



# Profile at a glance

# Uganda

*“The findings effectively informed responses to displacement in northern Uganda. De-mining activities and work being done to address land disputes are two clear examples.”*

Mildred Ouma, UNHCR

Following the 2006 peace talks and agreements between the Government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), relative peace and security returned to northern Uganda. Paving the way for more freedom of movement, 90% of the population who had been displaced began to return to their villages of origin.

Considerable achievements have been made towards recovery in the region, including the Government’s Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) supporting the return and reintegration process. However, many challenges linked to displacement still persist in the Acholi sub-region and stand in the way of securing durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and the non-displaced population.



# Which methods were used?

The Durable Solutions Assessment (DSA) in Uganda aimed to determine the degree to which durable solutions had been achieved so far. It also aimed to provide information to better target humanitarian, recovery and development interventions by looking at the challenges preventing the attainment of durable solutions.

To achieve these aims the DSA combined multiple data collection methods, including a household

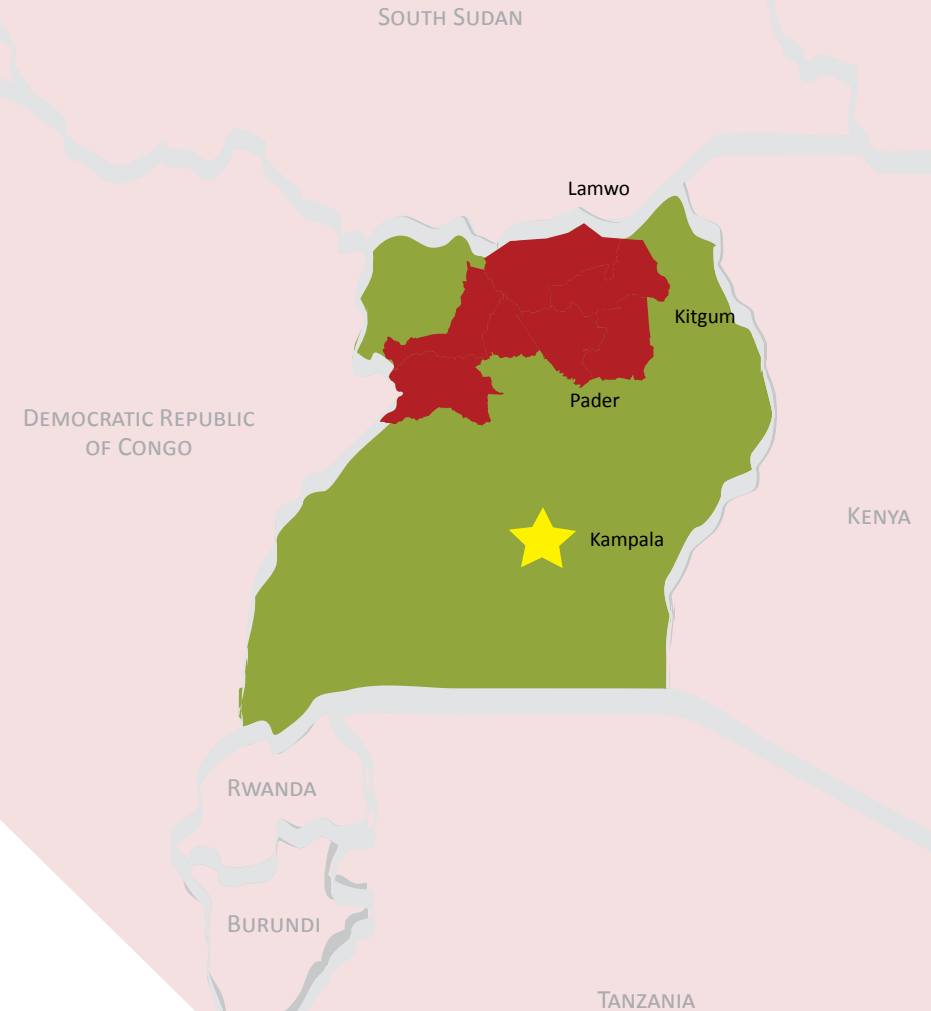
survey, community-based focus group discussions, key informant interviews, literature review and analysis of secondary data.

By operationalizing the IASC Framework for the Durable Solutions of IDPs the methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of displacement, return, local integration and resettlement.

