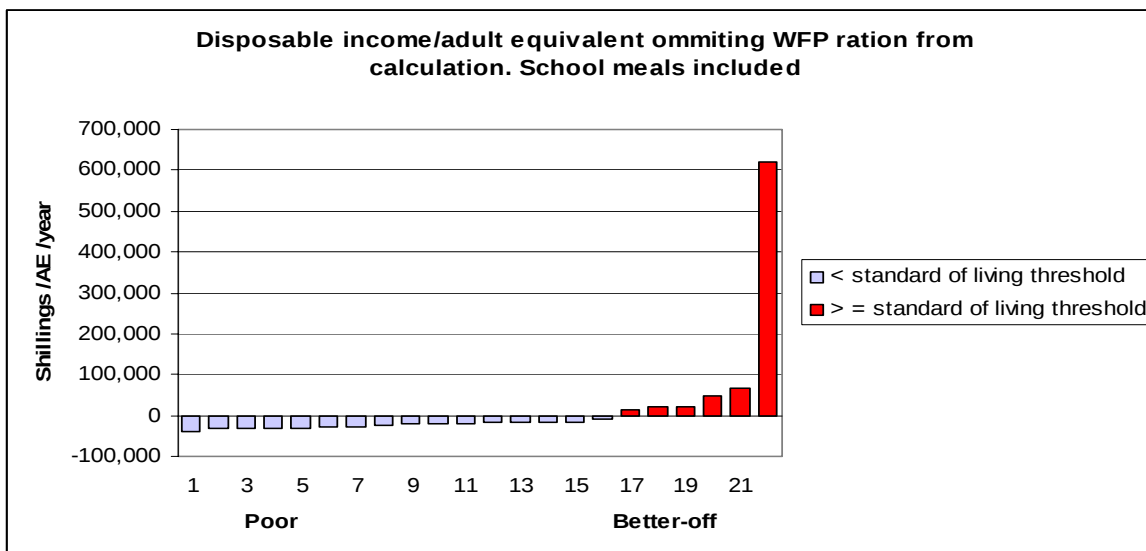


Figure 6

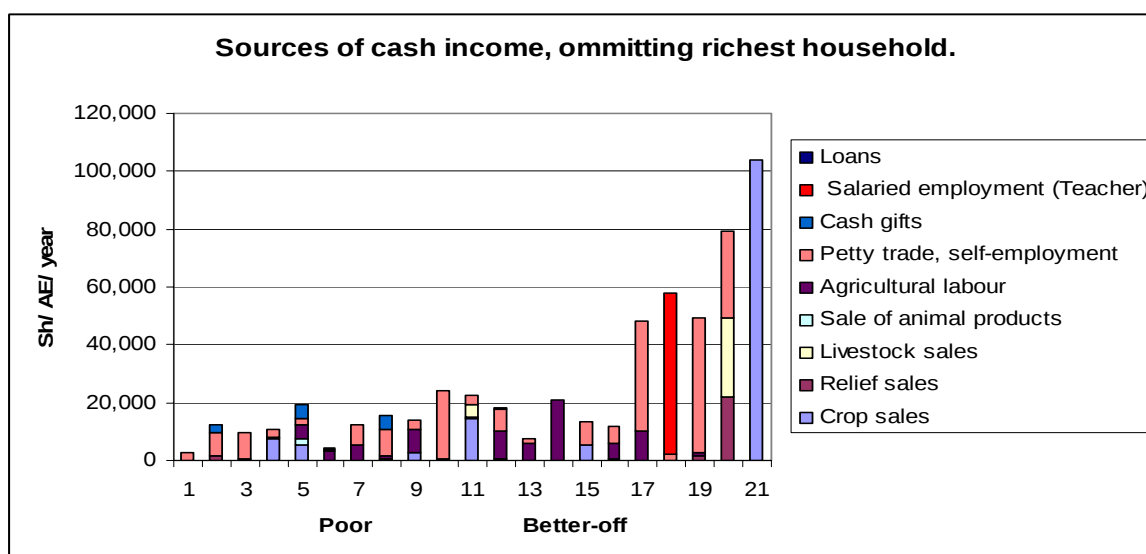


With the exception of one household that had salaried employment for part of the year (a female teacher), most cash income is made up from small crop sales, agricultural and other casual labour and petty trade. The mix of income sources (agricultural labour, petty trade/self-employment, crop sales etc.) does not vary greatly across the distribution. However, the level of income derived from the work does vary. The only exception (other than salaried work) concerns cash gifts, where only households in the lower part of the distribution receive gifts.

