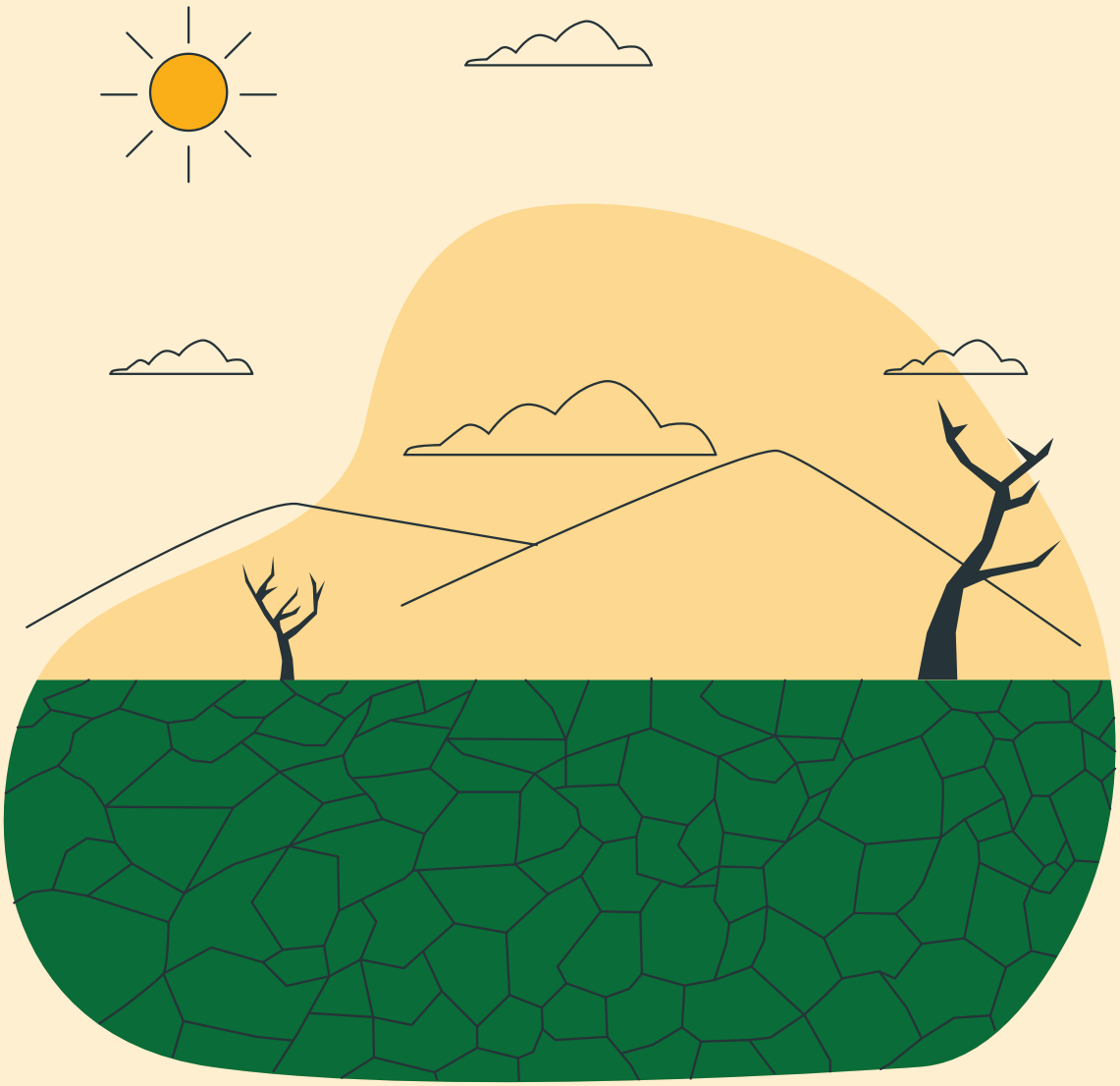
SITUATION REPORT:

Drought in Karamoja:

Why aBi Needs to Scale-Up Food Security and Climate Resilience Programming

aBi



The **Challenge:**

Climate change is among the worst global challenges of our times. It threatens the lives and livelihoods of over 100 million people globally. The effects of climate change have been more evident and adverse in the agriculture sector, a critical driver for economic growth and food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. The sector contributes 23 percent of the region's GDP and employs more than 60 percent of the total population in the region. In Uganda, 80 percent of the total population derives a livelihood from agriculture and the sector contributes 22.1 percent to the national GDP (UBOS, 2021).

