



# Kenya



## Quick facts

Number of IDPs	About 250,000
Percentage of total population	About 0.6%
Start of current displacement situation	1991
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	650,000 (2008)
New displacement	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	-

There have been a number of situations of internal displacement in Kenya over many years; they have varied widely in terms of the number of people affected and the duration of the displacement. People have been displaced by politically-motivated ethnic violence, conflict over natural resources which in some cases followed changes in weather patterns and disasters including drought and floods, government disarmament and counter-insurgency campaigns, and the insecurity which continued after all these events. In 2010, localised violence and operations by security forces led to displacement.

Most of these conflicts have featured long-running land disputes, and national and local leaders have often used these grievances to mobilise people to resort to violence. Meanwhile, recurrent droughts have forced pastoralists to move away from traditional grazing lands, leading to clashes with sedentary communities that have repeatedly caused internal displacement. The resulting loss of livelihoods has inhibited the social and economic development of large areas, and led to chronic vulnerability which has lasted for decades.

The large-scale post-election violence in 2007 and 2008 brought internal displacement in Kenya to the attention of the international community. The declared outcome of the presidential election of 2007 was widely disputed, and the widespread inter-communal violence which broke out led to the displacement of over 650,000 people in 2008. In order to end the violence, Kenya initiated a dialogue and reconciliation process with help from the international community, which led to a power-sharing arrangement and a national accord. The accord provided a plan to deal with immediate humanitarian issues and prevent future violence, including by ending the impunity of perpetrators of violence and human rights abuses and promoting broader accountability of government and institutions.

Most of the people displaced by the violence fled to urban areas and areas where their ethnic group was in the majority. A large number took refuge in camps. In 2008, the government launched Operation Rudi Nyumbani ("return home"), to encourage IDPs to return to their places of origin. Many went back though they did not feel safe there, while a large number moved to transit sites where they often faced worse conditions than in the main camps. However, according to the protection cluster in Kenya, some IDPs were in 2010 still in transit camps and other camps like Pipeline IDP camp in the Rift Valley,

which hosted over 1,000 families. Efforts to resettle them had been beset by corruption and at times resistance from the proposed host communities. For example, Maasai politicians resisted the resettlement of Kikuyu IDPs to areas they claimed were their ancestral lands.

The perpetrators of the post-election violence included members of Kenya's commercial and political elites. Human rights organisations have reported that perpetrators of violence have routinely avoided prosecution. Kenya has yet to repeal the 1972 Indemnity Act, which was enacted to shield members of the security forces from prosecution for human rights violations perpetrated in the 1960s against ethnic Somalis and other nomadic peoples of northern Kenya, which caused massive displacement. However, in December 2010, the International Criminal Court named six Kenyans whom it intended to investigate for organising the violence, including three government ministers.

The government provided some assistance to those internally displaced by the post-election violence, but has done little to assist other groups of IDPs. For example, people displaced as a result of state disarmament programmes, as in Mount Elgon in 2008, have had no access to justice.

In the absence of consistent reporting of displacement, there were no reliable figures available on the number of IDPs in 2010. However, several new displacements resulting from conflict over natural resources and from human rights violations were reported. In May, families were forced to flee their homes in Isiolo, Samburu, Turkana and Marsabit districts as a result of human rights violations committed by government armed forces engaged in a programme to disarm pastoralists. In October, inter-ethnic violence over land led to the displacement of hundreds of people in Garissa District of North Eastern Province. In November and December, army operations to expel Ethiopian rebels of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) from northern border areas reportedly caused the internal displacement of civilians. The OLF caused further displacement by attacking people they believed to be reporting their presence.

A positive development in 2010 was the formulation by the government of a draft national IDP policy. The policy, designed to prevent displacement, ensure assistance to IDPs, and promote durable solutions, was expected to be submitted for ratification by the government in 2011.