



Executive Brief: Uganda Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis

Overview, scope and methods

Despite its fertile soil, favourable weather and a promising economy, Uganda is one of the poorest countries in the world and classifies as a least developed country. Social and economic progress is challenged by prolonged rebellion in the north, high population growth, increasing poverty and a growing disparity in income distribution.

Given the scale of WFP's interventions¹ and the multiple challenges facing the country combined with the need to update existing information on food security at both national and household levels², WFP conducted a Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) to gain a better understanding of households' food insecurity and vulnerability at the sub-national level.

The Uganda CFSVA is based on the analysis of a national survey of 2,987 households carried out in July-August 2005, covering 55 districts (only the urban Kampala district was not covered).

WFP conducted the CFSVA in collaboration with the Government of Uganda, UNICEF, the Institute of Public Health, the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the University of Makerere, FEWS NET and the National Bureau of Statistics. The Food Security and Early Warning departments of the Agriculture Ministry and ACF, ACDI-VOCA also contributed. The CFSVA was prepared under the umbrella of the Strengthen Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) project and was made possible through funding and support of the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission.³

How many people are food insecure? ⁴

About one million people (5 percent of the total rural population) are food insecure.

About 6.75 million people (31 percent of the rural population) are highly vulnerable to food insecurity.

Another 4 million (19 percent of the rural population) are moderately vulnerable.

Definitions:

Food insecurity¹ exists when people do not have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Vulnerability² is a result of exposure to risk factors and of underlying socio-economic processes, which can reduce the capacity of population to cope with those risks.

¹ FAO (2002), *The state of Food Insecurity in the World 2001*

² FIVIMS - *Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems*

Who are the food insecure people? Where do they live ?

Food insecurity exists throughout the country but varies both geographically and amongst livelihood groups. Food insecurity is most highly concentrated in the north. Even in regions where food insecurity is as low as 3 percent (mainly the central and southern parts of the country), vulnerability is a concern, often affecting from 19 to 36 percent of the population.

Food aid and remittance dependants (about 9 percent of the rural population) are the most food insecure. Households who depend on their own livestock and agricultural production which some of them complement with brewing activities, unskilled work or the sale of natural resources (pastoralists,

¹ WFP has significant operations in Uganda: a US\$263 million Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (2005-2008) targeting 2.6 million refugees and displaced people, a US\$38 million country programme (2006-2010) targeting 280,000 people and a US\$8.5 million programme for 92,000 people affected by HIV.

² VAM produced an in-depth study in 2000.

³ The SENAC project aims to reinforce WFP's capacity to assess humanitarian needs in the food sector during emergencies and the immediate aftermath through accurate and impartial needs assessments. The project is funded by internal and external sources, including major donors such as ECHO.

⁴ While the study was conducted in the most rigorous manner, some limitations have been acknowledged and taken into consideration for the conclusions. Information on the methodology is available in the first chapter of the report. On the representativity of the sample, the margin of error is within 3%.

agro-brewers, agro-laborers and agriculturalists) are the most vulnerable. They represent about 54.4 percent of the rural population. Those whose main source of income comes from skilled or artisan work or from a salary, hunters, fishers and gatherers are more food secure (about 37 percent of the rural population).

