



**UNHCR Uganda**  
September 2009 Update

*UNHCR: Congolese refugee influx in south western Uganda 2008*

# REFUGEE & IDP OPERATION

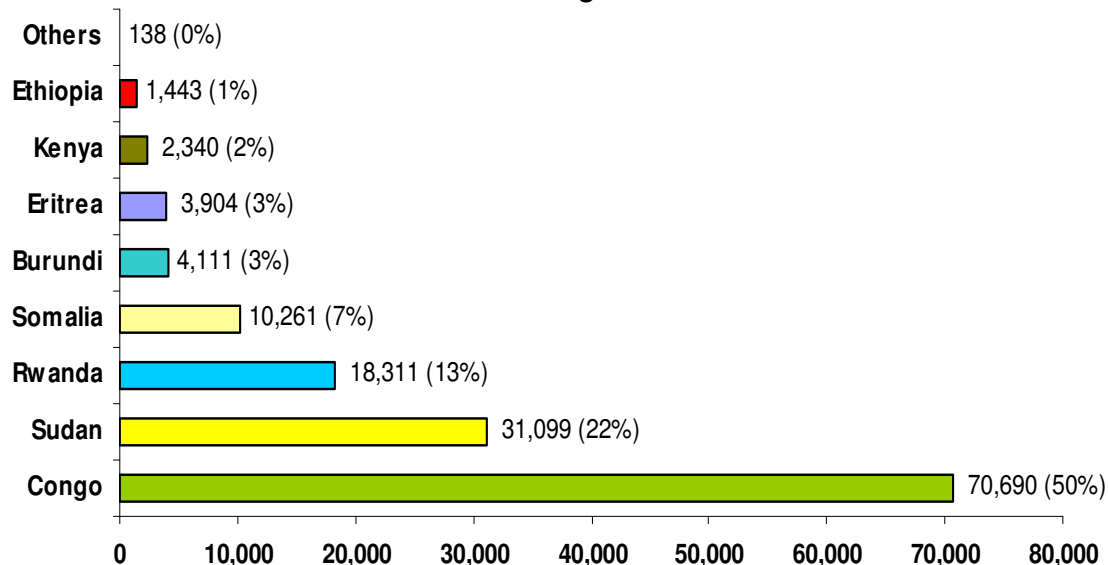
## GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Uganda supports the Government in protecting, assisting and seeking lasting solutions to the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Office was initially established in the 1960s to support refugees originating from neighbouring countries.

UNHCR helps give effect to durable solutions to refugees by facilitating voluntarily and informed return and/or settlement for **142,297** refugees as of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009, from 24 countries. The majority of the refugees come from countries in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Somali, Eritrea and Kenya.

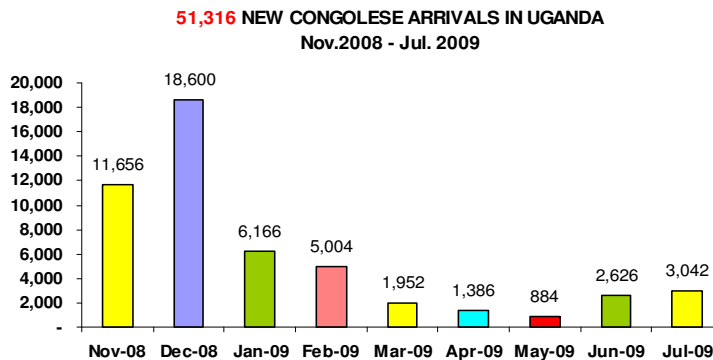
The refugee programme in Uganda is unique - refugees live in settlements resembling national villages and have access to land for residential and agricultural purposes and, as a result, most of the refugees have achieved some level of self-sufficiency in food and livelihood. Many of their Ugandan neighbours were themselves refugees in neighbouring countries, and there is a well-developed sense of mutual understanding, cooperation and support. Health centres, schools, wells and roads constructed and supported by UNHCR are also accessed by the host community. Conversely, refugees have access to national services, such as hospitals and schools.

### **142,297** Number of Refugees in Uganda as of 1st August 2009



## CONGOLESE REFUGEES

The inflow of Congolese refugees into Uganda has been continuous since November 2008. UNHCR registered a gradual increase in new arrivals in June through to August 2009, with August receiving 150 to 300 new Congolese arrivals per day, a rise from 70 to 100 new arrivals per day in the previous month. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR held a multi-sectoral contingency planning exercise to plan for an effective emergency response for up to **100,000** refugees.



## SUDANESE REFUGEES

Following the signature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the SPLA in January 2005, and the Tripartite Agreement for the Repatriation of Sudanese Refugees between the Government of Uganda, the Government of Sudan and UNHCR, repatriation started in May 2006. A total of **175,547** refugees have since returned to South Sudan from the districts of Moyo, Adjumani, Arua, Hoima, Masindi and Yumbe. In this context, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of over **94,467** of them through, *inter alia*, the provision of transport and the distribution of non-food items upon return.

In August and September 2009, UNHCR suspended the repatriation process to carry out a re-verification process to establish the number of Sudanese refugees remaining in Uganda, with an objective to consider a durable solution for the residual caseload.

