

23 January 2014

## UGANDA

# New displacement in Uganda continues alongside long-term recovery needs

Since the 2006 signing of a cease-fire agreement between the government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army there has been significant return of those displaced by conflict in northern Uganda. The overwhelming majority of the 1.8 million internally displaced people (IDPs) who lived in camps at the height of the crisis have returned to their areas of origin, driven by their cultural ties to the land and the region, or resettled in new locations. Support for recovery and development in areas to which IDPs have returned has been insufficient. Returnees have faced continuing difficulties due to inadequate basic services and limited support to rebuild their livelihoods. The return process has been marred by land conflicts, sometimes leading to violence.

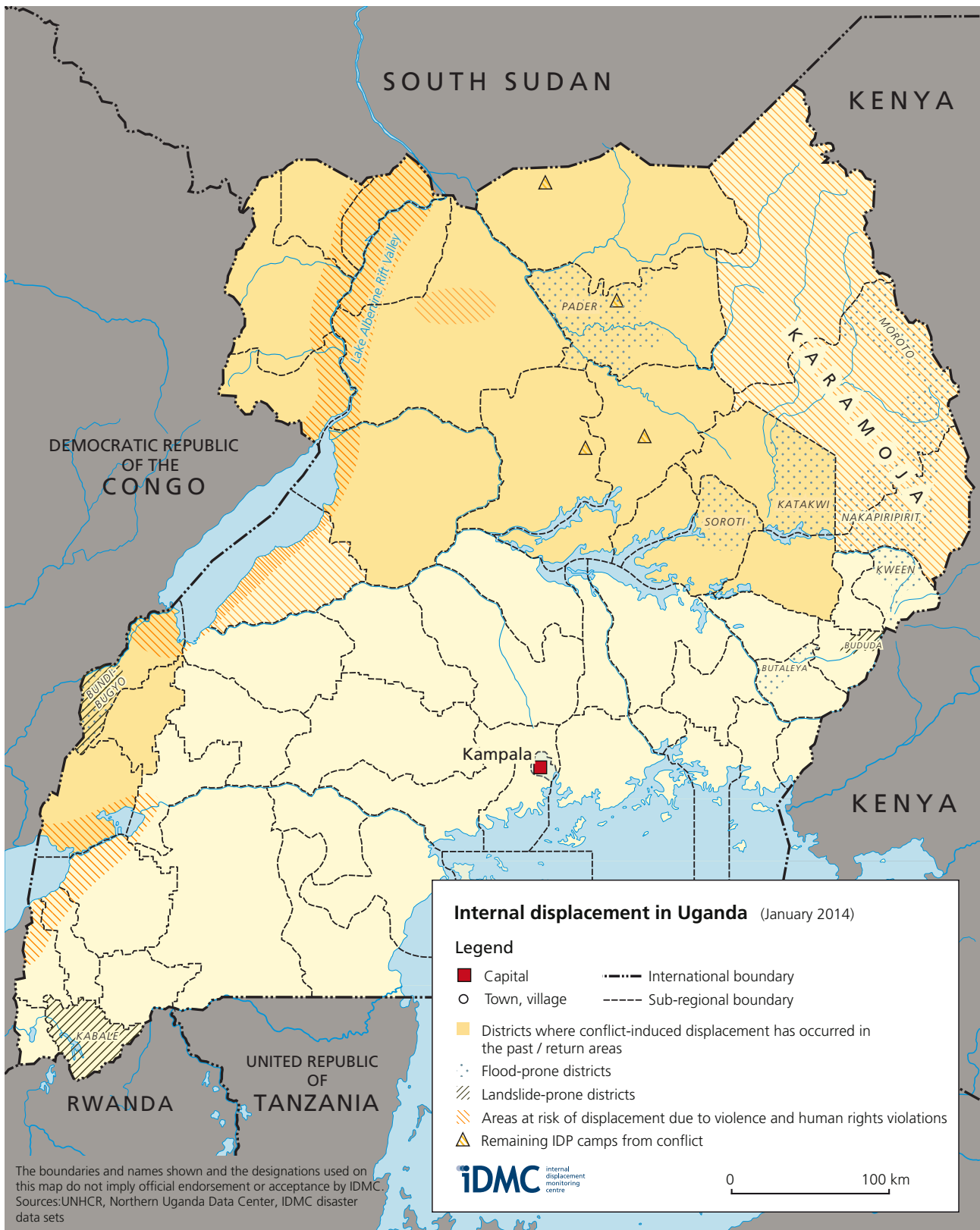


A woman climbs into a waiting truck during ongoing evictions in Apar, Amuru District, Uganda (Photo: IRIN/Charles Akena, February 2012)

Internal displacement continues to be reality in Uganda, as people flee to avoid the impact of disasters such as floods and landslides, inter-communal violence, or are evicted from their land to make way for development projects.