Staple food prices have continued to increase in recent months and are higher than prices recorded last year and five-year average levels across most of Uganda. Prices of staple sorghum and maize are now significantly above average in several key reference markets across the country. In Karamoja, terms of trade for sorghum against firewood, charcoal, and goats are below average and worse than last year, significantly restricting food access for poor households. After the first season bimodal harvest in June/July, food prices are expected to decline but are now expected to remain above average given expectations for below-average production, increased net exports, and impacts of the war in Ukraine on global supply chains and prices.

And as maize prices hit a record high of **KSh210 (UGX 6,680) for a two-kilo packet,** up from **KSh120 (UGX 3,800)** at the start of the year in Kenya

(Business Daily Kenya, July 2022).

traders are pushing across borders to Uganda where **the price of maize flour has increased to UGX2,500.**

While this presents market opportunities for farmers in Uganda, it also presents a significant food security risk as countries in the region compete for a limited maize stock for both human consumption and the manufacturing of animal feeds.

Across most areas, the March to May rainy season started late, and cumulative rainfall to date has been significantly below average in the northern and eastern regions and parts of the central region. Given this, first-season crop production is expected to be below average at the national level, with northern and eastern areas likely to experience the worst production losses. Given eroded coping capacity following two consecutive below-average production seasons, below-average income-earning and above-average prices are expected to drive an increasing number of poor households in northern areas to face stressed outcomes before the start of harvesting in June/July, when the harvest will support some improved access to food and income through September.

(FEWSNET, June 2022).

In Karamoja, worsening insecurity has disrupted normal livelihood activities and income-earning. Given this and above-average food prices, purchasing power has declined for Karamoja households, with many poor households facing widening consumption gaps given the famine in Karamoja: impact on agro-value chains and livelihoods.

(FEWSNET, 2022).

This insecurity and a **prolonged drought have triggered a deadly famine** in the region.

In May and June 2022, reports of death from hunger and starvation were registered in the region, and in July

more than 600

starvation-related cumulative deaths had been recorded in four of its districts; **Kotido, Napak, Moroto, and Kaabong** alone.

As of today,

4 in every 10

Karimojong have no food

Only **2 in 10**

have stocks enough to last a month

3% will be able to feed themselves

for the next 90 days

41% of the population (517,800)

are at risk of food shortage.

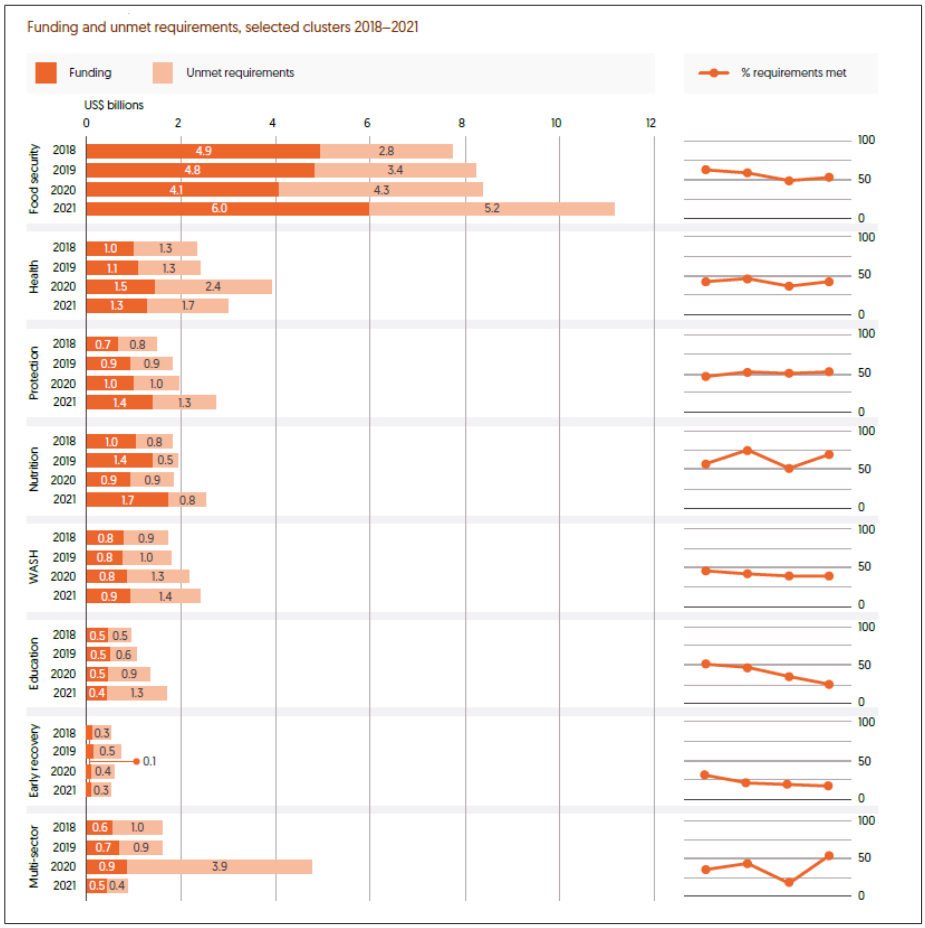
(Daily Monitor, July 2022).

