

**Overview - Highlights**

*Moderate to well distributed rainfall received in eastern, central, Lake Victoria Basin, and northern Uganda confirms the beginning of the second season enabling farmers to intensify sowing of cereals and pulses. Sale of agricultural inputs is reportedly high in eastern districts. Predominantly dry conditions limit cultivation activities in western and southwestern Uganda where farmers are cultivating in low land areas, which have moisture to support crops. Uncertain civil security in Gulu and Kitgum Districts limits farmers' activities and will lead to reduced cultivation and crop harvest this season.*

*According to the Department of Meteorology the second season started early and is expected to end nearly one month earlier in October with a peak around September. Most districts are predicted to receive average to above average rainfall for the August to September period. A detailed forecast for September to December 2000 is expected after the Regional Climatic Forum in mid August. The Department of Meteorology recommends that farmers start and intensify cultivation activities for the second season to take advantage of the peak rains for adequate moisture during critical crop growth stages.*

*Vegetation "greening" in agro-pastoral Karamoja has enabled increased access to pastures for livestock. Only isolated incidence of livestock diseases is reported. Dry conditions since late June have reduced availability of pastures and browse in southwestern and central Uganda's "cattle corridor" as well as the supply of water for livestock and human consumption. Pastoral households are reportedly moving their animals to water sources in Lake Mburo National Park, repeating a pattern observed in the second half of 1999. With the beginning of the second season, pasture and water availability is expected to improve and FEWS NET does not anticipate any serious deterioration in livestock conditions.*

*A July/August assessment of eighteen districts in eastern, central, western and southwestern Uganda found that despite low household food stocks there was no emergency and therefore no need for food aid except in Karamoja and Kisoro Districts. Medium to long-term interventions are necessary to improve agricultural production and that continued monitoring of second season rains, market prices and related food security conditions is necessary to update conditions during the coming months.*

*Crop supply to major district markets in Uganda remains adequate except for markets in Kotido and Moroto Districts, where staple food supply continues to be restricted owing to low crop availability within the districts and limited inflows from neighboring districts, mostly due to uncertain security on the roads. Nevertheless, price trends remained mixed by the end of July with minimal price declines observed, a signal of unusually lower than normal crop production for the first season. A shortfall in Kenya's maize production has encouraged cross border trade in maize and beans from Uganda into Kenya mostly through informal trade channels.*

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**Sources and Contributors:**

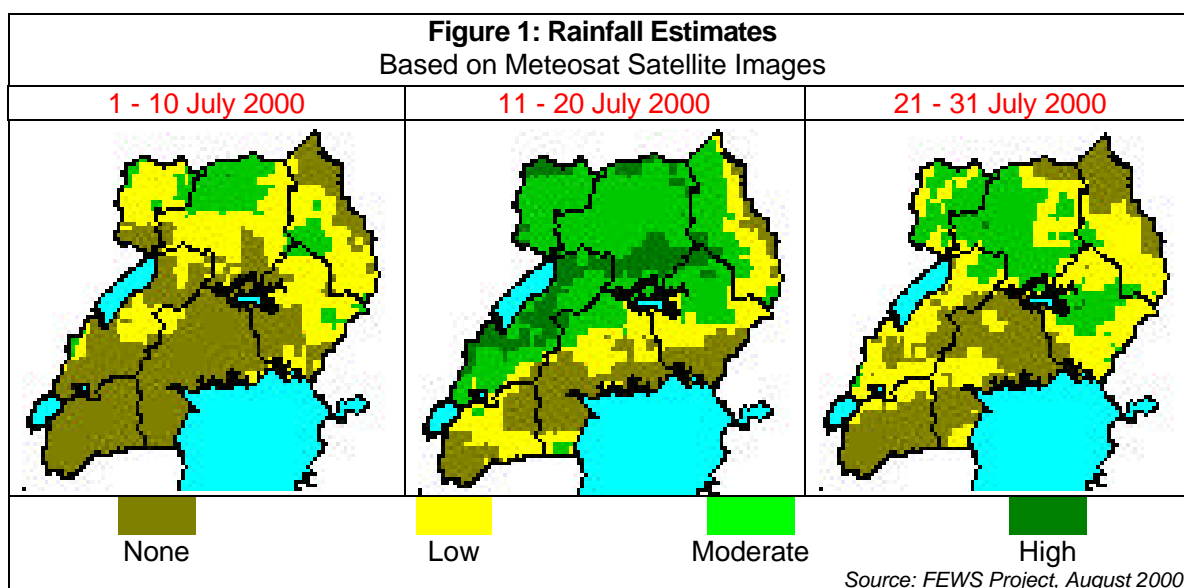
- District Agriculture and Veterinary Officials
- IITA-weekly district market data
- OCHA, WFP - reports, field assessment
- LWF, OXFAM GB and other NGOs - activity reports
- FEWS NET - field assessments

