

# PROFILE: UGANDA



Once described as 'the pearl of Africa' because of its lush fertility, Uganda has seen its huge potential stunted by dictatorship and civil war.

Half a million people died under Idi Amin's reign of terror in the 1970s, while in 1986 another terrible conflict dawned in the north.

At war with the government, rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) used children as soldiers or sex slaves. Before the LRA was driven into the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2008, tens of thousands of civilians had been killed or kidnapped. Some 1.6 million people had fled their homes.

Most Ugandans work as small-scale farmers and struggle to grow enough to feed their households – while cash crops are vulnerable to fluctuating global prices.

Up to 20 per cent of Uganda's children aged six to 17 have lost at least one parent, mostly to HIV and conflict. Meanwhile, increased droughts and flooding have had a knock-on impact on malaria and water-borne diseases.

A workshop of Tearfund partners recently identified poor governance as a key cause of poverty, but acknowledged the church's complicity or silence in the face of corrupt or unjust practices. Participants resolved to transform society through good citizenship, integrity and servant leadership.

## TEARFUND'S WORK IN UGANDA

Tearfund has worked in Uganda since the late 1970s and currently partners 14 organisations. Here are some examples of their work:

ACET (AIDS Care Education and Training) is working with formerly displaced people in Kitgum, northern Uganda, setting up 'orphan councils' and providing HIV education, counselling and testing, and better access to HIV treatment.

COBAP (Community Based AIDS Programme) works in five slum communities in Kampala. Dozens of community members have been trained as peer educators, community nurses, counsellors and childcare workers.

COBAP also provides grants to people living with HIV to set up small businesses – and works with medical services to improve access to treatment and testing.

In north-east Uganda, Karamoja Diocese Development Services (KDDS) works in a marginalised region where food shortages and cattle-rustling are common. KDDS responded to a recent food crisis by distributing aid and building future resilience and food production capacity.

Meanwhile, the Kigezi Diocese of the Anglican Church of Uganda works in south-west Uganda, a mountainous, often inaccessible region. It aims to benefit around 25,000 villagers each year through improved water supplies, sanitation services and hygiene education.

Communities are trained to maintain and repair the water facilities. They also provide labour and construction materials to ensure sustainability.

➤ **Pray for people living in poverty in Uganda.**

➤ **Please pray for our Ugandan partners as they seek to help others.**

➤ **And pray for Uganda: for justice, peace, health and hope for everyone.**