



# Liberia

## Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1989
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	500,000 (2003)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts, generalised violence
Human development index	176

The internal displacement of up to 500,000 people in Liberia was caused by the 14-year civil war that ended in 2003 with the Accra Peace Agreement.

IDP camps were officially closed in 2006 and the return of IDPs and refugees was completed in mid-2007. However, later that year, UNHCR and NGOs found some 23,000 people remaining in and around former IDP camps, of whom 16,000 had received a return package but had not managed to restart their lives in return areas. In addition, an undetermined number of people who had found refuge in public buildings in the capital Monrovia were left out of the registration process, and were still displaced there at the end of 2008. Small-scale displacements due to land-related conflicts were reported in 2008.

Liberia is facing extraordinary reconstruction challenges and many of the vulnerabilities shown by the remaining IDPs and returnees are shared by the rest of the population. As evidenced by the return of some IDPs to their former camps, there is a severe lack of basic services and infrastructure in areas of return. There is also continuing insecurity, with clashes between rival ethnic groups over land ownership becoming increasingly frequent. Durable solutions will depend on better services and infrastructure and the peaceful resolution of land conflicts, and

improved security of tenure for those who exercised their right to local integration or settlement in another part of the country.

The Guiding Principles were adopted into national legislation in 2004 but there is still room for better governance and wider access to justice to guarantee durable solutions, while the remaining IDPs are yet to have their needs assessed. The introduction in 2006 of the cluster approach, and the creation of an Inter-Agency Standing Committee country team including non-UN organisations, appear to have addressed some of the initial coordination problems. The current challenge is, however, to implement the cluster's phase-out strategy effectively, to enable the transition to recovery and development without leaving unsustainable gaps in assistance.