*WFP's ongoing programs in Uganda, catering to needs of IDPs, drought affected people in Karamoja and refugees requires urgent donor support. The Karamoja EMOP 6235.00 is most in need of pledges, having only received only forty six percent pledges of the required 9,069 metric tons yet the need may increase in coming months. The Government of Uganda is to spend nearly twelve (12) billion shillings to alleviate the suffering of the Karimojong population. The program, which began in August 2000, will provide the population with food, improved seed and fertilizer, training in improved crop and animal methods and income generating activities, including apiary and fish farming. Medical services, nutrition foods and drugs, will also be provided to the population. The Office of the Vice President is heading the program together with relevant government ministries and departments.*

*Subsequent to its nutritional and food security assessment of Kotido District, OXFAM Great Britain (GB) is considering a follow up in September to monitor the populations' conditions after the "hunger period", May to August. The agency is currently consulting with other humanitarian organization, including Medecins Sans Frontieres/Swiss (MSF/S), to explore ways of carrying out a joint assessment to cover a wider geographical area, including parts of Moroto District. It is expected that the results will help to guide and allow for review of response programs in Karamoja.*

I. Weather and Rainfall

**Rainfall:** July is typically a dry period, following the end of the first rainy season in many districts of Uganda and in Kotido and Moroto District, northeastern Uganda, which only experience a single season extending from April to October. Normal dry conditions were observed for most districts in the southern half of Uganda, during July, a region that experienced a nearly one-month early end to the season. Areas round Lake Albert, western Uganda, recorded moderate rainfall. District Agriculture Officials, NGOs and UN agencies in northern Uganda report that well distributed rainfall since mid-July has helped support farmers' activities in the region. The *Meteosat imagery* below depicts the occurrence and spread of rainfall since the beginning of July and corroborates ground station reports from districts across the country.



**Climate Forecast:** In July, the Department of Meteorology issued its short range forecast for July to August 2000 predicting an early start and end to the second rainy season, which started in August and is expected to end by October. Peak rainfall for this season is expected in September, a month earlier than the normal peak observed in October when the season ends in November. Most districts of Uganda are expected to experience average to above average rainfall for the August to September period. A detailed forecast for September to December 2000 will be available after the Regional Climatic Forum that is due to meet in Kisumu, Kenya, in mid August.

Current ongoing rains in several part of the country confirm the beginning of the second season where the northern region is reportedly receiving average to above average rainfall. Eastern, central and Lake Victoria Basin have experienced moderate rainfall since early August. In a late July advisory, the Department of Meteorology recommended that farmers start and intensify cultivation activities for the second season to take advantage of the peak rains therefore ensure crops get adequate moisture during critical growth stages before the expected early end to the season.

## **II. Vegetation Conditions**

**Pasture and Livestock Conditions:** The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), an NGO active in Moroto District, reports that sporadic rainfall received since July in agro-pastoral Karamoja Region -- Kotido and Moroto Districts -- favors vegetation "greening", improving livestock access to pastures. However, lower than normal rainfall and continual grazing of young shoots by herds limit regeneration of pastures, which may not last through September. Meanwhile, the Livestock Extension Program (LEP) and LWF report isolated incidence of Anaplasmosis, East Coast Fever (ECF), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP) and black heart diseases. These livestock conditions were confirmed by a UN, NGO assessment of the region where it was also noted that rainfall has increased supply of ground water in some counties, although areas of limited supply were observed in eastern counties towards the Kenya border.

