

# A guide to Uganda



<b>Population:</b>	37 million
<b>Currency:</b>	Ugandan Shilling
<b>Language:</b>	English (official). Swahili, Arabic and many ethnic languages are also spoken.
<b>Religions:</b>	41.9% Catholic, 42% Protestant, 12.1% Muslim, 4% other religions or none.
<b>Land size:</b>	Almost the same size as the UK
<b>Exports:</b>	Coffee, fish and fish products, tea, cotton, flowers, fruit, vegetables, gold. Oil has recently been discovered.
<b>Labour:</b>	82% of the labour force work in agriculture
<b>Staple crops:</b>	Sorghum, millet and maize.

## History

Many archaeologists believe that modern humans can be traced to East Africa and there is evidence of iron being worked here from about 1000 AD.

In 1890, Britain colonised part of this area, which by then was home to many different ethnic and religious groups. Britain drew new country boundaries, and called the area 'Uganda' after signing a treaty that gave the largest group – the Bagandans – more status than the many smaller groups.

This inequality, and the different cultures and political systems of the groups, made it difficult to function as one country and led to conflict when Uganda gained independence in 1962.

Under Idi Amin (1971-79) and Milton Obote (1980-85) mass killings were common. During this time up to half a million people were killed.

Since 1986 Uganda has been more stable. However, there was conflict in Northern Uganda between the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and government forces from 1987 until 2006, when the LRA was forced out of Uganda. Since then, thousands of those who were abducted and forced to fight with the LRA have been reintegrated into Ugandan society.



*The wet season used to start from the month of February... Now the rainy season starts between late March and early April with a lot of unreliability. It also ends early."*

*Lotee Moses, Project officer for Caritas Moroto*

## Current situation

Uganda is one of the poorest countries in the world. One measure of country wealth divided by population – known as 'GDP per capita' – is £2,000 in Uganda (UK £39,500). Conflict has had a huge impact on the society and economy. Many people have not returned home since being driven out by LRA fighting and Uganda gives refuge to people fleeing conflict in neighbouring countries, particularly South Sudan. High levels of HIV and AIDS have also increased poverty.



**The Crested Crane is the national emblem of Uganda and appears in the centre of the flag.**

## Geography and climate

Uganda's beautiful landscape ranges from the snow-capped Rwenzori Mountains to the immense Lake Victoria. Its abundant wildlife includes endangered gorillas and chimpanzees as well as rare birds.

The country has a tropical climate, so it should be rainy during the months of March to May and September to November, while December to February and June to August are hot and dry.

In recent years, these seasons have become less reliable. Now there are longer, hotter dry seasons and shorter rainy seasons with more intense flooding.



*I can attend school fully because hygiene and illness are now not a problem. And I can stay in the dorms at school because they are clean. I can concentrate at school and often I study until six in the evening.”*

Guti

See our film about Guti:  
[cafod.org.uk/secondary](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary)

HEALTH CLUB MEETING



## CAFOD in Uganda

CAFOD has worked with partners in Uganda since about 1984. Our partners there work on peace building and help people to find ways to grow enough food or earn enough to buy food. They also work on HIV and AIDS projects, as well as helping people to know their rights and to hold their government to account over its management of health, education and natural resources.

## The problem of water

Around 9.2m people don't have access to safe water in Uganda – that's about one in every four people in the country. There is poor access to water in remote areas and an increasingly dry climate. The burden of collecting water often falls on girls. Many drop out of school so that their families can have the water that they need to drink, cook and wash. This problem isn't specific to Uganda, millions of girls and women around the world face this challenge every day.

## CAFOD response

Our partners help communities in Uganda to bring water to their homes by repairing water pumps in villages. They also train the community – particularly women – to look after the borehole so that if it breaks again, they can fix it. This gives thousands of people the dignity of being in control of one of their basic human rights. CAFOD partners also give training in good hygiene and sanitation and help communities to build safe toilets if they need them.

## Guti

Guti, 15, attends a primary school in northern Uganda at the foot of Mount Moroto. Three years ago, Guti's family wanted her to leave her small school. There weren't good facilities for the girls to stay clean and because there weren't many girls at the school, they found it very difficult being there.



*When I joined the school, there were only a few girls here, maybe three. And most of them missed school now and again.”* Guti

## Guti's school

Our partners made sure that Guti's school had a working pump so that pupils no longer have to walk to the river to collect water. They also provided a portable sink and soap for handwashing and trained teachers in good hygiene practices, so that pupils had routines for keeping themselves clean and healthy.



*Diarrhoea used to be really common in school... But now people wash their hands after using the latrine, and we don't get sick.”* Guti

Now, a few years later, there are 85 girls at the school and fewer pupils have to miss school due to illness. Some girls are taking high-school exams that only boys took before. More and more girls are joining the school, wanting to stay on, finish school and get good jobs.

A health club has been set up and Guti is one of the young leaders, training and supporting younger pupils, especially girls, in good hygiene practices.



*I feel proud to be able to help the other girls. It's good to get more knowledge and give advice to others.”* Guti

Going to school is very important to Guti. She wants to become a nurse. Guti says: “The best thing about school is that I have a brighter future because I am in school... Without an education, I wouldn't be able to train to be a nurse”.

# ACTIVITY SHEET

## Starter: Quiz (5 mins)

Answers are overleaf.

