

## Conflict in Northern Uganda

The long-running conflict in Northern Uganda has been characterized as one of the world's "forgotten crises" by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. A 20 year insurgency has led to the displacement of 1.27 million people who live in over 500 refugee camps. The displaced population has inadequate or poor sanitation facilities and services for basic human survival. Flooding has further impacted water and sanitation, as open water sources were contaminated and pit latrines collapsed. The affected population also lacks access to health care and disease prevention information, and is susceptible to deadly yet easily preventable diseases like malaria, diarrheal diseases, and respiratory tract infection. The lack of safe drinking water, poor access to proper sanitation facilities, and unsafe hygiene practices make children under 5 years of age especially vulnerable to diarrheal disease.



## Saving Lives with Safe Drinking Water

In recognition of the urgent need for improved access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation and hygiene practices, PSI/Uganda has implemented safe water programs for internally displaced persons (IDP) in Pader district, as well as emergency flood relief programs in Teso region. Since 2004, PSI/Uganda has succeeded in promoting the use and availability of low cost, highly effective water treatment options, including *Waterguard* Safe Water Solution, *Waterguard* chlorine tablets, and *PUR* Purifier of Water.

**Pader District:** With support from UNICEF, PSI implemented a social marketing program in 30 IDP camps (including 18 military units) in Pader district, Northern Uganda. The program aimed to improve the health status of IDPs through prevention of HIV/AIDS and diarrheal disease. PSI/Uganda increased access and utilization of HIV/AIDS services and products through communications, counseling and testing, and free condom distribution, as well as provided Basic Care Packages for people living with HIV. IDPs in the targeted camps were provided information and products to treat water and improve hygiene, including free safe water treatment vessels and *WaterGuard* chlorine solution.



**Teso Region:** Heavy rains in the eastern parts of Uganda also warranted immediate humanitarian response. PSI/Uganda implemented an emergency response program to distribute Non Food Items (NFIs) to affected communities in the Teso region. The program provided access to a package of safe water, hygiene and sanitation to reduce diarrheal diseases and malaria. Each NFI kit contained one long-lasting insecticide-treated bed net, water purification products for one month, soap, a water storage vessel and health information materials. Through collaboration effective community mobilization, PSI/Uganda was able to reach 15,000 families in four districts in Phase I alone. Results showed that 38,382 households were reached in total; two-thirds of the households observed had covered water storage containers; and in Katakwi over 80% of the households were treating their drinking water.