Uganda has shown considerable leadership in its efforts to address internal displacement and foster durable solutions. It developed one of the first national policies on IDPs in 2004, and its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP) set out a comprehensive approach to support reconstruction and IDP return. In practice, however, development programmes in northern Uganda have suffered protracted delays. Considerable resources have been invested but positive impacts to enable IDPs to find durable solutions remain limited.

Now that international humanitarian agencies have scaled down their activities, development actors must focus efforts on ensuring that IDPs and returnees are helped to pursue durable solutions.



Source: IDMC

More maps are available at [www.internal-displacement.org/maps](http://www.internal-displacement.org/maps)

## Background and causes of displacement

### *Displacement caused by conflict and violence*

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) emerged in 1987 against a historical backdrop of antagonism and distrust between the Acholi people of northern Uganda and South Sudan, and the politically influential tribes of southern Uganda. Led by Joseph Kony, its aims were to overthrow the government of President Yoweri Museveni, protect Acholi culture and rule Uganda in accordance with the Ten Commandments ([LIU](#), 30 October 2003; [CSOPNU](#), 10 December 2004).

Both LRA attacks and the government's strategy of forcibly relocating civilians to camps led to large-scale displacement in northern Uganda. The government began moving people to what it described as "protected villages" in 1996, and by the end of 2005 around 1.8 million people had been relocated ([UNHCR](#), 6 January 2012). An unknown number fled to urban areas in other parts of the country.

After the government and the LRA agreed a ceasefire in 2006, security improved and many internally displaced people (IDPs) returned home. The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CHA) ended LRA attacks inside Uganda, but it did not lead to a conclusive peace agreement. Instead, the LRA shifted its operations to South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR).

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Kony and other LRA commanders in 2005. As of December 2013, they were either dead or at large as fugitives whose whereabouts were unknown.

Clashes between government forces and a variety of other rebel movements, inter-communal violence and general banditry also caused displacement in the 1990s and early 2000s ([GoU](#), 23 June 2011; [Uganda clusters](#), 2010).

Inter-communal violence has led to more recent displacement as well, particularly in the border area between Uganda and South Sudan. People also fled clashes in the northern district of Amuru in December 2012 ([RLP](#), October 2012; [URCS](#), 3 January 2013). In the north-eastern region of Karamoja, cattle raids have become increasingly devastating since Karamajong warriors began using firearms introduced to the area, but there are no estimates of the number of people displaced as a result ([GoU](#), 23 June 2011; [Uganda clusters](#), 2010).

### *Displacement caused by disasters*

Sixty-one disasters brought on by natural hazards were reported between 1980 and 2010, and almost five million people were affected by events including floods, earthquakes, landslides, drought, epidemics, crop failures and livestock diseases ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

Flood and landslide-triggered disasters mostly affect the mountainous and Nile river basin regions in northern and eastern Uganda. The Bududa district, for example, has experienced a number of landslides that have led to death, destruction and displacement, in some cases wiping out entire villages ([RLP](#), October 2012; [New Vision](#), 10 August 2013). Unusually heavy rains caused significant displacement in many parts of the country in 2013 (IDMC Disaster-Induced Displacement Dataset, 10 January 2014; [IRIN](#), 11 April 2013).