**7** districts covered: Amuru, Nwoya, Gulu, Kitgum, Lamwo, Pader and Agago

**2,037** household interviews conducted: both male and female headed

**46** focus group discussions: including representatives of different age cohorts and extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs)



# What was the impact?

- The results of the profiling exercise informed programmes and activities of partners involved in the process. To address land dispute obstacles to durable solutions, district authorities established a peacebuilding committee and started to issue certificates of customary land ownership in Gulu.
- The findings have resulted in advocacy by the Uganda Human Rights Commission and de-mining activities by the Danish De-mining Group (DDG) and the Government. Recommendations to inform IDPs on these activities led to the Commission's dissemination of such information in the camps.
- Through its methods and findings the DSA highlighted the importance of participation when engaging with communities on durable solutions. It emphasized the importance of creating high-level strategies that ensure consultation and community participation.
- The collaborative process helped to build relationships between humanitarian actors and local authorities of the newly established districts in northern Uganda. By highlighting the challenges of establishing new districts with insufficient capacity, the DSA brought the issue to the UN Country Team for discussion.

# What were the findings?

Overall the DSA results indicate the need for a developmental approach to securing sustainable solutions for displaced and formerly displaced persons in the Acholi sub-region. Whilst many challenges faced by respondents are also experienced across the country, the results demonstrate how those who have been displaced are particularly affected.

## Patterns of displacement

At its highest levels, 90% of the population in northern Uganda was displaced and there were 121 IDP camps. By 2010, 95% had left the camps, many clustered in transit sites near their villages of origin from where they had access to their land.

The DSA found that before leaving the camps, 56% of survey respondents were offered the option of returning home, 12% were offered local integration and 6% were offered the option of resettlement.

Figure 1: Location of respondents at time of survey

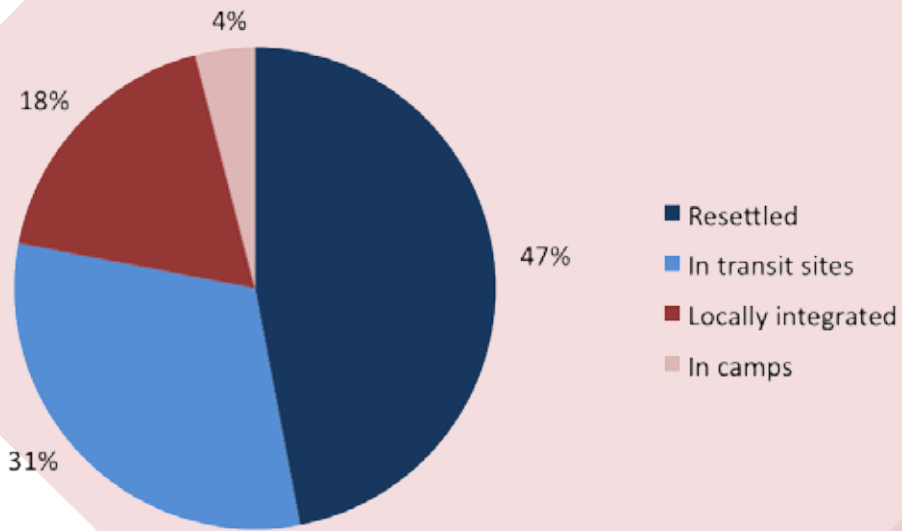
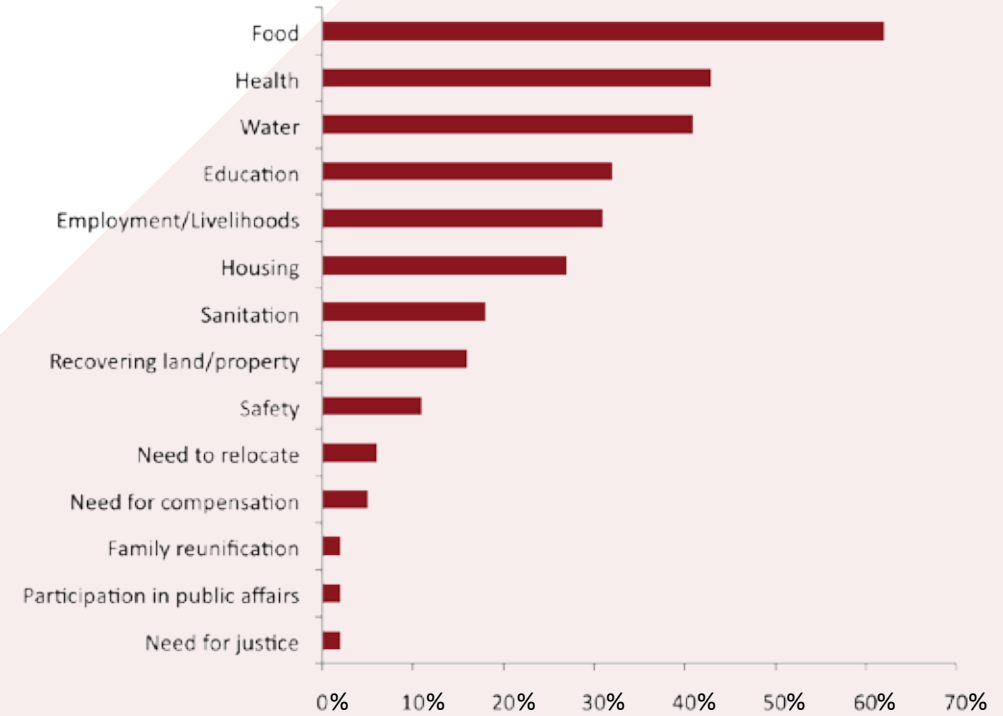