Since the beginning of this year, incidents of interethnic clashes among Karimojong clans have been reported in Kotido and Moroto Districts. After July, a high incidence of interethnic raids, when cattle have also been rustled, have been reported amongst the Tepeth, Matheniko, Bokora and Pian ethnic Karimojong groups. Cattle rustling normally intensify during the dry period when livestock movements, in search of pastures and water, are markedly high. The heightened raids are attributed to increasing food and pasture scarcity and apprehension, among Karimojong warriors, due to an impeding Government of Uganda disarmament of the warriors who are commonly armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles (AK 47). There are several ongoing peace initiatives, by the Government of Uganda, NGOs and humanitarian organizations.

Predominantly dry conditions since late June have reduced availability of pastures and browse in southwestern and central Uganda's "cattle corridor" as well as the supply of water for livestock and human consumption. District officials in Mbarara District, southwestern Uganda, have reported migration of pastoral households and their animals towards water sources in Lake Mburo National Park, repeating a pattern observed in the second half of 1999 when an extended dry season caused pastoralists to move their animal into the gazetted grounds. As the second season begins, pasture conditions and water availability are expected to improve and FEWS NET does not anticipate any serious deterioration in livestock conditions and will continue to monitor developments in the region.

## **III. Crop Calendar and Production**

Rainfall in several northern, eastern, central and Lake Victoria Basin districts since July, signifies the start of the second rainy season in Uganda. According to District extension personnel, average to above average rainfall received in Apac, Lira, Arua and Nebbi has enabled farmers with access to arable land to intensify cultivation of cereals and pulses -- millet, sorghum, maize, beans, pigeon peas and others. By early August, moderate rainfall supported increased farm activities in eastern districts where farmers were busy sowing cereals -- maize, millet and sorghum -- and pulses, mainly beans in a bid to make up for a relatively poor first season. The IDEA Project -- *a USAID funded project promoting the production and export of non-traditional export crops* -- and district agricultural extension personnel report high sales of agricultural inputs, including

improved seed and fertilizer. The retail price for improved maize and bean seed is US\$ 1,200/= and 1,400/= per kilogram, respectively.

Prevalently dry conditions continued to be experienced in western and southwestern Uganda over early August. Farmers are mainly cultivating in low level wetland areas where adequate moisture is available to support crops. District officials expect farmers to intensify sowing of crops after late August when rains become established.

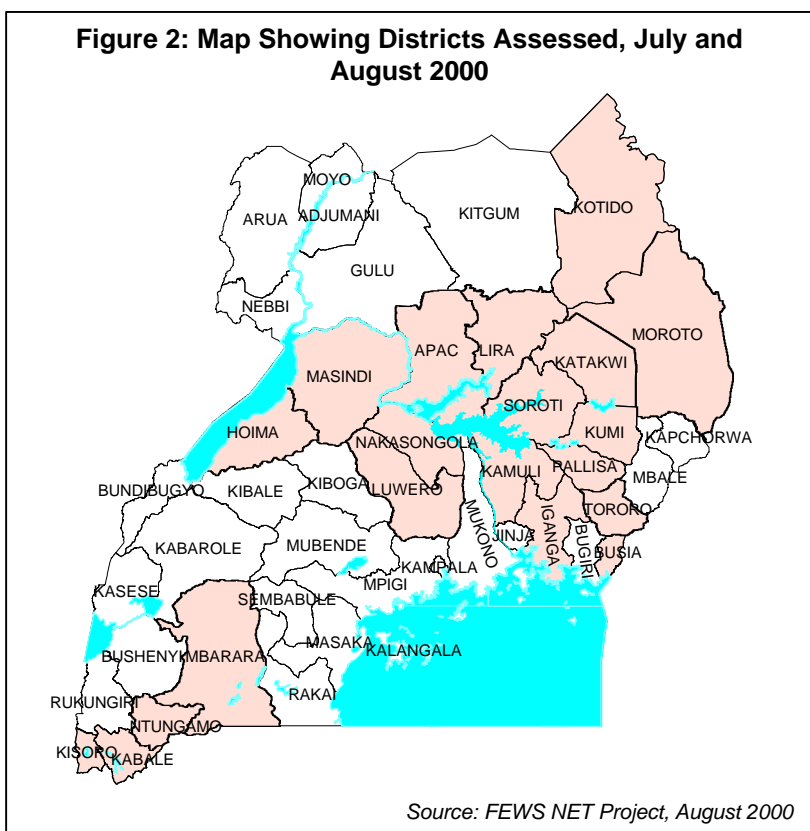
Sporadic and increased Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel attacks on communities and road convoys in Gulu and Kitgum Districts in recent weeks limit farmers' activities. This may lead to reduced cultivation and crop harvest for the second season.