Such natural hazards are not new, but disasters are happening more frequently for a number of reasons. IDPs in the eastern district of Kween, for example, who did not return to their places of origin because of a lack of infrastructure, have increasingly moved to disaster-prone areas such as river banks. They have also used fragile slopes for cultivation. Ever heavier rains, possibly the result of climate change, and increased deforestation are also factors ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

Some regions are prone to disasters related to drought. Other areas, such as Kween district, face alternating drought and floods. Therefore many people have been exposed to repeated and multiple types of hazards or triggers of displacement including cattle rustling, flood and drought events, resulting in multiple displacements that have left those affected extremely vulnerable to any future shocks ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

Beyond immediate effects such as loss of life, injury and displacement, the widespread destruction of property, livelihoods and infrastructure brought about disasters have set back Uganda's socio-economic development. Given that around 87 per cent of the country's population live in rural areas and depend on agriculture as their primary source of income, the loss of farmland is a particularly serious problem ([Trading Economics](#), 9 December 2013). In districts such as Bundibugyo and Bududa, up to 98 per cent of the population is rural ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

#### *Displacement caused by development and environmental conservation projects*

Evictions by both Ugandan and foreign actors to make way for development and conservation projects are on the rise. The government is keen to attract foreign investment. It has allowed domestic companies to purchase or lease (foreign ones can only lease) large areas of arable and mineral-rich land for a range of projects, including large-scale palm oil and carbon offset tree plantations. Thousands of people have been displaced as a result of such projects, losing access to vital natural resources such as water supplies, farmland, firewood and other forest products in the process. Land has often been transferred without adequate consultation of the populations affected, and without compensation or the allocation of alternative land for resettlement ([ACCS](#), March 2013; NULP, 15-16 July 2013, on file with IDMC; [NAPE](#), FoE, April 2012).

Two projects in Amuru district, a sugar cane plant proposed by the Madhvani Group and a game reserve planned by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), have resulted in protracted and unresolved land disputes during which the communities affected have become increasingly well-armed. Evictions often affect people previously displaced by the conflict between the government and the LRA, and some have been prevented from returning or resettling in areas earmarked for projects ([IRIN](#), February 2012; [RLP](#), October 2012; [Saferworld](#), 22 March 2013). One of the main reasons for opposition to the Madhvani sugar cane project is that the land on which it would be sited is the most viable asset left in the area for communities trying to recover from the economic losses they suffered during the conflict. Locals also suspect there are oil reserves on the land, and that both the government and the company want to benefit from them. Forced evictions to make way for the proposed game reserve in Apaa reportedly resulted in a number of deaths and arrests. Widespread destruction of property was also reported, with an estimated 2,240 homes being demolished or burned down ([ACCS](#), March 2013). Similar examples of forced evictions can be found elsewhere in Uganda ([NAPE](#), FoE, April 2012).

The increased use of land for large-scale agricultural and development purposes has had a particularly negative impact on pastoralists. Land for grazing and subsistence farming has become increasingly scarce, making their traditional way of life untenable and leading to their displacement (IDMC interviews, September 2013; [NAPE](#), FoE, April 2012). Both colonial and post-colonial governments have pursued policies of settling pastoralists in order to free up some of the land they range over, and this has long been a source of social conflict ([CCR](#), June 2011).

Since 2006 the discovery and exploitation of oil reserves has also led to large-scale evictions in western Uganda ([IRIN](#), 13 December 2012). For example in August 2013, the government began

moving 7,118 residents from 13 villages in the Lake Albertine rift basin to pave the way for an oil refinery project ([Hydrocarbon Processing](#), 7 August 2013). However, unofficial figures estimate at about 30,000 people ([ActionAid and IPIS](#), November 2013). The same month, security forces evicted around 60,000 residents from Bukinda and Katikara villages in the oil-rich district of Hoima, reportedly to make way for the expansion of the Kyangwali refugee camp due to an influx from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Local communities reported many more evictions in the region and complain about human rights abuses including lack of consultation, notification and compensation. Land and property owners with valid title deeds have not been immune from eviction ([AllAfricaAllAfrica](#), 13 September 2013). However, the government subsequently halted the evictions of the Katikara residents and instituted a committee to investigate the legality of evictions and the legality of land transactions in the sub-county. Authorities claim that the relocation of refugees will allow for the return of IDPs to the vacated land ([Daily Monitor](#), 20 September 2013).

## Displacement figures and patterns

### *Figures*

At the end of 2011, UNHCR handed over its responsibility for compiling statistics on IDPs to the Ugandan authorities ([UNHCR](#), 6 January 2012). The government continues to gather data, but there is no standardised collection system across districts, and estimates are not usually disaggregated by age and sex ([Brookings-LSE](#), November 2011).

