



Updates from JRP

January—March 2011



A Quarterly Newsletter from the Justice and Reconciliation Project

Special Points of Interest:

- You can visit us online and sign up to receive our newsletters at www.justiceandreconciliation.com.

Welcome to the 1st Quarter 2011 Edition of the JRP Newsletter

Welcome to the First Quarter 2011 edition of our newsletter. This edition includes JRP activities from January through March 2011. Since 2005, the **Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP)** has pro-

moted locally-sensitive justice and sustainable peace in northern Uganda by focusing on the active involvement of grassroots communities in transitional justice (TJ).

Thank you for taking the time to read our latest updates. For more information on our work, we invite you to follow us on Twitter via [@JRP_Uganda](https://twitter.com/JRP_Uganda) or to visit our website by clicking [here](#).

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2010 Annual Report Now Available

Do you want a recap of last year's activities? Download JRP's 2010 Annual Report [here](#) for a summary of activities from our departments: community mobili-

zation, documentation, research and advocacy and *Ododo Wa: Our Stories*. All of JRP's past reports are also available for review.



JRP & ICTJ Launches Joint Report on Memory and Memorialization

On March 4, JRP and our partners at the [International Center for Transitional Justice \(ICTJ\)](#) launched a new joint report titled, ***We Can't Be Sure Who Killed Us: Memory and Memorialization in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda***.

Churchill Courts Hotel, was attended by more than 60 members of civil society and representatives from massacre survivor associations in West Nile, Teso, Acholi and Lango.

The event, held at Gulu's

The report examines the role memorials have played in Uganda's transitional

justice (TJ) process. Addressed to community members, conflict survivors, policymakers, and donors, it reviews existing memorials and offers recommendations to those seeking to initiate new memorial activities. It is based on research conducted in the Acholi and Lango sub-

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(continued) JRP & ICTJ Launches Joint Report on Memory and Memorialization

regions, yet reveals post-war insights into memory and memorialization relevant to the greater North and any society in transi-

tion.

To download the report, visit our website [here](#). Stay tuned for next quarter's

report launches on the Mukura (now available) and Lukodi massacres.

“For one hour, we sat under the shade of a compound tree, discussing our work-streams and answering questions about our activities asked by the Ambassador.”

Norwegian State Secretary and Ambassador Visit JRP

On January 24 and February 6, JRP welcomed two delegates from Norway to Gulu. The first visit, with Norwegian Ambassador H.E. Thorbjørn Gaustadsæther, provided an opportunity for our team to share more about our work and experiences with him. For one hour, we sat under the shade of a compound tree, discussing our work-streams and answering questions about our activities asked by the Ambassador.

Again on February 6, the Ambassador visited our office, this time with the

State Secretary in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ingrid Fiskaa. The State Secretary was interested in

learning about gender and equality, so we incited the collaboration of *Ododo Wa:Our Stories* and a women's group they work closely with. In addition to team leaders providing short presentations on their work, the women performed an original drama on the subject, what they viewed as 'gender inequality.'



Both visits were important opportunities to showcase our work and to share experiences. JRP is funded with generous support from the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala.

Above: JRP staff with State Secretary Ingrid Fiskaa and H.E. Thorbjørn Gaustadsæther during the February 6 visit (Credit: JRP)

Advocacy Training for West Nile Victims

From February 1-3, JRP's Community Mobilization and Documentation teams organized an advocacy training workshop for members of the West Nile Kony Rebel War Victims Association (WNKRWVA) in Jershem Hotel in Arua town. The training included participants from Arua, Nebbi, Zombo, Adjumani, Moyo, Yumbe, Koboko and Maracha districts.



On February 4, the Association put the skills obtained in the training to good use. In a meeting facilitated by JRP, WNKRWVA met with local leaders to create awareness about the challenges they are undergoing in pursuing compensation and reparations from the Government of Uganda for atrocities they suffered throughout the conflict.

A statement written by JRP in consultation with the Association was presented to local leaders by the victims. Local leaders present included the Deputy LCV of Arua, the Deputy LCV of Nebbi, and candidates who were standing for elective positions in Arua.

Since this meeting, the group has continued to seek avenues to advance their advocacy demands to

(continued) Advocacy Training for West Nile Victims

their leaders. They are currently undergoing registration of their members in a bid to solidify their demand for reparations. They have opened official files in the

office of the LCV and the DISO in Arua district to update local government about their activities and maintain a conducive working relationship.