3.3.2 Income and land access

Lack of access to land, and a very limited range of income opportunities means that the population relies overwhelmingly on food aid. Only 6 out of 22 households would be able to feed themselves adequately and meet basic non food needs without the WFP ration. (This calculation also assumes that primary school children would continue to attend school and receive school meals from WFP).

Figure 7



Our initial assessment data includes information on land ownership and land rented or borrowed in the current year. During the reference period, access to ‘own land’ was extremely limited: only six households were able to access their land during the year (and this was only for season 2 planting). The maximum ‘own land’ cultivated was one acre. Seventeen households were able to cultivate some land (either rented or borrowed), but these were mostly smaller plots. Only five households cultivated more than one acre of rented or borrowed land. The area of land cultivated among better-off households was slightly higher than among worse-off households. Although some of the worse-off households did access larger plots of land (up to two acres) unexpected problems such as ill-health meant that yields were poor.

As households relocate to their own villages, we will look at issues of land access and its impact on disposable income. We will also consider the impact of land disputes and sub-division on household economy.

Over the next three years, the study will monitor changes in these baseline conditions, measuring economic and social indicators across the sample population. For each indicator, correlations with other household characteristics will be explored, including demography, land and other asset holdings, health/disability and education. In particular, we will be looking at:

- Changes in the number of households surviving below the absolute poverty line (i.e. unable to meet basic food needs).
- Changes in the proportion of households below the standard of living threshold.
- Changes in land access and agricultural activities.
- Changes in the proportion of household income from production and crop sales.
- Changes in the number of livestock owned and in income from livestock.
- Changes in income from off-farm sources, such as petty trade and construction.
- Changes in access to education and the proportion of children moving on to secondary school.
- Changes in children’s contribution to household income.
- The impact of NGO projects on household economy (e.g. seeds and tools distributions).
- The impact of water projects (e.g. freeing up women’s and children’s time).

The study will also explore the timing of key decisions, including when people choose to move from the main camps to resettlement sites and finally to villages of origin or elsewhere. This analysis will assist in identifying the characteristics of households that most successful in building up assets, the external factors that influence this process (including opening up of markets and insecurity/livestock theft) and the contribution of external relief in this process.

3.4 Some of the people participating in the study

‘Grace’

Grace left her village in 2002, following a rebel attack. She and her husband had five children, three boys and two girls.

Two of the boys were abducted by the LRA, and Grace does not know where they are, or if they are still alive. Her third son was badly beaten in an attack that killed her husband. The boy suffered severe head injuries trying to grab back their cattle as they were being stolen, and she believes his injuries affected him mentally. He left for Kampala afterwards, even though he had no relatives there. He said he would never come home, and Grace has not heard from him since he left.

Grace’s two daughters have both died of AIDS, and she is looking after four grandchildren, aged 12, 10, 5 and 3. The three-year-old is chronically sick.

The household’s main source of food is the WFP ration. Grace supplements this with money earned from selling firewood in Lira Palwo. She moved to Obolokome in January for the start of the school year. She had to construct her own hut, cutting grass and making bricks (she paid someone to lay the foundations). She has no one to help her in Obolokome, but she does receive extra WFP rations as she is classified as an EVI (Especially Vulnerable Individual). The household supplements the ration with wild food, including termites, which are dug from a mound near the hut. Since arriving in the TRS in January, Grace and her charges have also been eating unripe mangoes two or three times each week, which Grace adds to the evening meal.

Before the war the household farmed around 2–4 acres, and grew cassava, ground nuts, maize, beans, sorghum, millet cow peas, sim sim, sweet potatoes and cotton. There was always enough for subsistence, and sometimes a surplus to sell. The

household also had an ox plough, seven cattle, two bulls, four goats and some chickens.

The household's day now starts around 6am, when Grace and her two eldest grand daughters walk around three miles to Lira Palwo with bundles of firewood. She remains there for the day and the girls walk back to Obolokome to go to school. The two youngest children remain in the hut by themselves until they hear the bell ring for school breakfast at around 10am, when they go over to the school kitchen and are given some extra food by one of the cooks who knows them. Then they go back to their hut until they hear the lunch bell at around 1pm.