The last official figure for people displaced by the LRA conflict was 30,000, as of December 2011 ([UNHCR](#), 6 January 2012). The figure was compiled from data humanitarian organisations and government agencies gathered in camps, settlements and transit areas. It does not include IDPs living in rural host communities or those who have fled to urban areas. The latter have only recently started

to gain recognition as IDPs. They were previously believed to be better off than their counterparts in camps, and were commonly portrayed either as either economic migrants or former IDPs who have achieved a durable solution ([OJRS](#), December 2011).

The number of people displaced by the LRA conflict has fallen since December 2011, but according to the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) there are still four displacement camps open; in Ngomoromo in Lamwo district, Mucwini in Kitgum district, Corner Agula in Gulu district and Arum in Agago district (IDMC interviews, September 2013). A more detailed assessment is needed to establish the number of IDPs still living in the camps, and to better understand their vulnerabilities and their individual reasons for not returning to their places or origin. Previous assessments found that the majority of IDPs still in camps either had no land to go back to, or were unable to manage the return process on their own because of age, illness or disability ([UNHCR](#), December 2011; [GoU](#), 23 June 2011). Decades of war have significantly eroded the traditional Acholi commitment and capacity to care for elderly and other vulnerable family members. Many returnees have had to prepare new land on which to re-establish their livelihoods and this, along with the many other burdens they face, has left them unable to offer support.

According to the authorities, as of September 2013 there were 4,853 IDPs living in new camps. They were yet to be resettled after their land was re-designated as part of Mount Elgon national park. Of the total, 4,033 were in Kween district and 820 were in Bukwo district (IDMC interviews, 12 September 2013).

Disasters brought on by natural hazards displace a significant number of people each year. Flash floods reportedly displaced 25,445 people in Kasese district in May 2013, and the previous month hailstorms displaced more than 5,500 in

Mbale, Tororo, Kalangala, Bundibugyo and Masaka districts (IDMC Disaster-Induced Displacement Dataset, 10 January 2014; [IRIN](#), 11 April 2013; [ACT Alliance](#), 13 May 2013). A single landslide in Bududa district displaced 5,000 people in 2010 ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

Around 4,800 Ugandans were recently sent home from Tanzania following a presidential directive in July 2013 aimed at expelling irregular immigrants. As of the end of September, they were living on a temporary site for IDPs in Kikagati ([AllAfrica](#), 13 August 2013; [OCHA](#), 30 September 2013).

#### *Displacement patterns*

Most of the IDPs displaced by the LRA conflict in northern Uganda have chosen to return to their places of origin ([FMR](#), October 2011). Thanks to improved security, most of the 1.8 million who were living in camps at the height of the conflict have been able to do so. A minority has chosen to resettle elsewhere.

The process of closing camps has been led by the government and facilitated by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). After the government published guidelines for phasing out the camps in 2008, some owners of land on which they were established began pressuring IDPs to leave ([OPM](#), May 2008). According to a 2010 assessment, 43 per cent of respondents felt they had been coerced into the decision they took ([JIPS](#), 2011). Those holding deeds for land on which camps were set up have received no compensation for its protracted use, despite provisions in Ugandan law for such redress ([WRI](#), December 2010).

For people displaced by disasters, moving in with family or friends is the most common coping strategy. As most rural communities are poor, however, this is usually a temporary solution. IDPs who flee events such as landslides, which tend to cause more protracted displacement, often have to return to their places of origin prematurely in

order not to overstretch host families' resources. In Bududa, IDPs sought refuge in camps in Kiryandongo district or pitched tents on their neighbours' land, often staying for a year or more.

In relation to seasonal flood disasters, displacement tends to be repetitive and frequent. Where homes and livelihoods are not severely damaged or destroyed, families return to their homes within relatively short periods of time. However, frequent disruption and loss of assets contributes to continuing or worsening levels of poverty. People in Butaleja district, for example, are displaced every year, forcing many to live on and off their land. Communities that have been resettled elsewhere after being displaced by a disaster, such as the Bududa landslide victims who were relocated to Kiryandongo district, continue to visit their areas of origin ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014). Those who fled to urban areas after the landslide now live in deplorable conditions among the urban poor ([RLP](#), October 2012).

## **Obstacles to durable solutions**

#### *Inadequate access to basic services*

The majority of IDPs and returnees struggle to access basic services. There have not been enough recovery and development initiatives in return areas, but at the same time there is no evidence that returnees are any worse off than other poor Ugandans in terms of the services available to them ([RLP](#), October 2012; [GoU](#), 23 June 2011).