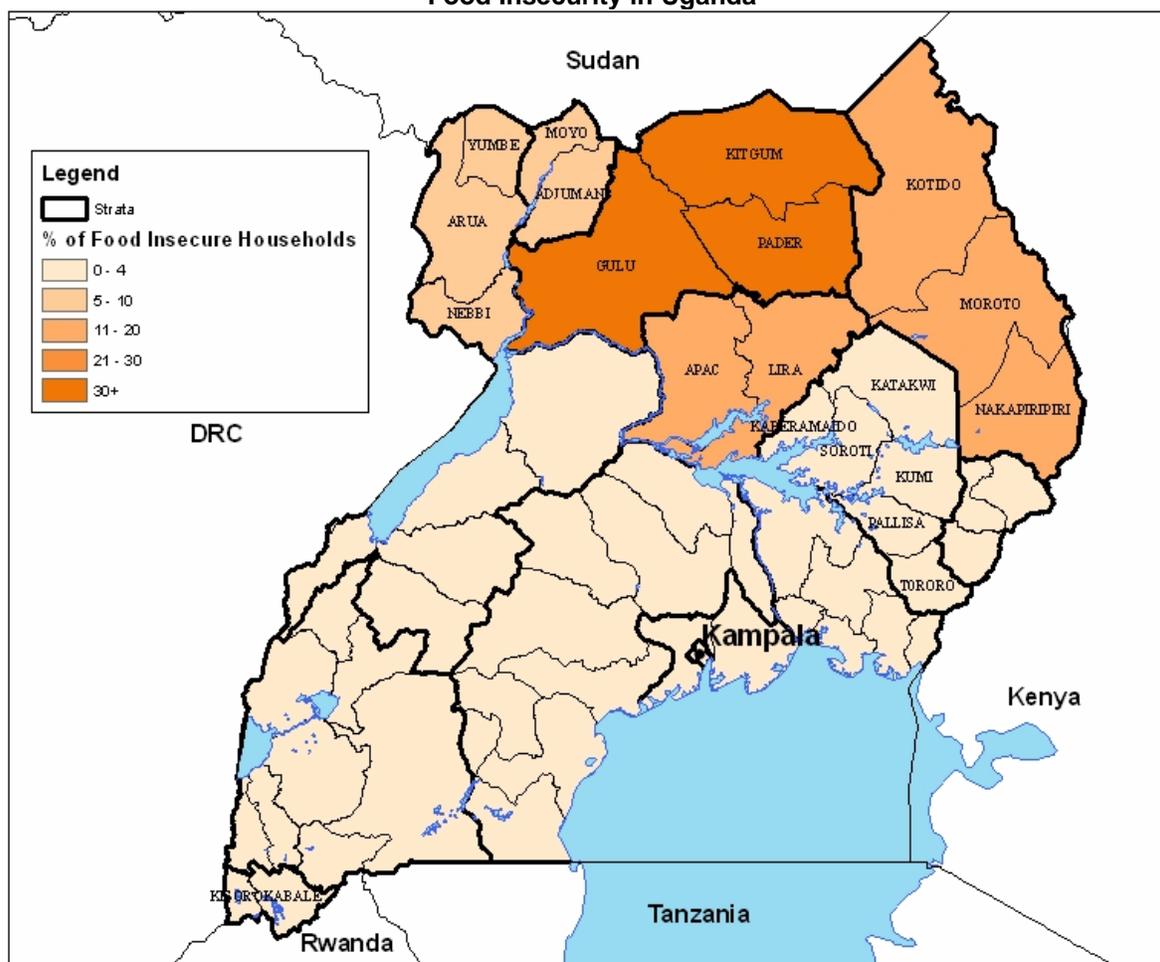
Chronic malnutrition among children is widespread in Uganda but is more pronounced in the north. Stunting affects one third of the children and is especially acute in the Kabale and Kisoro districts. In rural areas, wasting affects 10 percent of the children under five on average, and reaches alarming levels in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts (16 percent) and in Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts (22 percent).

Districts with high percentage of food insecure and vulnerable people

Districts	Est. number of food insecure people (% of strata population)	Est. number of highly vulnerable people (% of population)
Northern Uganda		
Gulu, Kitgum, Pader (Acholi strata)	357,700 (33%)	411,400 (38%)
Apac, Lira (Lango strata)	171,000 (12%)	527,300 (37%)
Kotido, Moroto, Nakapiripirit (Karimojong strata)	168,500 (18%)	430,700 (46%)
Kabermaido, Katakwi, Soroti, Kumi, Pallisa, Tororo (Teso-Dhola strata)	<70,000 (3%)	1,191,100 (53%)
South-west		
Kabale, Kisoro (Kiiga strata)	<7,000 (1%)	407,000 (60%)
Rest of rural Uganda	About 434,000 (1 to 7%)	About 3.5 million (19 to 36%)
Total in the rural part of the country	About 1 million (5%)	About 6,75 million (31%)

Strata were created to ensure homogeneity as existing administrative regions were too heterogeneous with regards to livelihoods, poverty and other indicators.