Grace gets back from Lira Palwo at around 4pm, when the girls get back from school. The girls help her prepare food, which takes around an hour and a half. They do their homework from around 5.30 until it gets dark about an hour later, when they go to bed. There is no money for kerosene to study by. Grace collects water at night although there is still a long wait – up to three hours – at the bore hole.

Grace is keen that her grandchildren should get a good education. She has a brother in Gulu who is a priest, and she plans to take them there before too long, where she hopes he will pay for their schooling. Her main problem at present is to organise her husband's funeral rites. He died of his injuries in hospital in Katong, and before she can move to Gulu she needs to get goats for the funeral. She is hopeful for the future.

'Peter'

In August 2006, Peter moved from the main camp in Lira Palwo to the TRS in Obolokome, where his original village is located. He and his family had been displaced since fleeing to Lira Palwo in 2001, due to rebel activity. Before this, Peter had farmed around seven acres jointly with his father and four brothers. His father is now dead and, of the four brothers, one is working in Kampala, one is a soldier, one works with an NGO in Pader and the fourth is also a farmer in Obolokome. They will soon have a family meeting to decide how to divide the land.

After they fled to Lira Palwo, a few people returned periodically to collect food, but most remained in the camp. Peter has a wife and six children, two of whom were born in the camp. The eldest is now 16 years old, and the youngest is two. They lost four goats to the rebels (the family had already given

up on cattle, his father having lost 12 to the Karamojong in earlier raids).

Prior to displacement the household was able to meet all its food needs and grew cotton for cash. They used family labour to harvest maize, and group work to harvest sim sim and sorghum, but would hire a further 4–6 people to harvest millet and cotton. In addition to this, Peter's wife brewed warega twice a month between December and March, and they would sometimes work for others if they needed extra cash.

While they were in the camp his wife stopped brewing as she could not afford the cost of the ingredients. They were both working in other people's gardens to pay for food and clothing, but could not afford to rent land (at around 25,000 Ush an acre).

Peter was among the first group to move back to Obolokome, in August 2006. His main reason was lack of land in the camp and he needed to start cultivating cotton to pay secondary school fees for his two eldest sons.

In the course of a typical day, Peter starts work at around 6am, moulding bricks which he bakes and sells to people constructing huts. He is also building huts for other people, having learnt how to do so in the camp. Since moving to Obolokome, Peter has constructed around eight huts, with the help of an assistant. (It takes around two days to put up the basic structure, for which he is paid 9,000 Ush.)

Peter combines building work with preparing his land for cultivation. He and his wife are currently clearing around three acres.

When he has finished work, Peter bathes and starts to make handles for hoes. His lack of hoes is one of the most serious problems he faces. He says he is not 'one of those who sits around drinking warega'. His plan is to 'feed his children academically' so that they in turn will be able to help their younger siblings when he is old.

'John' and 'Sarah'

John and Sarah are part of a family of nine from Aywee Keyo who have been living in the Lira Palwo camp for over four years. They have five children of their own and have adopted John's brother's two children. John's sister-in-law was killed in an LRA attack; John's brother was shot and lost the use of one arm.

John and Sarah used to cultivate eight acres of land, growing a diverse range of crops such as millet, sorghum, cassava, sunflowers, ground nuts, maize, pigeon peas, beans and ocra. They used some of their land each year for cash crops, growing either a couple of acres of cotton or an acre of tobacco, bringing them to the cooperative in Lira Palwo at harvest time. They would also sell some of their cassava and millet from time to time to raise cash. Their farm included about three dozen hens, giving them eggs to sell and eat.

In December 2002, the family, along with their entire village, had to flee an LRA attack on Aywee Keyo, and seek the security of the Lira Palwo IDP camp. After more than four years of enduring the crowded camp, their biggest hope today is to be able to return to their land and start farming it again.

John and Sarah longingly recall the hard months of shared, collective work on their farm from March to December each year, and the relaxed period following Christmas when they could take a break from farming and spend more time with their children, who were out of school for the holidays.