**Sweet Potatoes, Cassava and Banana (Matooke):** Availability and supply of tubers and root crops, major food security crops in Uganda, remains normal in most of the country. Despite dry weather experienced in western and southwestern Uganda, production and supply of sweet potatoes and bananas, major staple crops in several districts in the region, remains adequate. A recent assessment of some districts in the region did not find any serious household food security problems.

#### **IV. Findings of a Recent Crop Harvest Assessment**

Following predominantly poorly distributed rainfall during the first season, the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) led a joint assessment of eighteen districts in eastern, central, western and southwestern Uganda between 31 July and 4 August. FEWS NET, government departments and NGOs participated in the assessment in which a rapid rural appraisal methodology was applied. The assessment aimed to update crop, food, water, pasture and livestock conditions; determine the magnitude of the food security problem; and identify affected population groups, their coping mechanisms and possible humanitarian interventions. Market conditions and trade, labor opportunities and alternative sources of income as well as determining programs in place and actions taken by Government/NGOs to mitigate food insecurity were considered. A separate assessment of Karamoja -- Kotido and Moroto Districts -- was also made. The assessments found that:

- Agriculture was the primary livelihood for most households -- source of food, employment and income;



- In districts visited, the teams were informed and observed that poorly distributed rainfall during the first season of 2000 caused lower than normal harvests, especially for cereals -- maize, millet, sorghum and rice;
- Crops, including cassava and sweet potatoes, key food security crops, are available and help households to cope with low cereal stocks. Consequently, the teams found no evidence of famine nor serious food or starvation related health problems, including malnutrition;
- Household food stocks are very low for parts of Kisoro District where approximately 75 percent of the districts' population is at risk to food insecurity;
- There are few income opportunities, mainly related to agriculture but normal July dry conditions have reduced households' ability to sell labor. Other sources of household income are petty trade, fishing and brewing. The limited income opportunities reduce households' purchasing power and poverty levels are high thereby increasing their risk to food insecurity;
- In some areas, households are coping by eating one meal a day, selling assets, including livestock (goats, sheep, sometimes cattle), firewood, hunting etc;
- High intensity of farming activities were observed in wetlands and previously forested areas where farmers are increasingly reclaiming swamp areas and cultivating in forests as climatic conditions become more erratic;
- Crop supply to markets is adequate, mainly from the ongoing harvest or from neighboring districts. Commodity prices, however, are unseasonably higher than normal, in some cases more than 100 percent higher. This limits many households' access to access markets;
- At Uganda's eastern border with Kenya, cross border trade in cereals and pulses was very much evident. Supply of the commodities comes from all over Uganda;
- Dry conditions have reduced water availability in many areas where households have limited access to water for human and livestock use. Water supply is expected to improve when the second rains begin. In some areas, households lack adequate sanitary facilities, such as latrines, however, no significant outbreak of diseases was reported;
- There are few ongoing programs to mitigate food insecurity in many of the districts, with most limited to availing planting materials -- multiplication of cassava etc -- as possible. Due to limitation in logistical capacity and funding, no district is able to handle a major food crisis without external assistance;
- Mixed conditions were observed for Karamoja: irregular rains have affected the eastern lowlands and this reduced crop production and household food security. Conditions are relatively better in western counties of Kotido and Moroto Karamoja, where crop and livestock conditions were normal. An estimated 273,500 people require humanitarian assistance in the most and moderately drought affected sub-counties until the harvest period in September 2001;
- In Kiryandongo settlement, Masindi District, an area occupied by refugees and IDPs there are about 3000 non-registered refugees whose livelihood status is unknown. The refugees have limited access to land, water and sanitation facilities although no serious nutritional problems were observed for the under fives.