Figure 2: Main challenges faced of respondents at time of survey



## Achieving solutions

Whilst only a small majority was not aware of the different options for solutions to their displacement, 43% felt they were pressured into the decision they chose: mostly in deciding to return.

At the time of the survey many respondents indicated current challenges related to their displacement, preventing full achievement of durable solutions (Figure 2).

43% of respondents felt pressured into choosing solutions

## Safety & Security

Concerns about security still persist in northern Uganda. These include tensions over land, fear of anti-personnel landmines, UXOS, Karamojong cattle raiders, sexual and gender-based violence, inadequate law enforcement personnel and lack of service infrastructure in places of return.

Although 80% of respondents felt their community had become safer, a notable 51% remained concerned that the violence would return and that they would be displaced again.

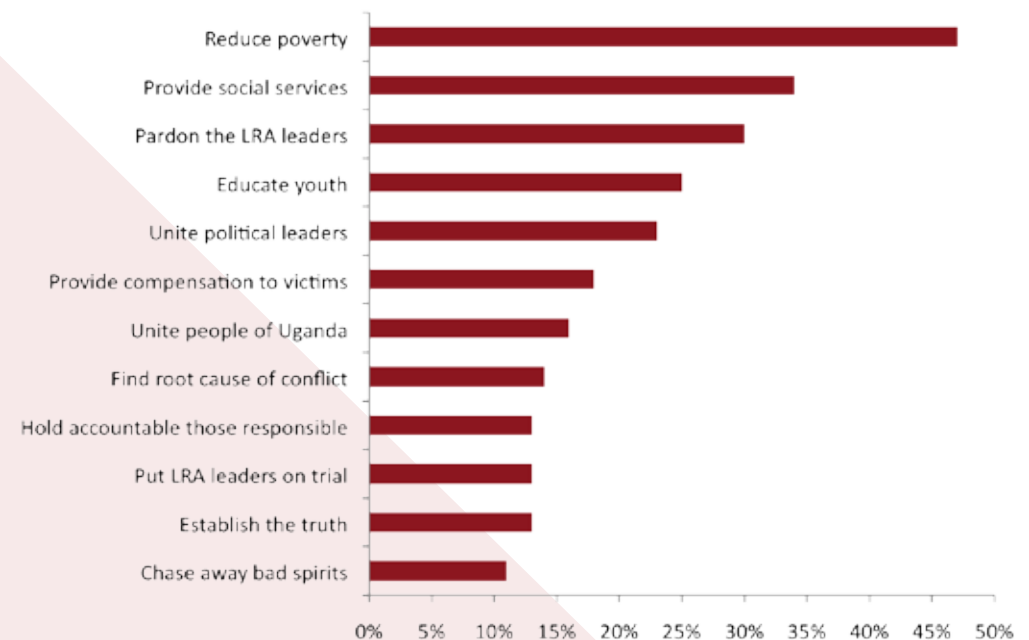
## Justice & reconciliation

Results from both the household survey and focus group discussions (FGDs) highlighted the link between peace and justice. However, as Figure 3 illustrates, the reduction of poverty and provision of social services ranked the highest in work to be done to secure lasting peace.