For most of their time in Lira Palwo they have not been able to access any land to grow on, and have relied heavily on food distributions by WFP to meet their family's needs; however, the monthly WFP rations fall far short of the family's total food or income needs, and they have to work hard to bring in other income.

Both John and Sarah have been able to work for most of the years they have been in Lira Palwo, cultivating other people's fields in return for either cash or a portion of the harvest, which allows them to supplement their diet and to buy the basic necessities of life, such as cooking pots, soap and fuel for cooking. Throughout the year they are also able to collect leafy greens grown around their house, which provide a small but regular and nutritious supplement to their food rations. When special expenses arise, such as new school uniforms or health care, John adds to their income by selling charcoal and bricks that he produces.

'Camilla'

Camilla and her husband 'Matthew' have just built a house in Obolokome for their family of six children. Three of the children are orphans whose parents, John's sister and husband, died some years ago. They fled their village in 2002 to escape

LRA attacks. They lived in Lira Palwo camp until November last year.

Before they fled, Camilla and her family had cultivated eight acres of land in Aringo Pee. Camilla's husband had three acres near the village and five more about 2 hours' walk away, which he was given by the community when he married Camilla so that they could grow enough for a family. They used to grow many different crops, such as millet, sorghum, sesame, ground nuts, ocra, pigeon peas and vegetables. They also kept livestock, which they brought with them when they fled (three cows, five goats and 15 chickens), but their cows and goats were stolen in Karamojong raids and their chickens died of disease in the camp.

Camilla says feeding her family through these years has been hard because they have not been able to cultivate their land. They have had to rely instead on WFP food to add to the small amounts they can collect and buy. Over the years, Camilla has sold firewood she collects from the bush, cut grass and sold it for thatch and sold beer that she has brewed.

Camilla was preparing a meal when interviewed, while her husband was out fishing. At the moment, she tells us, life in their home revolves around collecting water because there is only one borehole nearby for the whole community. Camilla and her children wait for hours every day to collect water. By storing water in pots, Camilla can spend every second night at home (every other night she needs to queue for water again from 10pm, and sometimes does not get back until 6am). During the day they take turns in the queue and alternate between collecting water and other household activities. Each day, Camilla or her husband cycles to Lira Palwo to check on his mother, who lives by herself in the camp.

Camilla hopes that this year they will be able to access all their land again and cultivate crops for food and cash; if the peace holds they hope to move back to their original home and rebuild there. Camilla says that they are modest people and have simple hopes and dreams – her biggest hopes are that peace will stay so that they can keep their children in school and cultivate enough land to feed them again. Her biggest fear is that the LRA will come back and that the Karamojong or bandits will continue attacking and stealing from them.

Camilla wants to get back to preparing the family meal – she smiles and looks at her daughter and says ‘This one shall be a nurse’, points to her eldest boy (‘he should become the parish chief) – ‘and this one’, looking at his young brother beside him, ‘he shall be a teacher’.

‘Janet’

Janet is 38 years old, married, with seven children. She was born in Ayee Keyo to a well-to-do family. Her father was a trader, and had a shop, a large herd of livestock and at least 40 acres of land. When she was about ten years old, her father died after a short illness. ‘When Dad died, things were no longer the same’ she recalls. That was the first shock in her life. Her paternal uncle took over the family.

A few years after her father’s death, Karamojong warriors raided their village and took all their livestock. They fled their village. When their uncle returned to check on the home a week or so later, there was nothing left. Virtually all the household property had been stolen and the house vandalised – even the iron-sheet roof had been removed. This was in 1987.

Because of insufficient money to pay everyone’s school fees, Janet dropped out of school early in order to enable her brothers to continue with their education. She thinks it was the best thing to do since her mother needed assistance in looking after the family. However, the brothers also did not go far with education, one dropping out at primary level and the other at secondary.

Janet got married at about 18 years of age to someone from the neighbouring village, Obolokome. He was a hard-working man. They cultivated their land – amounting to about 13 acres, three on one side of the river and ten on the other. They cultivated maize, beans, sim sim and groundnuts, and often had large harvests. They managed to cultivate a large acreage using traditional work cooperatives, whereby one invited people in the village to work and prepared food and drink for them as a reward. They had granaries of food, 26 goats and lots of chicken. Life was comfortable.

