



### Thisland Country Brief

**Thisland is a low-income country that has experienced periods of violent conflict over the last several years. State capacity is limited outside the capital and corruption remains a serious problem. Thisland—like other countries in the region—suffered thousands of deaths during the HxNy influenza epidemic three years ago. The country’s public health infrastructure remains weak, further undermined by a growing fiscal crisis.**

#### General Information

**Population:** The population of Thisland is estimated at 18 million. Life expectancy is 66.5 years, with an infant mortality rate of 40 per 1,000 live births. The country’s Human Development Index value of 0.579 places it 160th in the world.

Some 10 million Thislanders live in Eastern Province, primarily along the southern coast, while 8 million live in Western Province. Some 38% of the population of Thisland live in urban areas. Myro—Thisland’s capital, largest city, and primary port—is located on the eastern coast.

The population of Thisland is religiously diverse. Religion has not been a major source of social division.

Over the past five years, an estimated 342,000 persons have been displaced from Western Province to Eastern Province. Most now reside in informal settlements or urban areas.

**Economy:** Thisland has a Gross Domestic Product of \$3,782 per capita. Its primary exports are agricultural goods, although some natural resource extraction occurs in the western mountains. Unemployment is high, estimated at 13% of the labor force. Women, who form 40% of the paid labor force, have been most impacted by the rise in unemployment, and there are reports of increasing child labor in the informal economy. Approximately 70% of the population lives below the poverty line. Inflation is high throughout the country due to ongoing instability.

**History of the Current Conflict:** Five years ago, contentious elections led to widespread clashes between militias in Western Province and national security forces. Over a quarter of a million persons were displaced during this time, most fleeing from Western Province to areas in the east of the country. Although the subsequent formation of a coalition power-sharing government reduced the worst

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of the fighting, sporadic violence has continued in the western border region, leading to periodic displacement and making it difficult for internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their homes.

The situation is further aggravated by poor economic conditions and a growing fiscal crisis which has left the government unable to reliably meet many of its obligations (such as civil service payroll and social benefit payments) and undermined its popular legitimacy. The governing coalition remains fragile. Government authority has especially weakened in the countryside, where real power often lies in the hands of local politicians, landowners, and former militia commanders. Fighting and insecurity has worsened this year, mainly in the west, and there has been additional forced displacement.

**National Public Health Emergency Capacity:** Thisland's public health infrastructure throughout the country is weak. An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and an Incident Management System were established during the HxNy response with support from the Global Health Organization (GHO). Infectious disease surveillance activities, including a sentinel surveillance network for measles, polio, cholera, and influenza exist but still need increased capacity and resources. Thisland depends on a regional reference laboratory for the identification of novel pathogens and has enhanced the capacity of a central lab in the capital to be able to identify, confirm, and sequence specimens for notifiable diseases. During the HxNy outbreak, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing facilities were established in a few district hospitals, and other healthcare investments were made, although budget cutbacks have left these inadequately resourced. Many rural clinics have been closed, forcing rural communities to travel to the nearest town for care.

## Humanitarian Situation

**Overview:** An estimated 342,000 persons have been internally displaced from the northwest of the country to the northeast (173,000 people), southeast (137,000 people), and southwest (32,000). In the last year, an escalation in conflict in the northwest has resulted in the displacement of approximately 32,000 refugees to camps in Neighborland.

Within Thisland, IDPs are located primarily in urban areas (55%), informal settlements (30%), and formal camps (15%). There are nine informal IDP settlements and three formal IDP camps in the northeast of the country, and 65,000 IDPs displaced within the city of Murelle. Tensions are increasing between the host community and IDPs, as it is unlikely the IDPs will be able to return to their home communities soon due to the sporadic and ongoing conflict in the northwest. There is a high percentage (26%) of female- and child-headed

households in the displaced population.

**Security:** Security in major towns and cities and along the country's primary highways is adequate. However, in rural areas of the west and northwest, the situation is considerably more dangerous, and it is from here that most forced displacement has occurred. Continued political tensions and the widespread availability of firearms suggest that any future occurrence of political violence could rapidly escalate.