Whilst 76% of respondents considered it important to hold human rights violators accountable, there were mixed feelings as to how LRA combatants should be held accountable. Over 40% wanted them to be given amnesty, 27% wanted them arrested and trialed and 27% thought they should be reconciled within the community.

51% feared renewed violence and renewed displacement

Figure 3: Perceptions of actions needed to secure lasting peace



## Housing, land & property

Land disputes are the single largest obstacle to achieving sustainable solutions. The vast majority indicated that return has increased land issues as varied as land grabbing (71%), illegal land occupation (41%) and land deserted due to displacement (30%).

This signals to the authorities the need to take seriously the causes and resolution of land disputes in considering longer term solutions.

## Living standards

Years of conflict in the region have lead to widespread poverty (46% living in poverty compared to the national average of 25%). Respondents expressed difficulties in relation to access and availability of adequate shelter, clean water, sanitation facilities and quality education. Respondents linked many of these issues directly to their displacement.

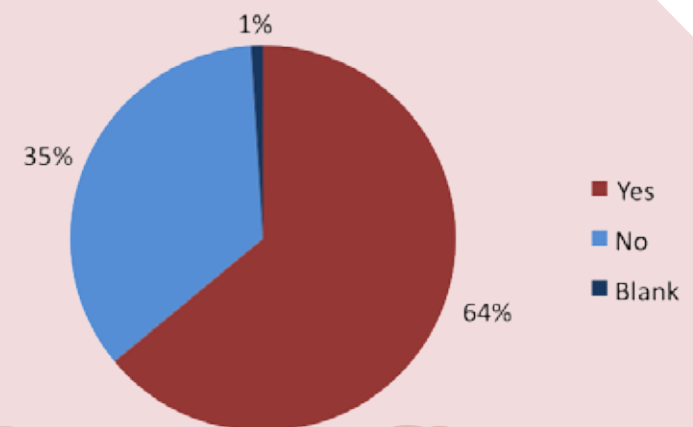
## Livelihoods & Employment

Whilst a significant 20% of respondents considered themselves able to make a living from their current source of income, the remaining 80% deem themselves 'barely' or unable to do so. The more geographically remote households were, the more likely they are to fall into this latter category.

## Family reunification

51% of respondents across the Acholi sub-region indicated that family members had gone missing during the war. Of these, 86% still have family members missing. Many are likely to be children abducted by the LRA.

Figure 4: Were missing family members children?



88% of respondents think return has worsened land conflicts

## Documentation

Many respondents possessed identification documents (79% voter registration cards and 30% ID cards). With 21%, birth registration remains notably low. The high costs involved was the main reason cited for this lack of documentation.

Documentation is a recognised problem across the country and has particular challenges for formerly displaced persons seeking solutions, especially in relation to family reunification and land disputes.

*“Sharing findings through different mechanisms proved useful in Uganda. Since publication of the report was delayed, we found different ways of doing this, for example through a protection handover report to the Human Rights Commission in Gulu.”*

Mildred Ouma, UNHCR

## What were the profiling lessons?

- The Uganda DSA transformed the *IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons* into a comprehensive survey. Informing the design of data collection tools and methods with recognised standards is an effective way of shaping profiling exercises, especially in transition situations.
- Formulating and agreeing on recommendations from profiling findings with partners is instrumental to ensure these are acted upon. In Uganda this was accomplished through a recommendations workshop where district authorities committed to incorporate profiling findings into their work.
- Collaborative profiling exercises provide a clear opportunity for effective handovers between humanitarian and development actors in transition situations. In Uganda, findings were shared with the Ugandan Human Rights Commission to be used for advocacy in relation to IDP camp closures and land disputes.
- Planning is crucial to ensure a successful profiling exercise. In Uganda planning for the analysis and reporting stages was insufficient, leading to challenges with regards to capturing all the relevant information in the report and gaining Government authorisation for its publication.

*The full report, containing further analysis, is currently being prepared for publication. The profiling tools can be found at: <http://www.idp-profiling.org/uganda-profiling.html>*



This summary provides a glimpse into a collaborative IDP profiling process. Local Government authorities, UN agencies and NGOs undertook this assessment to measure the progress that has been made in realising durable solutions for Ugandans displaced by conflict.

JIPS helped these actors to prepare for and implement the study through an internationally endorsed methodology for profiling IDP situations.

This glance into the profile of displacement in northern Uganda hopes to spark interest to learn more about the findings and profiling of IDP situations in general.



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