Inadequate health care infrastructure has left populations susceptible to epidemics such as Hepatitis E and polio. Many middle-aged people, particularly women, are HIV positive. Several districts in northern Uganda have suffered outbreaks of nodding disease, a physically and mentally debilitating condition that generally affects children between the ages of five and 15. It is untreatable, and is thought to have killed more than 200 children and affected several thousand more

in recent years ([Africa Report](#), 30 July 2013; [Daily Monitor](#), 2 May 2012). Many of those affected by the LRA conflict have been left traumatised and in need of psychosocial support, particularly the estimated 30,000 children abducted and forced to serve as soldiers, porters and sex slaves ([IRIN](#), 09 January 2013). The losses and disruption of social networks that IDPs suffer as a result of their displacement have also been destabilising for many ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

Public health services are free of charge for all Ugandans, but a shortage of medicines forces many people to buy them for themselves, which most IDPs and returnees are unable to afford. Many public health workers also extort fees from their patients ([Guardian](#), April 2009).

In many cases, people displaced by disasters lose their homes, access to land and livelihood opportunities, which often leads to food insecurity. For want of a better alternative, many IDPs live in tents and temporary shelters for extended periods, often with no access to clean water. Water and sanitation services are poor for both IDPs and their counterparts in the general population (IDMC interviews, September 2013).

Poverty is a key factor inhibiting access to services, including education. Despite the government's policy of free primary and secondary education, hidden costs such as those for materials, and the need for children to contribute to their household's income, prevent many from attending school (NRC, July 2012). The dropout rate for girls is high because of teenage pregnancy, and the standard of teaching is poor ([IRIN](#), 09 January 2013). Children, including IDPs, often have to travel long distances to access education. Either there are no schools in their area, or local facilities have been damaged or destroyed during disasters, as happened in the floods in Kasese district in May 2013 ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014; IDMC interviews, September 2013). Lack of access to education is an issue for IDPs and returnees alike.

#### *Limited support for livelihoods*

For the majority of people in the Acholi sub-region farming is their main potential source of income, but most only produce enough to subsist on. Those affected said their inability to afford livestock and other farming equipment and supplies was the main barrier to their making a living from agriculture. Even for those who have surplus produce, infrastructure damage severely hampers their access to markets.

According to a 2010 assessment on durable solutions in northern Uganda, around 80 per cent of respondents said they were barely able or unable to make a living from their current primary source of income. The more remote households were, the more likely this was to be the case ([JIPS](#), 2011).

Coping strategies include recourse to petty trade and the sometimes illegal use of natural resources, and doing casual labour either for pay or in exchange for food or shelter. The rise of prostitution and child labour were also highlighted ([AllAfrica](#), 22 October 2013; [NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014; NRC, 14 November 2012, on file with IDMC).

The recovery of livelihoods after displacement is usually a lengthy process, particularly for those whom disasters displace from areas where floods tend to alternate with drought. Indeed, poverty tends to get worse as a result of displacement, especially given weak political leadership and inadequate policies to inform a response. IDPs' lack of access to credit schemes, particularly for women, only serves to make matters worse ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014; NRC, 14 November 2012, on file with IDMC). That many of those involved in ongoing clashes over land are reportedly unemployed youths, many of them former LRA abductees, points to a need for livelihood initiatives that target this group ([Saferworld](#), 22 March 2013).

#### *Housing, land and property issues*

The return of IDPs who fled the LRA conflict has been marred by land disputes, some of which

have led to violence, secondary displacement, the destruction of property, loss of livelihoods, marginalisation and criminality (NRC, 08 August 2012, on file with IDMC). In the Acholi sub-region, land disputes are the most frequent cause of tension after issues related to the conflict itself (NRC, 2010, on file with IDMC).

Moreover, Uganda's legal system is complex when it comes to land. Four land tenure regimes are recognized by the 1995 Constitution and the 1998 Land Act, namely: freehold (owners have a formal and indefinite ownership title with all the associated rights), *mailo* (now similar freehold ownership and is found in central and central Western Uganda), leasehold (enables owners to grant tenants exclusive rights to use the land for a specified period of time) and customary. About 69 per cent of Uganda's land is subject to customary tenure, most of it in the north and east of the country ([LDPI](#), September 2012). Customary landowners do not have deeds recognising their ownership rights and land is administered according to rules and practices generally accepted as legitimate and binding by a particular community. Customary laws vary according to regions but most systems are based on the same general principles. Ownership rights are recognised by the community through inheritance, purchase, or by settling on a plot of land which was previously vacant. Under Ugandan customary legal systems, particularly in northern and eastern Uganda, land is usually communally owned by the clan but it can also be owned individually. Customary land tenure is the most common system governing IDPs and returnees' land rights.