Then, in 2002, the LRA attacked their village, looting property and killing and abducting people. Luckily, no member of Janet’s family was lost. They had two children at the time. However, they were forced to flee and lost all their possessions. They fled to Lira Palwo for refuge, and lived there until

August 2006, when they moved to Obolokome transition camp, less than a kilometre from their three-acre plot. However, they are not yet confident enough to go back to their land. While at Lira Palwo, Janet and her husband could not access any land because they could not afford the rent. A piece of land of about half acre was going for about 20,000 shillings. Consequently, they depended on WFP food rations, which Janet supplemented by selling firewood and labour.

Shortly before they were displaced, Janet’s husband developed health problems. The situation worsened while they were in the camp and he cannot walk outside during the rainy season. With no money, treatment options are limited. His health has been a major handicap to their livelihood. He has not been able to complete the construction of their house and they are temporarily living in an incomplete structure belonging to a relative. It has no shutters and a blanket hangs over the door.

Their children have benefited from free primary school education, although their eldest dropped out of school at 19 because she became pregnant. She was in primary 5. She is still living with her parents as her boyfriend is a student. Janet worries about the effects of insecurity on her daughter: her classmates who managed to get out of Lira Palwo are now in senior 3, and Janet believes that her daughter could also have gone on to secondary school if she had had the opportunity.

The household now totals ten members. Mother and daughter have to ensure that the rest of the family have enough to eat. Janet is planning to open up some land so that she can cultivate her own food, and she is hopeful that, with the help of her children, the family will have some food of its own soon. Janet summed up her feelings in a metaphor: ‘the groundnuts are still being ground on the grinding stone; they are not fine paste yet. Let us wait and see’.

4. Conclusions

The vast majority of IDP households rely on food aid to meet minimum food energy requirements, and most have seasonal, unreliable sources of income. The small number of households with significantly higher levels of disposable income are engaged in formal employment, such as teaching.

The preliminary assessment outlined here explains why most of the population are currently unable to meet their own needs without WFP assistance. Under the prevailing camp conditions:

- Lack of access to land has meant that households were only able to produce a very small proportion of their own food requirements (typically around 2%–5%).
- The potential to earn additional income from petty trade has been limited by low levels of demand (and in the case of firewood and grass sales, over-supply).
- Income from agricultural labour has also been limited by low demand.

Most households have no financial reserves, and have been unable to recoup major assets lost during the conflict.

4.1 Implications for humanitarian programming

This preliminary analysis reinforces the view that WFP should continue with the general relief food distribution (GFD) until the first season's harvest in August 2007. It suggests that there are broadly two categories of household requiring livelihood support.

The first comprises households with land and labour. As land access improves, these households should be able to meet their basic needs after the first agricultural cycle if they can also access tools, seeds and other agricultural inputs. Around 75% of households are in this category.

Suitable farm inputs including tools should be provided at the right time to the right households,

to maximise household production.¹³ The survey provides the basic information required for this. However, there is scope for more detailed planning, including variation in inputs (e.g. of seed types and quantities), according to household land access and labour. It should be noted that the poor timing of earlier tools distributions, i.e. before it was possible to cultivate, meant that many hoes were sold on to meet immediate needs (a rational act when families are hungry or school fees fall due). This should not deter agencies from providing timely and appropriate support in the future, or from using a range of transfer mechanisms, including vouchers and cash grants.

Humanitarian agencies should also consider ways in which their agricultural interventions can most effectively inform relevant national programmes (including the Programme for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA)). For example, how adequate is the information base for agricultural rehabilitation, and where are the gaps in methodology and programme coverage? How and by whom could these gaps be filled?

Other important factors include the extent to which previously cultivable land has been sown with mines, no longer visible land boundaries and demarcations and changing land ownership following such high levels of loss of life and migration. This is likely to result in disputes over land as communities return to their villages.

During the long period of conflict, demographics and gender roles may also have changed and cultural norms governing land ownership and inheritance may be challenged. Traditional livelihoods and agriculture patterns may change after years spent in camps, and where young people have developed different skills and livelihood strategies.

Finally, the district has suffered massive livestock losses over the past two decades. Whilst much of this has been due to rebel activity, cattle raiding remains endemic, and many households are reluctant to restock until this problem has been resolved. Humanitarian agencies considering livestock programmes should take the high risk of loss into account before embarking on projects.