The global & national shift towards food security & climate resilience:

As the number of countries experiencing crisis has grown across the globe, **these countries have received a growing share of official development assistance, from 9.4% in 2012 to around 14% in the five years to 2021.** (Global Humanitarian Report, 2022)

Due to the impact of climate change, this development assistance is being channeled more and also adapted to tackle food security and build climate resilience, especially in the agriculture sector.

Food security received almost four times as much funding as any other sector in 2021, while nutrition was the best-funded



Source: Development Initiatives based on UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

Several large-scale development initiatives by the government of Uganda, and development partners tailored to promote peace, recovery, and risk management are under implementation within the region. These include the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), Development Initiative in Northern Uganda (DINU), the Pro Resilience Action (PROACT) project, Apolou, and Nuyok projects, Mercy Corps, and the World Food Program. (Aklilu et al., 2021). These projects have significantly improved the well-being of the communities within the region, for example, there has been a shift of a few households from typical pastoralists to agro-pastoralists households. However, since climate change is long-term and irreversible, there is a need for launching development initiatives aimed at building long-term resilience within communities. The existing gap is that there is limited knowledge on the adaptive capacity of the communities which is needed to inform resilience programing.

In July 2022, the United States announced it would be providing more than $82 million in new humanitarian assistance in Uganda through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State. This funding will help to meet the emergency needs of the people of Uganda, exacerbated by a global food crisis and regional conflict. This additional funding is composed of $21 million in emergency food aid provided through USAID and more than $61 million in humanitarian assistance through the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to respond to the humanitarian needs of refugees, internally displaced persons, and people affected by food shortages and conflict in Uganda and the region. (USAID.GOV)

Also in 2022, the UK government announced an investment of up to €39m for climate-smart economic growth and development. The investment would be delivered through a project aiming to support market systems development and build resilience to climate change for at least 130,000 Ugandan households in Northern through climate-smart agriculture and run a challenge fund called the 'Uganda Climate Innovation Fund' which will aim to facilitate transformational change in Uganda's ability to adapt to and mitigate climate change and promote sustainable land management.

Why aBi needs to adapt to factor food security & climate resilience as key programming components/to also tackle the Karamoja challenge:

Already, evidence from **research** conducted by the aBi indicates the devastating effects of the current drought on crop production and productivity in the North and North East parts of the country. The Agro inputs implementing partners (MMP Agro input, Ngetta Tropical Holdings) were not able to harvest at least 50% of the targeted crop yield due to the drought in 2021 season B, which is also likely to be the case for 2022 season A. Partners working in the Eastern region attest that of 40 tons of Naro bean (seed) distributed to farmers in Oyam, Lira, Abim, Teso, and Karamoja regions just about eight tons (20%) were harvested. In addition, a just concluded assessment of oil seed yield commissioned by MMP Agro and Cerez in the Dokolo district projects a decline in yield per acre as the prolonged drought rages on, with a 28 percent decline in sunflower yield, 14**%** soya bean, and eight percent decline in sesame yield per acre.

What aBi has/is doing regarding climate resilience/food security?

Advancing Agriculture Insurance

- Agricultural insurance in Uganda currently covers most production risks, such as drought, excessive rainfall, hail, frost, floods, and other similar risks by transferring such risks to the insurance companies. It has provided a 50% premium subsidy to small-scale farmers, 30% to large-scale producers, and up to 80% to farmers in disaster-prone areas like Isingiro, Kasese, parts of Mt Elgon, Teso, Karamoja, and West Nile. aBi partnered with Uganda Insurers Association in 2017 to advance agricultural insurance. Exploring venues for the scale-up of this product with a keen focus on the Karamoja sub-region is required.
- Opportunity bank has enhanced partnerships with Agro-consortium to offer insurance services at negotiated rates not exceeding 2.5percent to boost smallholder farmers and big agribusiness borrowers.

Promoting Climate Resilient Crop Varieties and practices

- aBi partner through its partner MMP Agro in Abim district is promoting smallholder farmers' involvement in blended farming of local drought-resilient varieties, crop rotation with local legume varieties, and improved seed farming to enhance the adoption of good agronomic practices and post-harvest handling, to influence mindset change from reliance on cattle keeping as the mainstay and minimize effects of climate change.

Adapting irrigation to climate change

- Between 2018 and 2020, aBi supported sectoral studies on irrigation investment and through local partnerships advanc ed installation of small-scale irrigation systems for farmers across Uganda.

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