Although the state recognises customary tenure to be at the same level of other tenure systems, in practice it has been regarded and treated as inferior to other systems, including during dispute resolution and in the general administration of justice (MLHUD, February 2013). Attempts to formalise the customary tenure including through the issuance of certificates of customary

ownership (CCOs) have proved problematic. The first CCOs were issued by the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) in March 2012, but several stakeholders called for MLHUD to stop the initiative and revisit it, to ensure it is more inclusive and to address a number of technical and cultural difficulties identified with the design of the CCOs. The absence of an accurate record of individual, family and community land rights with comprehensive disaggregated data was highlighted as one of the challenges (IDMC interviews, September 2013; NULP, April and July 2013, on file with IDMC). The process is still under discussion. The limited recognition of customary land rights exposes people - including IDPs and returnees - living on communally owned land to evictions when investors want to purchase or lease their land for different purposes ([Daily Nation](#), 12 September 2013), and hampers their economic recovery, including because banks are hesitant to give them loans (NULP, October 2013, on file with IDMC).

The complexity of the legal land system, combined with the high number of disputes resulting from large-scale displacement and return, hampers the prevention and resolution of disputes, and the determination of tenure rights and compensation due in eviction cases ([IRIN](#), 13 December 2012). Other factors include the fact that: valuable land is in increasingly short supply, the boundaries of property and protected areas are not clearly demarcated and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have been disrupted because clan elders have been displaced. The underfunded state court system and traditional mediators are both overwhelmed by the volume of cases, and the enforcement of any rulings or agreements is poor (NULP, October 2013, on file with IDMC).

Few victims of eviction receive adequate compensation or an appropriate allocation of alternative land, and those forced to leave their homes to make way for the Mount Elgon national park



are no exception ([Daily Monitor](#), 17 June 2013). Neither are the members of the indigenous Batwa community evicted by the National Forestry Authority (NFA) to make way for national parks in the Semliki forests of western Uganda in 1991 and 2007. They were forced to resettle on a small piece of land in Bundibugyo district, where they have been unable sustain their traditional nomadic lifestyle. Given their lack the skills to compete for work in the modern marketplace, they are left in a very vulnerable position ([NAPE](#), 24 June 2013).

Certain groups are more likely to have limited or no access to their HLP rights due to their economic, social or cultural status. Many IDPs are unable to afford the fees charged for legal assistance in settling a dispute ([RLP](#), March 2013). In the Acholi sub-region, where the culture is patrilineal, women – and especially those widowed, separated or divorced – are at a disadvantage because their families and clans disregard their legal right to inherit and own land. Illegitimate children and orphans, former combatants, the elderly and the disabled are also particularly vulnerable (NRC, 08 August 2012, on file with IDMC).

## National and international response

### *Policy and institutional frameworks*

Uganda has shown considerable leadership in its efforts to address internal displacement. It was one of the first countries to develop a formal [national policy on IDPs](#) in 2004, and the first to ratify the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa (also known as the Kampala Convention) in January 2010. Uganda has also ratified the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, including its protocols on IDPs and the property rights of returnees.

The 2004 policy provides a solid and useful framework to address displacement caused by both

conflict and natural disasters. It should, however, be reviewed with the aim of harmonising it with the Kampala Convention's provisions and making it more relevant to the current displacement situation in Uganda. It could better address the issue of urban displacement, include measurable criteria for the achievement of durable solutions, and specify the role of the government in creating conditions conducive to them more clearly. It could also do more to address challenges in terms of local governance, land governance, access to services and livelihoods in order to improve assistance to all IDPs, including those outside camps ([IDMC, NRC, AUC](#), 12 April 2013; [RLP](#), October 2012). Legal protection against eviction also needs to be enhanced to prevent renewed displacement, and a new legal instrument to domesticate the Kampala Convention could be drafted in accordance with the model law developed by the African Union ([IDMC, NRC, AUC](#), 12 April 2013). The implementation of existing laws and policy frameworks should also be priority.