¹³ Support to local artisans such as blacksmiths would be a sensible intervention at this stage, if supply of raw materials can be assured.

The economic implications of continued livestock insecurity should also be considered, and the costs of neglecting the root causes of security problems should be set against the economic benefits of a reinvigorated livestock sector. Finally, whilst there is some potential for small stock projects, the problem of veterinary support and other costs, including costs of preventing environmental damage by goats, needs to be considered.

The second group comprises households with limited labour assets. Up to 25% of households are likely to face difficulties in establishing secure livelihoods after resettlement. These households are broadly defined by labour poverty, i.e. the household's income is limited by a lack of able-bodied adults. Their survival and standard of living depends on WFP assistance, and in the short term there is no alternative to continuing to provide direct assistance. The question here is what form that assistance should take i.e. food aid or cash transfers.¹⁴

In the longer term, some of these labour-poor households may combine with more viable ones. Others may benefit from a general improvement in the economic environment, which should increase income earning opportunities and may increase the flow of 'gifts' to these households from the better-off.

In the short term, humanitarian agencies need to consider practical ways to improve income among the poorest households. However, agencies should be realistic about the 'sustainability' of these projects. Information from the assessment gives some indication of the problems these households will face, including low levels of demand and an oversupply of labour. As in other areas of Uganda, most labour-poor households will require assistance to meet even the most basic needs. Various 'social protection' options are currently being considered by the government (including cash transfers in the form of old age allowances).

Information from this project could inform these proposals: for example, it would be possible to model the impact on poverty levels of cash transfers set at different levels. Using data from the baseline assessment, the agricultural returns

that labour-poor households could expect, given specific inputs, could also be modelled

Finally, as abducted children and young people are demobilised, it is possible that some will not be accepted back into their families and communities. Girl mothers in particular may face problems with reintegration. These young people are likely to fall into the category of 'labour-poor' households, and will require specific interventions to assist them in establishing economic independence.

The individual household study includes some families that hope to see abductees return; changes in these households will be tracked alongside others in the sample. The planned household economy studies will provide further insights into the range of 'very poor' households, their characteristics and the economic opportunities that are open to them. Depending on the outcome of discussions with a prospective research partner, it is possible that in-depth work with marginalised groups of returning abductees (for example, girl mothers) may be possible. The purpose of this work would be to promote understanding of the problems they face, to give practical programming guidance and to monitor the effectiveness of these programmes over time.

The previous paragraphs have indicated specific types of programmes and interventions that might be targeted at different types of household on the income side: this includes cash transfers, inputs to support production and direct food aid. On the expenditure side, reducing school costs and improving health services and access to water would also bring important benefits to all households, including the poorest. The wider local economy and the local market infrastructure also needs to be exploited as a means of promoting greater livelihood security and long-term accumulation among households at all levels. This would certainly include improvements in marketing, support to farmers investing in cash crops such as tobacco, cotton and sunflower oil, opening up feeder roads and upgrading main transport routes. A Household Economy Assessment is planned for September 2007, (after the next harvest) to provide information that will support this work.

The policy and programming implications outlined in this section all rely on targeting of some kind. There are practical administrative limitations on the extent to which any form of assistance can be targeted on a household-by-household basis.

¹⁴ Levine discusses the use of cash transfers in a study for the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala: *Cash based programming for returning IDPs in northern Uganda. Does it make sense, and can it be done?*.

However, we have suggested that, where targeting takes place, this should be based on the household's actual capacities, rather than on population categories (e.g. the presence of elderly people or the disabled). Information from this assessment provides a good basis for defining criteria relevant to the context of Pader district: these criteria are primarily a) household labour and skills; b) access to land; and c) other potentially productive assets, such as livestock. Where targeting criteria are identified, it is important that they are understood, discussed and agreed at a community level.

4.2 Next steps for this study

The operational partner in the study, Mercy Corps, regularly monitors its own livelihoods programming in the area and, as part of this study, is maintaining a chronological record of events in the community, such as their and others' livelihoods projects, aid distributions, agricultural activities, access to basic services and movements of people.

The study is actively seeking with Mercy Corps to link with other agencies operating in Pader so that the research is closely tied to the monitoring and evaluation of their programming. The study is also collaborating with Development Research and Training (DRT) in Uganda, which is carrying out research on conflict and chronic poverty and its links to development policy, as well as specific impacts on human development.