1. How many litres of water does a person in the UK use each day, on average? A. 50 B. 100 C. 150
2. How many litres of water does a person in one of the world's poorest countries use each day, on average? A. 10 B. 50 C. 100
3. How much water is needed to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool? A. 300,000 litres B. 2.5 million litres C. 10 million litres
4. Approximately how many people in the world do not have clean water to drink? A. 9 million B. 95 million C. 650 million
5. Approximately how many children die each year from diarrhoea caused by unclean water and poor sanitation? A. 500,000 B. 1.2 million C. 3.4 million
6. How many hours each day do women and children spend collecting water? A. 700,000 B. 30 million C. 125 million

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## Imagine if... (5 mins)

Ask the group to imagine it's hot and they've been playing football, shopping, or walking home from school. They're thirsty. They turn on the tap for a cool glass of water, but nothing comes out. How would they feel? What would they do? Imagine there's a water shortage and water needs saving. How could they do this (for example, by not flushing the toilet every time they use it, fewer baths and showers, washing clothes by hand)? What would be hardest?

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## It's not fair! (10 mins)

**Aim:** to show that for many people around the world, fetching water takes up a lot of time and the task is not fairly shared.

**You need:** lots of two-litre plastic bottles filled with water; a few large bags; plenty of space.

Split the group in two. One group rests; the other takes turns to race to the end of the room to collect bottles of water. After two minutes, stop the game and see how much water they've collected. Ask both groups what they would be able to do with this amount of water. Can they imagine carrying five bottles (ie. 10 litres) for 45 minutes (you could invite them to try lifting five bottles in two bags)? What activities would they miss out on if they had to collect the water they needed every day? Now tell the group that did the collecting that they must share the water with the other group. How does each group feel about this? Explain that in many cultures, it's the women and girls who have to collect water for the family, often missing out on going to school, playing and even sleeping.



## Life without taps (45 mins)

**Aim:** to simulate the difficulties and impacts of lack of access to water.

If you have enough time and would rather deal with scrap paper than bottles of water, why not play our simulation game? Search 'Life without taps' on our website.

A trained CAFOD volunteer could run this game with your class. Contact your local centre at [cafod.org.uk/local](http://cafod.org.uk/local)

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## The ripple effect (30 mins)

**Aim:** to show how simple solutions can bring about lasting change.

Read on page 2 how CAFOD partners worked with Gutti's school and other communities in Uganda to increase access to clean water. Ask the group to share ways in which they think lives have changed and how people feel now they have water and sanitation nearby. Ask small groups to imagine interviewing Gutti about life in school before and after the changes. Write up as a magazine article or perform to the other groups as a chat show.

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## Reflect and pray (30 mins)

**You need:** tea-lights; matches; a world map. You can buy a Peters Projection world map from [shop.cafod.org.uk](http://shop.cafod.org.uk). You could display quotes and statistics around the map.

Millions of girls around the world miss out on school because of lack of access to water. Let each group member place a lit candle on the map as a prayer for them. You could end by saying together:

Creator God, We hold before you all the people around the world who still do not have access to clean, safe water. May our gifts, prayers and actions support them as they work to help their communities. Together, may we build a world where no-one misses school because of lack of access to water. Amen

# SIGNS AND SYMBOLS: WATER

In the Catholic Church, objects are often used as symbols or signs—to represent or point towards something else. For example, the Easter Candle is a symbol of Christ our Light. Can you think of some other examples? Sacramental imagination is the Church’s way of seeing the world; it means seeing God in every person and every ordinary thing.

1. What might water symbolise about God? (eg. a rainstorm might symbolise the power of God)
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. Read Guti’s story on page 2. What might water symbolise to Guti, and why?
3. What one thing might I do differently if I remembered to see God represented in every drop of water?



**Task:** On a paper water droplet (template available at [cafod.org.uk/secondary](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary)), write one way that water symbolises God to you. On the other side, write one way you will treat water with respect and care. Add your droplet to a class or whole-school display.

**Thought to ponder:** How can I be a symbol of God’s presence to other people?

## Other ways to use the display:

- Write prayers for people with restricted access to water or for girls who miss school to fetch water for their families;
- Write Lenten promises about helping people gain access to water;
- Use the display as a fundraising ‘totaliser’, where each droplet represents an amount.

Display your group’s droplets around our ‘Make a splash!’ poster to form a giant splash which could grow into a geyser, waterfall or river. Leave some blank droplets for other people to fill in. More posters are available from [shop.cafod.org.uk](http://shop.cafod.org.uk). Send a photo of your ‘splash’ to [schools@cafod.org.uk](mailto:schools@cafod.org.uk) to inspire other people.

## What next?

Do watery fundraisers to support CAFOD partners’ work! There are lots of ideas on our website.

### Curriculum links

**RE Curriculum Directory:** 3.2.3 Signs and symbols  
**People of God:** Year 7 unit 4.

**Quiz answers:** 1. C (the size of a medium fridge), cambridge-water.co.uk; 2. A, CAFOD 2012; 3. B: 4. C (10 times the population of the UK), WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme Report 2015; 5. A (more than 1300 children a day), Committing to Child Survival Progress Report 2014, UNICEF; 6. C, <http://water.org/water-crisis/women-crisis>.