In May 2011, Uganda adopted a [national policy on disasters](#) with the aim of improving preparedness and management ([GoU](#), 23 June 2011), but the lack of regulations, a strategy for implementation and a business plan on which to base its funding have hampered its effectiveness. As a result, disaster response remains more reactive than preventative (NRC, UNISDR and IIRR, August 2013). The prime minister's office and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have helped Acholi and Karamoja to develop district-based contingency plans.

The government has also taken important steps to address some of Uganda's land issues. After a consultation process lasting more than a decade, it adopted a [national land policy](#) in February 2013 that aims to enable the "efficient, equitable and optimal utilisation and management of Uganda's land resources for poverty reduction, wealth creation and overall socio-economic development". The policy builds on land and property provisions

in the 1995 Constitution, the 1998 Land Act and the 2004 national policy on displacement ([Focus on Land in Africa](#), accessed on 2 December 2013).

#### *Promoting national ownership of humanitarian coordination*

The last UN consolidated appeal process (CAP) for Uganda was in 2010. In its place, an inter-agency working group has developed a humanitarian profile paper to guide decisions on humanitarian action ([GoU](#), 21 December 2011).

The cluster system established in 2006, not long after the peak of the conflict, has been phased out, and the government has been responsible for humanitarian coordination since the end of 2011. Responsibility for the protection monitoring of IDPs was transferred to UHRC ([UHRC/IASC protection cluster](#), 29 October 2009). To facilitate effective coordination in northern Uganda, the UN Country Team devolved that function to area coordinators (UNACs) who report to the humanitarian/resident coordinator (HC/RC). The UN Development Programme (UNDP) leads UNAC in the Acholi sub-region. UNHCR closed its office in the north at the end of 2011.

In the wake of natural disasters, the government and humanitarian organisations such as the Ugandan Red Cross Society (URCS) have provided emergency assistance to the affected populations. URCS has also put cash transfer schemes for IDPs in place to cover both emergency and recovery needs. The introduction of a national platform on disaster risk reduction has reportedly led to an improvement in humanitarian agencies' response, but support for community resilience-building remains scarce. Local prevention and response mechanisms, including indigenous knowledge, have proved crucial ([NRC, UNISDR and IIRR](#), January 2014).

#### *Recovery and development plans*

The government assumes primary responsibility for recovery efforts, which are led at the national

level by the prime minister's office and locally by district administrations.

In October 2007, the government launched its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP), which aims to stabilise northern Uganda and bridge the gap between it and the rest of the country by supporting the socio-economic development of local communities, including returnees. A lack of funding and monitoring mechanisms caused delays, but in July 2009 implementation of an initial three-year plan with a budget of \$600 million began. A mid-term review in May 2011 concluded that PRDP's strategic goals would not be achieved within the three-year timeframe, at which point the government proposed PRDP II. The new plan has adjusted objectives and a budget of \$455million, and will run for an additional three years from July 2012. This brings it into line with the current national development plan, which comes to the end of its cycle in June 2015 ([GoU](#), June 2011; [GoU](#), November 2011; [RLP](#), October 2012).

In June 2009, the UN launched a three-year peace-building and recovery programme (UNPRAP) to align UN interventions with PRDP and other government frameworks for northern Uganda (UN, 22 June 2009). According to UNHCR, important government programmes including PDRP have focused primarily on commercial agriculture and manufacturing and have had little immediate impact on returnees (UNHCR, 25 July 2010). The national poverty reduction strategy enacted in 2010 aims to lift the population as a whole out of poverty in 30 years, and as such should benefit IDPs and returnees ([IME](#), May 2010). The second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF II) managed by the World Bank aims to enhance basic socio-economic services and access to income-generating activities for communities in northern Uganda, and runs until the end of August 2014 ([World Bank](#), October 2010).

In 2010, UNHCR and district disaster management committees in the north carried out an assess-

ment on durable solutions in northern Uganda with support from the Joint IDP Profiling Service ([JIPS](#), 2011). The aim was to inform the planning of recovery activities, but as of December 2013 its full findings had not been made public.

There is increasing recognition of the need to foster peacebuilding activities on various levels - between communities, between northern Ugandans and between the region and the rest of country. Communities in northern Uganda have long expressed a need for reparations and reconciliation. Linking the consolidation of state authority with peacebuilding and service provision could help to address the strongly-held perception that the region has been marginalised - one of the factors behind the emergence and rise of the LRA ([USAID](#), October 2010).