Food Insecurity in Uganda



Northern Uganda

Vulnerability and food insecurity are the highest in the Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts. About 357,000 people (33 percent of the population) are food insecure and about 411,000 people (38 percent) are highly vulnerable. This part of the country has experienced brutal rebel activities over the last 19 years, which have caused loss of lives, internal displacement, and disruption of economic and social services. Continued attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army prevent people from returning to their homes to cultivate their fields. A large number of families live in camps under harsh conditions and 87 percent depend on food aid and other assistance. In addition, 185,000 Sudanese have sought refuge in this area.

In Apac and Lira districts, people face similar but less intense problems: lack of security remains high but access to land is better. Approximately 170,000 people are food insecure (12 percent of the population) and 520,000 are vulnerable (37 percent).

In Adjumani, Moyo, Arua, Nebbi and Yumbe districts, one third of households are highly vulnerable because of the large presence of agro-labourers and brewers who subsist on agricultural production, which is sometimes supplemented by income from brewing activities, sales of natural resources (e.g. firewood) or unskilled labour (e.g. agricultural work).

North-eastern Uganda

In Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts, about 170,000 people are food insecure (18 percent of the population) and about 430,000 people (46 percent) are vulnerable. These are mainly agriculturalists and agro-brewers who depend almost exclusively on agricultural production or complement their low income through brewing activities.

About 1.2 million people (53% of the population) are vulnerable in the Kabermaido, Katakwi, Soroti, Kumi, Pallisa and Tororo districts. Most of these households depend on their agricultural production which they supplement by earnings from brewing or unskilled labour.

South-western Uganda

In the districts of Kabale and Kisoro, about 407,000 people (60 percent of the population) are highly vulnerable. Stunting is high (26 percent of children). The diet is poor consisting mainly of staple foods (roots and tubers) and rarely vegetables, fruits or animal proteins. Remittances, gifts and loans are the main sources of income.

What are the underlying causes of food insecurity?

In the north, **the rebel activities of the Lord's Resistance Army are the main cause of food insecurity**. In the north-east, insecurity is a factor but **repeated droughts are also responsible for food insecurity**. Furthermore, families in the north have only one harvest/agricultural season, while those in the south can harvest twice.

People throughout the country are subject to **fluctuating food prices, crop and animal pests and diseases**, all of which contribute to their precarious situation. Low productivity and declining soil fertility also have long-term, adverse impacts on the ability of households to produce sufficient food.

Livelihoods are fundamental to understanding the food situation of a household. People who depend on external assistance (mainly the displaced and people who receive remittances) are the most food insecure. People who depend on livestock and agricultural production are also more food insecure. Households whose main source of income comes from skilled or artisan work or from a salary are more food secure. Hunters, fishers and gatherers are also better off. Access to productive resources (land, cattle and poultry) positively influences people's food security status.

At household level, higher education levels are closely linked with higher food security status.

What are the implications for programming?

The CFSVA provides essential information for monitoring, targeting and designing assistance programmes. It concludes that food security in Uganda will only be achieved through an integrated approach, which not only addresses the immediate need for food but also the problems that cause food insecurity and vulnerability.

Monitoring: One third of the population is highly vulnerable, and a small shock such as a drought, an outbreak of crop pest or animal disease could precipitate them into a critical situation. Therefore, a monitoring system with climatic data, crop pests and diseases information is recommended. Price fluctuations should also be monitored given that high food prices are the second most important shock for Ugandans.

Targeting - beyond the food insecure, who are the most vulnerable? Pastoralists, agro-brewers, agro-labourers and agriculturalists form the bulk of vulnerable households. Vulnerability is highest in the Acholi and Lango sub-regions due to current insecurity and in the Karamoja region due to recurrent drought. Vulnerability is also high in the Teso-Dhola strata due to insecurity as well as episodic droughts.

Programming: The CFSVA establishes a clear need for assistance, in particular the need to increase dietary intake and agricultural productivity in the long term.

- Geographically targeted food transfers may be particularly required to improve dietary intake in areas where there are a large proportion of food insecure households and/or as a response to large covariate shocks where there are a large proportion of vulnerable people.
- In some areas like Karamoja, Teso-Dhola and areas in the west where severe stunting is high and a large proportion of adult women are malnourished, the women need to be encouraged to attend ante/post natal and/or early childhood programmes.
- In Karamoja and probably the central lake region, the greater Busoga and the Lango sub-regions, programmes to promote school enrolment and attendance could be encouraged.

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