Data collection for the IHM will take place roughly every six months. In addition to the HEA exercise, the research team will also carry out further qualitative research with in-depth interviews with participating households.

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Appendix 1

Internally displaced persons health and mortality survey, Uganda, 2005

Table 1. Summary of main findings, health and mortality survey, northern Uganda, 2005

	Gulu District	Gulu Municipality	Kitgum District	Pader District	Acholi region total
Survey profile					
Estimated IDP population [†]	462 580	99 535	310 111	319 506	1 191 732
Households sampled	952	960	959	959	3830
Persons present on survey date (% under 5)	6310 (22.6%)	6658 (19.5%)	5920 (21.2%)	6098 (21.1%)	24 986 (21.2%)
Mortality					
Crude mortality rate (deaths per 10 000 per day) (95% CI)	1.22 (1.00-1.44)	1.29 (1.04-1.53)	1.91 (1.45-2.37)	1.86 (1.53-2.19)	1.54 (1.38-1.71)
Under 5 mortality rate (under 5 deaths per 10 000 children under 5 per day) (95% CI)	2.31 (1.76-2.86)	2.49 (1.79-3.18)	4.04 (3.17-4.91)	4.24 (3.40-5.08)	3.18 (2.81-3.56)
Top self-reported causes of death (%)	Malaria/fever (25.3%)	Malaria/fever (22.5%)	Malaria/fever (34.7%)	Malaria/fever (28.9%)	Malaria/fever (28.5%)
	AIDS (15.6%)	AIDS (19.7%)	AIDS (15.1%)	Cough (11.4%)	AIDS (13.5%)
	Violence (11.7%)	Cough (4.5%)	Violence (10.5%)	Violence (11.4%)	Violence (9.4%)
Deaths occurring in a health facility (%)	37.7%	61.2%	49.0%	35.4%	41.7%
Estimated excess mortality (January to July 2005)	6783 (4870-8697)	1667 (1177-2137)	8935 (6139-11 731)	9119 (7000-11 239)	25 694 (21 956-29 665)
Estimate of persons killed (January to July 2005)	1218 (522-1913)	78 (1-176)	1216 (486-1945)	1349 (771-1927)	3971 (2803-4905)
Estimate of persons abducted (January to July 2005)	174 (17-435)	39 (4-98)	304 (61-486)	771 (321-1220)	1168 (701-1869)
Measles vaccination coverage according to card or caregiver (95% CI)	94.8% (93.5%-96.1%)	95.7% (94.3%-97.1%)	85.1% (81.9%-88.4%)	90.6% (88.4%-92.7%)	-
Morbidity among children under 5					
Proportion of under 5 children ill in past 2 weeks	56.7%	61.3%	66.1%	69.9%	62.2%
Proportion seeking care within 0 to 1 days	70.4%	66.7%	53.4%	52.3%	60.4%
Top first sources of care (%)	Health centre (45.4%)	Private/drug store (44.5%)	Health centre (42.4%)	Health centre (45.0%)	Health centre (41.8%)
	Private/drug store (19.7%)	Hospital (36.9%)	Private/drug store (21.1%)	Private/drug store (15.6%)	Private/drug store (20.9%)
	CORPs [‡] (17.8%)	Health centre (8.0%)	CORPs (14.2%)	CORPs (15.6%)	CORPs (15.1%)
Bednet coverage among children under 5 (95% CI)	25.5% (19.2%-31.7%)	30.5% (26.8%-34.3%)	29.4% (21.7%-37.1%)	31.2% (22.3%-40.1%)	28.0% (24.0%-32.1%)
Water availability					
Mean litres per person per day (95% CI)	11.0 (10.2-11.7)	12.8 (12.1-13.5)	9.7 (9.0-10.5)	8.8 (8.3-9.3)	10.3 (9.9-10.7)
Mean waiting time in hours (95% CI)	2.0 (1.8-2.3)	1.3 (1.2-1.4)	3.6 (3.2-4.0)	3.5 (3.2-3.7)	2.7 (2.5-2.9)

[†] July 2005 post-validation WFP estimates for Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts; July 2005 WHO estimate for Gulu Municipality

[‡] Community Outreach Resource Persons (community health workers)



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