A better coordinated and more timely engagement among authorities and human rights, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding organisations is needed to bridge capacity gaps and ensure a holistic approach to the multifaceted issue of internal displacement. Consultation with affected communities, and their active participation in relevant decision-making processes, particularly on their protection issues and the support they need to achieve their preferred durable solution, is also of fundamental importance. Building community resilience is key both to ensuring that any durable solutions are sustainable, and to mitigating the impact of future shocks.

#### *Funding issues*

Large recovery and development programmes in northern Uganda have been delayed for long periods. There has been confusion about funding between the government and its development partners and a lack of coordination between the government, donors and the UN. The impact of development projects in terms of fostering durable solutions for IDPs has been limited, despite the considerable investments made. Thus far the government and its development partners have

focused mainly on initiatives such as the rebuilding of infrastructure and the consolidation of state authority. UHRC has played a fundamental role in supporting and monitoring the protection of IDPs and returnees over the years, but it no longer has a specific budget line for such work, which hampers its capacity to carry out activities those affected by displacement still need.

Uganda ranked 130th out of 175 countries on Transparency International corruption perceptions index in 2012, and endemic corruption leading to poor governance and failure to deliver services has been a major problem ([Independent](#), 17 June 2013). Donors have temporarily reduced or withheld aid a number of times in response to high-profile corruption scandals, but prosecutions have been limited to relatively low-level officials and new scandals have ensued ([HRW and YLS](#), 21 October 2013).

Most recently Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark suspended millions of dollars in aid in response to the large-scale misappropriation of funds by officials in the prime minister's office, who reportedly stole nearly \$13 million intended for the implementation of PRDP ([New Vision](#), 22 October 2013). Other donors providing direct budget support to Uganda also decided to withhold their aid. The countries whose funds had been stolen also demanded that the government pay them back, which it had done by early 2013 ([Red Pepper](#), 11 February 2013; [New Vision](#), 7 February 2013; [URN](#), 8 January 2013). The donors also negotiated a set of commitments needed to restore donor confidence and resume normal funding.

As of October 2013, however, Uganda was still not receiving direct budget support, which constitutes a severe setback for the country's economy ([HRW and YLS](#), 21 October 2013). Foreign donors had been financing up to 25 per cent of the state budget and the funding cut has seriously hampered ongoing projects and initia-

tives ([Independent](#), 17 February 2013; IDMC and NRC interviews, September 2013). The failure to implement PRDP and other similar initiatives has effectively kept communities in northern Uganda in a state of poverty and marginalisation, and this in turn has fuelled tensions and led to occasional outbreaks of violence (NRC, 12 March 2013, on file with IDMC). If the needs of all those in the north of the country are to be met, including the region's significant population of IDPs and returnees, the government must allocate sufficient funds for the agricultural, education, health and water sectors to address existing critical gaps. Additional funding from donors for development activities in the north are also needed, and this should be matched with the participation of district authorities, local partners and affected communities in the planning and implementation of projects. It is also fundamental that donors and civil society maintain pressure on the government to tackle corruption ([JIPS](#), 2011; [HRW and YLS](#), 21 October 2013).

## About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is a world leader in the monitoring and analysis of the causes, effects and responses to internal displacement. IDMC advocates for better responses to the needs of the millions of people worldwide who are displaced within their own countries as a consequence of conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations, and natural or man-made disasters. It is also at the forefront of efforts to promote greater respect for the basic rights of internally displaced people (IDPs). IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

### *What we do:*

- Promote appropriate responses to internal displacement through targeted advocacy
- Provide timely, accessible and relevant information on internal displacement worldwide
- Develop research and analysis to help shape policies and practices that have positive outcomes for IDPs
- Provide training and support to country-based policy-makers and practitioners with a responsibility to protect IDPs

### *Who do we target?*

IDMC is best placed to effect positive change for IDPs through advocacy to influence the decisions and practices of duty bearers and all those with a responsibility or capacity to promote or fulfil the rights of IDPs.

### *How do we operate?*

As information on internal displacement is often controversial and politically sensitive, IDMC must continue to operate and be seen to operate as an independent and effective global monitor of this widespread phenomenon.

IDMC has become an indispensable resource for anyone seeking impartial data and analysis on internal displacement, independent of political or operational considerations. [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org)

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