### NUMBER OF SUDANESE REPATRIATED TO S. SUDAN MAY 2006- July 2, 2009

Organised voluntary repatriation	94,467
Spontaneous voluntary repatriation	79,838
Assisted Voluntary self-repatriation	1,241
<b>Refugees Voluntarily repatriated from Jan 09 - Jul 2009</b>	<b>29,873</b>
<b>Remaining Sudanese refugees in Uganda</b>	<b>34,147</b>
<b>Total number of Sudanese refugees voluntarily repatriated</b>	<b>175,546</b>

## RWANDESE REFUGEES

The Rwandan refugee presence in Uganda stems back to the 1960s. Currently, some **18,311** registered Rwandan refugees live in Kampala, Kyenjojo, Isingiro and Hoima districts. Despite sustained activities to promote voluntary repatriation, very few Rwandans are willing to return, claiming difficulties in recovering their land and fear of being prosecuted by the Gacaca courts. UNHCR provides them with protection and assistance in the refugee settlement. In April 2009, the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda and UNHCR held a tripartite meeting in which the three parties agreed to step-up the return and reintegration of the Rwandan refugees and asylum-seekers who wished to return home. From May to August, UNHCR assisted the voluntary return of **5,534** Rwandans. UNHCR will continue assisting and protecting the residual Rwandan refugees still living in Uganda.

## URBAN REFUGEES

The number of urban refugees and asylum-seekers living in Kampala as of end-August 2009 was **23,415**. The first registration of urban refugees and asylum-seekers was carried out by UNHCR in July 2008. The urban refugees mainly originate from the DRC, Somalia, Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Burundi. They constitute a very fluid and diverse population with different resources and needs. A new community centre has been acquired for urban refugees to provide them with an interaction and training area.

## RESETTLEMENT

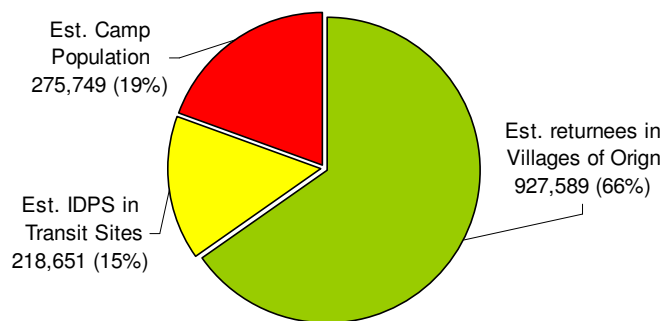
Resettlement to a third country is both a protection tool and one of the three durable solutions for refugees. In 2008, UNHCR resettled **570** refugees, and another **298** refugees had been resettled by June 2009. In 2009, UNHCR plans to process a further **3,000** refugee cases for resettlement. Of these, **1,500** cases are being processed through the expedited group resettlement process. The refugees who are resettled to a third country are usually victims of torture and violence, medical cases that can not be treated in Uganda or refugees in need of special physical and legal protection.

## Internally Displaced Persons

In 2006, Uganda was one of three pilot countries in which the Cluster Approach stemming from the Humanitarian Reform Process was introduced for IDPs. In that context, UNHCR assumed the leadership of the Protection and Camp Coordination/Camp Management Clusters, with a mandate of providing protection and assistance to the camp based population. UNHCR was further mandated to promote and support IDPs to achieve one of the **three durable solutions**, namely: **voluntary return** to villages of origin; **relocation** to another part of the country; and **local integration** in the place (camp) of former displacement.

UNHCR's IDP programme in Uganda supports the process of achieving durable solutions through the following activities: protection monitoring and continued advocacy for freedom of movement and durable solutions; monitoring to establish the trends of the movement of the IDP population out of camps; establishment and expansion of "legal clinics" to inform and provide legal advice/assistance to IDPs; camp phase-out (a process aiming at transforming former IDP camps into viable communities); identification of, and support to, Persons with Specific Needs/Extremely Vulnerable Persons (through shelter construction, travel facilitation, distribution of non-food items and livelihood activities, as well as rehabilitation of land for the landowner's own use); Mass Information Campaigns so that IDPs are in a position to take a free and informed decision about their future; Quick Impact Projects aiming at swiftly providing returning IDPs with the means to reintegrate in their villages of origin; capacity building of the national apparatus and civil society (Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Local Councils) to ensure a smooth disengagement of UNHCR; small scale rehabilitation/construction of basic social infrastructures; and support to urban IDPs.

### IDP Population Movement Statistics as of Sept. 2009



*NB: these statistics does not include the 466,103 IDPs who were displaced and have achieved durable solutions in Lira sub-region*

#### UNHCR'S PARTNERS IN REFUGEE OPERATION:

The Government of Uganda through the Office of the Prime Minister, the Uganda Human Rights Commission and Local Governments, ACTED, ASB, AVSI, American Refugee Committee, German Development Services (DED), Danish Refugee Council, GOAL, International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Danish Refugee Council, Right to Play, Windle Trust, Save the Children, JRS, Africa Humanitarian Action, Aktion Africa Half .e. V, German Technical Service (GTZ/MLP), Inter-Aid Uganda (IAU), International Aid Services (IAS), African Initiative for Relief and Development (AIRD), and the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS).

#### UNHCR'S PARTNERS IN IDP OPERATION:

The Government of Uganda, Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Local Governments of Gulu, Kitgum, Amuru, Adjumani, Masindi Soroti, Lira and Pader, ACTED, ASB, AVSI, American Refugee Committee, German Development Services (DED), Danish Refugee Council, GOAL, International Rescue Committee, and Norwegian Refugee Council