Above: A member of the Association leads a planning session for the West Nile memorial service (Credit: Evelyn Akullo Otwilli)

TJ Consultation with Victims in Teso

From February 9-10, JRP, in collaboration with South Africa-based [Institute for Justice and Reconciliation](#) (IJR), carried out the third in a series of consultations with victims to gain their perceptions on different transitional justice mechanisms.

The consultations were part of a series titled, "Enhancing Grassroots Participation in Transitional Justice Debates," aimed at intensifying local advocacy in northern Uganda around issues of truth-seeking, reparations, traditional jus-

tice, and gender justice ahead of the 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections. Earlier consultations were held late last year in West Nile and Acholi/Lango.

Like in the first two consultations, participants were eager to share their views on the relevance of different mechanisms and to state the importance of processes to foster healing and reconciliation. As it is across the greater North, victims in Teso prioritized compensation from the Government of Uganda for

crimes committed by state and non-state actors.

JRP is currently finalizing a report of the three consultations to share with stakeholders and present to Uganda's Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS). The following quarter will also see a series of thematic policy briefings released which further explore the relevance of TJ mechanisms discussed in the consultations.

Above: A participant explains the truth his group wants to know (Credit: Evelyn Akullo Otwilli)



“As it is across the greater North, victims in Teso prioritized compensation from the Government of Uganda for crimes committed by state and non-state actors.”

Encouraging Community Theatre with Women in Lukodi

In March, JRP's Community Mobilization team kick-started a new community theatre programme with women at the [Child Voice International](#) (CVI) centre in Lukodi.

The purpose of this activity is to engage victims groups with creative ways for promoting healing and reconciliation within communi-

ties. The approach is largely interactive, allowing the women participating to directly participate -- by acting, painting, role-play, singing, dancing, and discussing -- in enhancing the debate on justice and promoting community-led reconciliation initiatives.

This programme is being piloted with the women at

CVI for eight weeks, after which JRP hopes to expand it into the wider community in Lukodi and in other communities in the greater North.

Above: Women in Lukodi participate in JRP's theatre initiative (Credit: Sylvia Opinia)

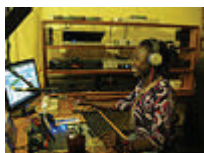




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Working for justice and reconciliation with war-affected communities



Visit us on the web!

www.justiceandreconciliation.com

The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) in Gulu, northern Uganda, has played a key role in transitional justice (TJ) in Uganda since 2005 through seeking to understand and explain the interests, needs, concerns and views of communities affected by conflict. We aim to promote sustainable peace through the active involvement of war-affected communities in research and advocacy. In addition, our work seeks to provide tools to empower other victims and survivors of conflict in Africa's Great Lakes region also in situations of conflict.

Arua Community Dialogue and Radio Talk Show

In line with JRP's recent report on memory and an upcoming memorial service for victims in West Nile (May 20), the JRP community mobilization department organized a community dialogue and radio talk show on March 23.

The dialogue aimed to spark debate about the role of memorials and memorialization in West Nile. It generated community ideas on the theme and explored different ways West Nile traditionally remembered events in the past, and how the upcoming memorial service could promote healing and positive remembrance in the region.

Over 100 participants attended this dialogue, held in the WENWA hall in Arua town, including members of the West Nile Kony Rebel War Victims Association (WNKRWVA), civil society organizations, the media, religious leaders and the public. The panelists included the L.C V Vice Chairman of Arua District Local Government (Mr. Sabo Kamilo), a representative of the Agofe of the Lugbara chiefdom (Mr. Godo Onzia John), the chairman of WNKRWVA (Eng. Buti Sam), and CSO representatives from JRP and the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

Following the community dialogue, an interactive radio talk show was hosted on Voice of Life radio to further the discussion on memory and memorialization with specific reference to West Nile. The panel discussants were Sylvia Opinia (JRP), Eng. Buti Sam (Chairman, WNKRWVA), and Ambassador Joram Jomabuti Ajeani (Elder). The talk show also presented an opportunity for the WNKRWVA to share plans for the upcoming memorial service.

Above: JRP's Sylvia Opinia at the Voice of Life studios in Arua for the radio talk show (Credit: JRP)

Story-telling with Women's Groups

This quarter, *Ododo Wa: Our Stories* continued its work to empower formerly-abducted women to undertake advocacy for their needs through story-telling, documenting life histories and experiences in the conflict, establishing networks, building capacity

and leadership skills, and creating awareness on the plight of women and children in the transition. The team implemented activities in documentation, story-telling, and data verification this quarter, and expanded their work into Amuru and Nwoya districts.

Stay tuned for more information on the integration of this work into a new Gender Justice work-stream at JRP.

Above: Women during an *Ododo Wa* theatre day (Credit: Lindsay McClain)