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Global Overview 2014: people internally displaced by conflict and violence - Côte d'Ivoire

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Number of IDPs	At least 70,000
Percentage of total population	About 0.4%
Start of displacement situation	2002
Peak number of IDPs (year)	1,100,000 (2003)
New displacement in 2013	At least 29,500
Causes of displacement	✓ Armed conflict ✓ Generalised violence ✓ Human rights violations
Human development index	168
Kampala Convention	Signed

Most of the one million people displaced by violence following the November 2010 elections in Côte d'Ivoire had managed to return to their homes by the end of 2013, thanks to significant security improvements in Abidjan and the west of the country. There were at least 70,000 people still living in displacement, most of them in the same areas, where they were staying with host families, renting or squatting. It was unclear how many of the one million people displaced during the 2002 to 2007 internal armed conflict had achieved durable solutions.

Despite the improved security conditions, inter-communal violence continued in the west of the country, where the slow pace of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process made tensions worse. There was also a rise in banditry, abuses by the security forces and land disputes. Clashes caused thousands of people to flee their homes in 2013, most notably when armed groups attacked the villages of Zilebly and Petit Guiglo in March, forcing as many as 4,000 people to seek refuge with host families in nearby towns. Clashes between villagers and miners in July displaced many of the 3,000 people living around the Angovia mines.

Government-sanctioned evictions from protected forests in the west and south-west of the country also caused the new displacement of thousands of people. The first evictions took place in the

Niegre forest, but it is difficult to confirm how many of the estimated 25,000 to 40,000 people living there were affected. It is thought that at least 9,000 people subsequently left the neighbouring Mont Pekoe park, possibly in anticipation of similar evictions there. National authorities put the settler population in Mont Pekoe at 27,000, including more than 13,500 children, at least half of whom may have been trafficked as cocoa plantation workers. The government's action plan for evictions is a potential blueprint for the relocation of those living in the country's remaining 230 forests, and includes a differentiated approach according to length of occupancy. It is unclear, however, how this might be implemented and monitored, if at all.

It is also difficult to assess how many IDPs have reached a durable solution to their displacement, given the lack of reliable data and the fact that a national census has been postponed. Obstacles to durable solutions were strongly linked to conflicts over land and the broader issue of citizenship and problems in obtaining civil documents. Returning IDPs continued to face social tensions caused by land disputes, often finding their property had been occupied or illegally sold in their absence, despite legal amendments to improve the state regulation of land tenure. Local authorities, particularly in the western regions, were reportedly struggling to deal with the high number of land disputes and lacked financial resources, fuelling a rise in corruption.

Côte d'Ivoire ratified the ICC's Rome Statute in February, but a lack of political will to fight impunity has left IDPs' grievances unaddressed, which in turn raises concern about the potential for violence in the run-up to the 2015 elections. The country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission has 50,000 victims' declarations awaiting investigation.

Inquiries into the attack on the Nahibly displacement camp, which forced 5,000 IDPs to flee into secondary displacement in July 2012, have proceeded only slowly. Investigations have not been made public and no arrests have been made. There are thought to be a number of mass graves that would have to be disinterred if an effective investigation and prosecutions are to take place.

National authorities and international organisations continue to focus their assistance efforts on returns. Many agencies taking part in the cluster system, which was activated in 2011, transferred responsibility for coordinating protection activities to the government in 2012. The Ministry of Solidarity took over the protection cluster's role. Renewed funding for humanitarian and development organisations such as UNHCR, UNDP and the African Development Bank is still limited, but is hoped to make recovery and rehabilitation initiatives more effective.

Few steps were taken in 2013 to implement the UN Framework on Ending Displacement in the Aftermath of Conflict, despite Côte d'Ivoire being selected in 2012 as one of three pilot countries. The appointment towards the end of the year of a durable solutions coordinator did, however, signal an important opportunity to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development programmes. The country was expected to ratify the Kampala Convention in early 2014.

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