

Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) Report for Climate Change Adaptation Project in Teso and Karamoja

Summer 2013

Prepared by **Arielle Tozier de la Poterie**

based on data collected by volunteer teams in the Kotido, Katakwi, Soroti,
and Abim districts and reports from the Ugandan Red Cross Society (URCS)

arielle.tozierdelapoterie@colorado.edu

Junior Researcher, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre
PhD Environmental Studies, University of Colorado – Boulder



Executive Summary

Introduction to the VCA

In summer of 2013 teams of URCS volunteers conducted Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCAs) in four districts in the Teso and Karamoja Regions of Uganda. The purpose of these VCAs was to assess the hazards, vulnerabilities, capacities and resources within each community so as to harmonize local needs with activities scheduled as part of a six-year climate change adaptation project.

General Findings

Although the precise nature of vulnerabilities and capacities in each community varied according to context, the challenges facing each of the communities were remarkably similar. Community members in nearly all of the communities identified

floods, droughts, and inadequate access to safe water as the primary hazards facing their communities. Because all sixteen communities depend primarily upon subsistence agriculture and do not have consistent access to water or irrigation they are particularly susceptible to climate variation and change. Community elders believe that traditional knowledge related to climate is being lost and is becoming less relevant in the face of unpredictable climate variation. Vulnerability to the hazards identified is also the result of limited skills, knowledge, and resources (particularly with regard to innovative farming and irrigation).

Most communities had similar capacities, including their own labor, locally available resources, and community groups; however, some communities had additional facilities or resources (grain storage, potential for fishing or agroforestry) because of previous partnership with other NGOs or because of their geographical location. In a few instances, it would behoove the Red Cross to partner with organizations already working in the communities or to build upon their previous efforts.

Conclusions

The results of the VCA study suggest that many of the interventions proposed by the CCA project are in line with community needs and priorities. Livelihood diversification, farmer trainings and exchanges, and improved access to water and irrigation will help farmers to cope with agricultural drought or unpredictable precipitation. All communities would also likely benefit from additional hygiene and sanitation training.

Training for existing groups, the creation of community-based disaster risk reduction teams, and development of contingency plans may help communities in responding to floods, which are a hazard common to most communities in Teso and a few in Kotido District. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether the existence of such groups will actually improve disaster preparedness and response and lead to better outcomes.

Other activities, such as rehabilitation of bore holes and placement of nursery beds should be implemented according to the needs and capacities apparent in each individual profile. For a more detailed explanation of the specific actions to be taken in each community, see the individual community action plans, which outline how each community is to proceed and how the Red Cross can contribute to decreasing vulnerability and increasing capacities.