There being no immediate emergency needs, the assessment recommended that:

- Except for Karamoja and Kisoro Districts, there is no need for emergency food aid intervention. An estimated 273,500 people in Karamoja, up from 160,000, and 150,000 people in Kisoro District may need food aid. In Kisoro, it was recommended that emergency food aid be provided, at half WFP ration, for three months starting as early as August;
- Nonetheless, medium to long-term interventions are necessary to improve agricultural conditions and the assessment recommended provision of improved seed varieties and other agricultural inputs as well as tree planting, adoption of irrigation and de-silting of existing water reservoirs.
- Continued monitoring of second season rains, market prices and related food security conditions are necessary during the coming months.

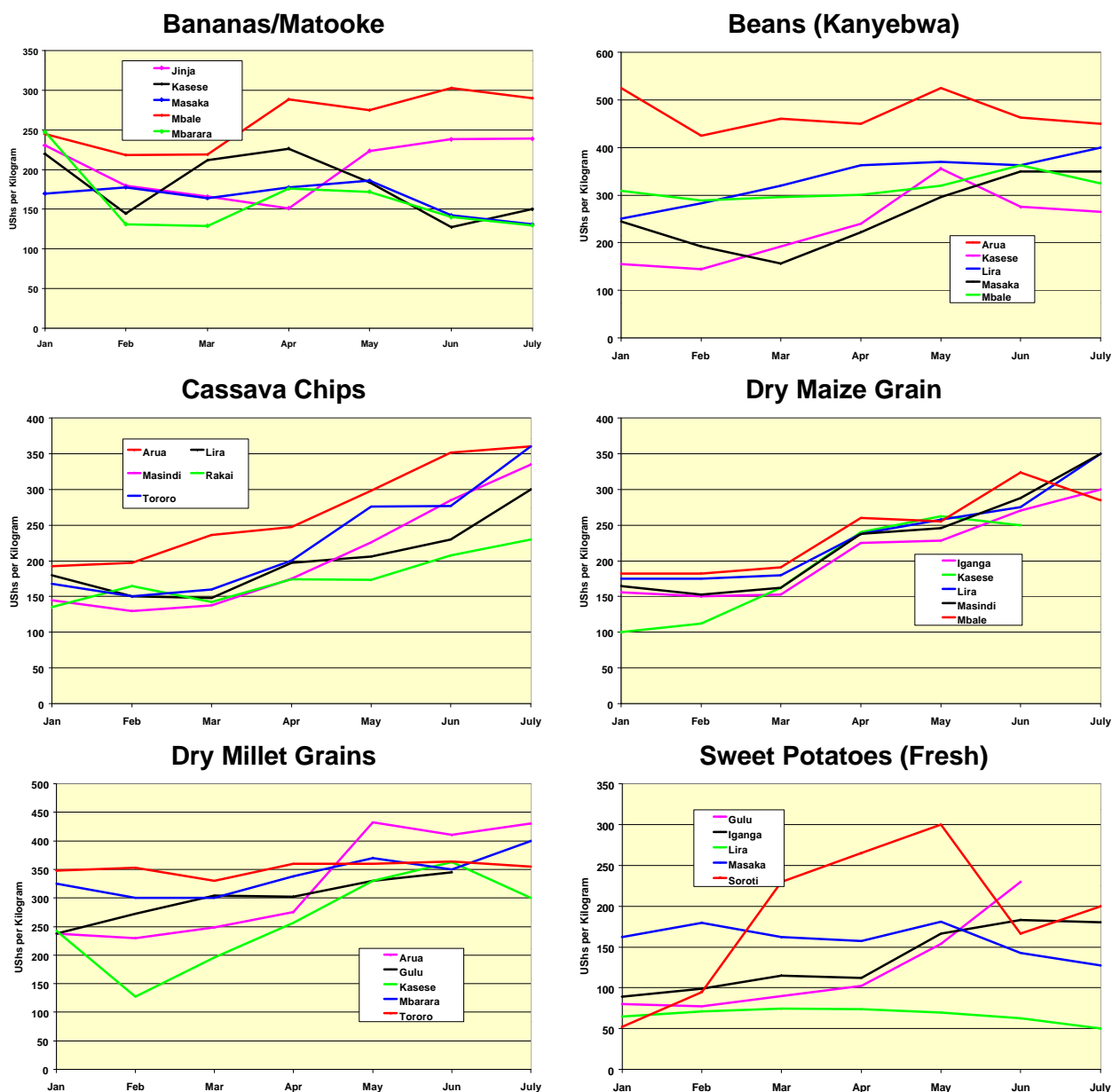
## **V. Market Conditions: Supply, Prices and Trade**

