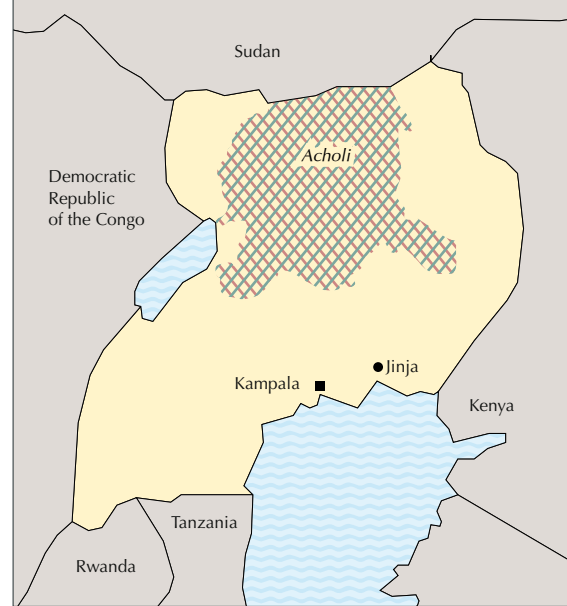


Uganda



Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 166,000
Percentage of total population	At least 0.5%
Start of current displacement situation	1988
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	1,840,000 (2005)
New displacement	0
Causes of displacement	Armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	143



The conflict in northern Uganda between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) began in 1988, but large-scale displacement only began in 1996, when the government forced people to move into camps under its "protected villages" policy. More people were forced into camps in 2002 and 2004, during two large-scale military operations against the LRA. At the height of the crisis, 1.8 million people in the north were living in camps. In addition, an unknown number of people fled to towns and cities in other parts of Uganda.

The leaders of the LRA were indicted by the International Criminal Court in 2005, but no arrests have been effected. There have been no LRA attacks in Uganda since 2006, when the government and the LRA signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA). However, the LRA never signed the Final Peace Agreement, but instead moved its area of operation to neighbouring countries.

As a result of the improved security in northern Uganda, by the end of 2010 the vast majority of IDPs had returned to their home areas. 271,000 people returned in 2010; during the year 96 camps were closed, bringing the total number of camps officially closed to 237, with only 14 camps remaining. However, by the end of the year 166,000 people were still living in camps and transit sites, 80,000 of them in camps which had officially been closed.

For most IDPs, return to their home areas has always been the preferred settlement option. But pressure from the local authorities, at times accompanied by threats to close the camps at set dates, has contributed to the fast pace of return. In some cases the owners of the land on which the camps were situated have also exerted pressure on IDPs to leave the camps; in a few instances in the years following the signing of the CHA, landlords burned down IDPs' huts.

The remaining camp population consists of two groups. Some IDPs have decided to settle in the camp locations permanently, often because of livelihood opportunities they have been able to seize. But a significant proportion of the residual population are vulnerable individuals, for whom no durable solutions strategy was put in place when the process for phasing out camps was implemented. Food aid for vulnerable households was terminated in June 2010; by the end of 2010 preparations were being made to assess how these households were coping without food aid.

Among the obstacles to return are disputes over land in

return areas, which affect widows and orphans in particular. Some children have chosen to stay behind in the camps, even when their relatives returned to their home areas, because of the better access to education there. Many people dependent on health services, including chronically ill people and people suffering from HIV/AIDS, have been unable to return because the nearest functioning clinic is too far away from their village. For elderly people without close relatives, the work involved in building a hut and clearing the land in their home village has often posed insurmountable obstacles to their return. Many urban IDPs have been unable to cover the cost of transport home.

Returnees have faced significant problems too, as the planning and implementation of recovery and development efforts in the return areas has lagged behind the rate at which the camps have been closed. Recovery programmes in northern Uganda were delayed for long periods, with confusion about funding between the government and development partners, and there was a lack of coordination between the government, donors and the UN. As a result, returnees have been confronted with the absence or inadequacy of basic services, including clean water, sanitation, health care and education; and limited opportunities to rebuild livelihoods. However, food security has improved since 2008, with the population of the northern Acholi region moving from emergency to non-emergency conditions in 2010.

An inter-agency durable solutions assessment was carried out at the end of the year to inform the planning of recovery activities; the results were expected in early 2011. There is increasing recognition of the need for reconciliation and peace building activities to be incorporated in recovery plans, to ensure that the peace in northern Uganda is sustainable.

Uganda adopted a National IDP Policy in 2004. It is party to the Great Lakes Pact, and in January 2010 became the first country to ratify the Kampala Convention. However, the implementation of these instruments remains a challenge.

Funding for the consolidated humanitarian appeal in Uganda decreased from 86 per cent in 2006 to 49 per cent in 2010. The cluster system for coordinating humanitarian action, established in the Acholi region in 2006, was phased out by the end of 2010, and all humanitarian coordination functions were handed over to the government. Responsibility for IDP protection coordination was transferred from the protection cluster to the Uganda Human Rights Commission.