

LWF Uganda

Response to the Floods in Katakwi

Health concerns in the Katakwi and Amuria districts of Uganda are overwhelming. The Amasewilko Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp reports an increase in the cases of malaria and pneumonia. There is also fear of a cholera outbreak. The increase in occurrences of these illnesses is a direct result of the flooding in the Katakwi and Amuria districts. Northeast Uganda is now in a state of emergency.

William Etukoit and his late wife were displaced to the Amasewilko camp in 2000. Their home and possessions were destroyed by a violent Karamojong raid. After moving to Amasewilko, they hoped to never be displaced again. That hope was shattered when long bouts of rain hit Katakwi starting in July. William and his three children worked hard to preserve the house. They dug trenches outside of the home in an attempt to divert the water. Despite their efforts, their house collapsed.

William moved his family into the health center, which is operating as an emergency shelter. Living without proper bedding or mosquito nets, William knew he was putting his family at risk. "I had no other choice. Nothing like that was available for my family." The standing water that engulfs the camp has created a hotbed for mosquito larvae. William's youngest son, Kevin, age 2, became infected with malaria. Lowering his head, William tells the story of how his young son died just one week after contracting the illness.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has worked in the Katakwi and Amuria districts for the past four years and is the largest NGO in the area. Mosquito nets, blankets, and tarpaulins have already been distributed to some flood victims. Those items are clearly essential for survival.

Although William and his children have suffered a great loss, they hope that no other family has to experience such a tragedy. William hopes blankets and nets provided by the LWF will protect his other children from malaria. Like many others at Amasewilko, William now needs the materials to rebuild his home.