Crop supply to major district markets in Uganda remains adequate except for markets in Kotido and Moroto Districts, where staple food supply continues to be restricted owing to low crop availability within the districts and limited inflows from neighboring districts, mostly due to uncertain security on the roads. Nevertheless, price trends remained mixed by the end of July with minimal price declines observed, a signal of unusually lower than normal crop production for the first season. On average, wholesale bean prices averaged US\$ 360/= per kilogram in most markets with Kasese (western Uganda) recording the lowest price of US\$ 265/= during July. Wholesale prices for dry maize grain ranged between US\$ 285 and 350/= per kilogram, the latter price being registered in Mbale, on Uganda's eastern border with Kenya. Bananas and sweet potato prices continue to be affordable, enabling population's access to markets. Figure 3, on the next page, is an illustration of price trends up to the end of the first season and it shows limited variation downwards for most commodities as expected after a harvest.

In its market support program using cereal banks, the Lutheran World Federation has been able to supply maize in Bokora and Matheniko Counties, Moroto District, at an average price of US\$ 280/= per kilogram compared to between US\$ 350/= and 400/= on the open market. More food is required to support the program.

Poorly distributed rainfall affected performance of Kenya's long rains maize, especially in the major producing Rift Valley area, leading to lower than normal production. The shortfall in maize production has encouraged cross border trade in maize from Uganda into Kenya mostly through informal trade channels. Records of formal trade show only minimal maize exports to Kenya, where under 10 metric tons were sold during July. Low maize sales are mainly due to duty imposed by the Government of Kenya on maize imports as a way of protecting the local market as the maize harvest begins in Kenya. Trade in beans has also been reported. Records at the Busia border post indicate that an average 2148.4 metric tons of beans were exported in June 2000, increasing to 2621 metric tons in July.

Figure 3: Crop Prices for Selected Crops in Selected Markets, January to June 2000



Source: The Market Information System (International Institute of Tropical Agriculture) and FEWS NET, August 2000

## VI. Humanitarian Update, Civil Insecurity and Current Interventions

**Gulu and Kitgum Districts, Northern Uganda:** Uncertain civil security has been experienced in Gulu and Kitgum Districts where sporadic attacks on communities and road convoys by LRA rebels have been reported since the first quarter of this year. Rebel activities led to “re-displacement” of people, who had gradually began returning home when relative calm was realized by late 1999, thereby reducing their access to fields to cultivate for the first season and leading to low production. This will increase the internally displaced persons’ (IDPs) need for food aid assistance in future. Further, uncertain security has greatly curtailed movement in the district, limiting government and humanitarian organizations’ effective delivery of services to IDPs. The World Food Programme (WFP) continues to provide food to an estimated 118,395 and 430,019

IDPs in Kitgum and Gulu Districts, respectively. This represents 24 and 92 percent of the districts' projected mid-2000 population.

