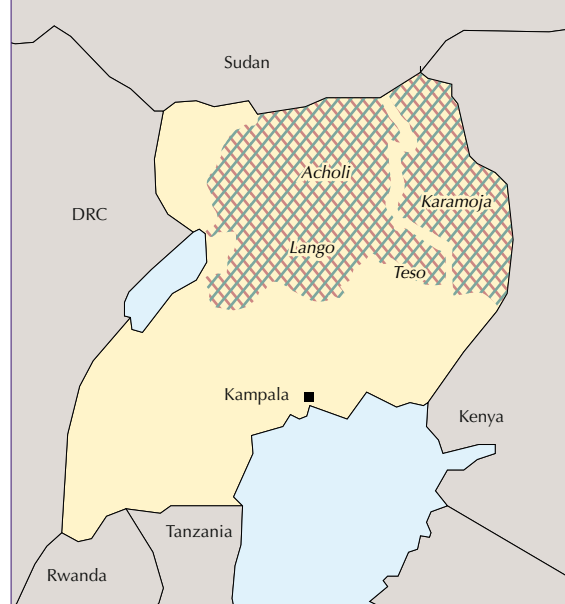


# Uganda



## Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 437,000
Percentage of total population	1.3%
Start of current displacement situation	1988
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	1,800,000 (2005)
New displacement	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations



The conflict in northern Uganda between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) began in 1988, but it was not until 1996 that the government forced people to move en masse into camps under its "protected villages" policy. It repeated the measure in 2002 and 2004, during heightened military operations against the LRA. An unknown number of people also fled to towns and cities in other parts of Uganda.

There have been no LRA attacks in Uganda since 2006, when the government and the LRA signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA). The LRA never signed the Final Peace Agreement, but rather moved its area of operation to Southern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. As a result of the improved security in northern Uganda, by the end of 2009 around 1.4 million of the 1.8 million IDPs returned to their home areas from camps in northern Uganda's Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions; over 400,000 returned in 2009 alone.

Violence continued, however, in the neighbouring Karamoja sub-region. Illegally-armed Karimojong persisted in 2009 with cattle raids and attacks against villages, while the army's ongoing forcible disarmament programme continued to give rise to human rights concerns. Since the population of Karamoja is largely nomadic, it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish between regular migratory patterns and forced displacement caused by conflict and human rights abuses. However, hundreds and perhaps thousands of women and children have moved out of Karamoja in search of safety and livelihoods.

While the return of stability in the Acholi sub-region is to be welcomed, the situation in 2009 presented two areas of serious concern. First, IDPs who had returned to their villages of origin faced significant challenges, and the sustainability of the large-scale return movements was by no means guaranteed. The obstacles they faced fell into two broad categories: the absence or inadequacy of basic services, including clean water, sanitation, health care and education; and the limited opportunities to rebuild livelihoods. Insufficient access to seed and fertiliser, combined with poor weather monitoring and forecasting, meant the 2009 harvest was only half what was expected. A food crisis arose across the north due to the premature termination of general food assistance.

Disputes over land in return areas, and the weakness of mechanisms to resolve them, further exacerbated the vulnerability

of returnees, including in particular widows, single mothers, orphans and former child soldiers.

Schools in return areas continued to struggle with a lack of teachers, classrooms, teachers' housing, latrines and water access points. The number of pupils per classroom and teacher remained well above national standards.

Second, by the end of 2009, 235,000 IDPs remained in camps and a further 200,000 in transit sites. A disproportionate number of these IDPs were elderly, disabled and sick people, including people living with HIV/AIDS. Local authorities had been phasing out the camps without developing any potentially durable settlement options for these vulnerable IDPs. Many could not return home, as they would be unable to build a hut or access health care there. But neither could many of them settle permanently where they were, due to disputes with the owners of the land on which the camps were based; some IDPs had been threatened by eviction from their huts in the camps. Children who had been left behind in the camps, to access basic services including education when their parents returned to their villages of origin, remained vulnerable to abuse.

The government signed the Kampala Convention in 2009. It also began to implement its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP) in July. The Plan's full implementation would help to bring the north up to the same level of development as the rest of the country, and would thus address one of the major causes of the conflict with the LRA. While the international community contributes financially to the PRDP, overall leadership lies with the Government of Uganda. However, there are concerns about the capacity of local government bodies in particular to manage and disburse the PRDP funding, as well as about monitoring mechanisms.

Funding for the consolidated humanitarian appeals in Uganda decreased from 86 per cent in 2006 to 67 per cent in 2009. The major challenge in the delivery of international aid is to find an appropriate balance between humanitarian assistance and recovery and development support. The reduction in humanitarian activities without a corresponding increase in recovery and development programmes is threatening to undo some of the gains made since the signing of the CHA and undermine the search for durable solutions.