**Ongoing Interventions:** Currently, WFP has six different ongoing programs in Uganda catering to needs of IDPs, drought affected people in Karamoja and refugees from Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. Due to limited donor pledges and funding problems the agency is finding difficulty in maintaining many of the current programs even at reduced rations and more pledges are required to enable it cater to increased needs. A case in point is the Karamoja EMOP 6235.00, which has only received forty six percent pledges of the required 9,069 metric tons. Nearly sixty percent, 2,500 metric tons, of the pledges for this program have not arrived in the Uganda. Following the assessment in July of Karamoja Region, the food security conditions were found to have deteriorated further and many households were found to be suffering severe food shortage. The number of beneficiaries under EMOP 6235.00 is expected to increase from the current 160,000 to 273,500, an increase of nearly sixty percent, and that the program may have to be extended for another six or more months beyond September 2000. However, unless the program receives considerable contributions now, it is not even likely to run until September 2000. The table below summarizes funding levels for each program.

Project Number	Type of Program	Duration	Number of Beneficiaries	Status of Contributions
<b>Protracted Relief and Recovery Program 6077.00</b>	Refugees in Mbarara, Kabale, Hoima	1 Aug '99 to 31 July 2001	19,068	Fairly resourced
<b>Protracted Relief and Recovery Program 6176.00</b>	IDPs in Gulu, Kitgum, Bundibugyo; Refugees in Arua, Adjumani, Moyo, Kitgum, Masindi	1 April 2000 to 31 March 2002	812,376	Only 6,900 MT (8%) out of 82,000 MT contributed to date. Pledges required.
<b>Country Program 6100.00</b>	Agricultural Marketing	1 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec 2004	10,000	
<b>Country Program 6101.00</b>	Education Adult Literacy	31 March 2000 to 31 Dec. 2004	60,150	Activity approved June 2000. Has received 60 percent pledges for 2000 that are yet to arrive in country.
<b>Country Program 6102.00</b>	Vocational Training for Orphans	1 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec. 2004	5,799	Requires 373 MT per year. Only 103.5 MT (or 28 percent) have been pledged for 2000. More pledges needed.
<b>Emergency Operation (EMOP) 6235.00</b>	Assistance to Drought Affected in Karamoja	1 April to 30 Sept. 2000	160,000 (may rise to 273,500)	Only 46 percent pledged out of 9,069 MT

The Protracted Relief and Recovery Program, 6176.00, for IDPs and refugees, which runs from April 2000 to 31 March 2000, has only received 8 percent of the required 82,000 MT. The program received 40,000 MT from prior programs catering to these people. However, with internal borrowing to cater for the Karamoja EMOP, pending arrival of the latter's contributions, and given a fluid nature of civil insecurity in the areas under the program, careful planning is necessary to ensure new pledges are received to cover the intended period.

**Karamoja -- Kotido and Moroto Districts, Northeastern Uganda**

**Government of Uganda Intervention:** In response to deteriorating food security and livestock conditions in Karamoja, the GoU has launched a nearly twelve (12) billion shilling program to alleviate the suffering of the Karimojong population. The program, which began in August 2000, aims to provide the population with food, agricultural inputs, such as improved seed and fertilizer, training in improved crop and animal methods and income generating activities, including apiary and fish farming. Medical services, nutrition foods and drugs, will also be provided to the population. The Office of the Vice President, who is actively involved, is heading the program together with pertinent government ministries and departments.

**Oxfam GB and NGO Plans:** Subsequent to its nutritional and food security assessment of Kotido District, northeastern Uganda in May 2000, OXFAM Great Britain (GB) is considering a follow up in September to monitor the populations' conditions after the "hunger period", May to August. The agency is currently consulting with other NGOs and humanitarian organization, including Medecins Sans Frontieres/Swiss (MSF/S), to explore ways of carrying out a joint assessment. MSF/S is active in Amudat Sub-county, Upe County of Moroto District and normally carries out nutritional surveys in the area. Discussions between OXFAM GB, MSF/S and other humanitarian organizations are aimed to allow for the assessment to cover a wider geographical area, including parts of Moroto District, with hope that result the will help to guide and allow for review of response programs in Karamoja.