



# Updates from JRP

October 2010



A Monthly Newsletter from the Justice and Reconciliation Project

## Special Points of Interest:

- JRP became an independent organization in January 2010 with funding from the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala.
- You can visit us online and sign up to receive our newsletters at [www.justiceandreconciliation.com](http://www.justiceandreconciliation.com).

## Welcome to the October Edition of the JRP Newsletter

Welcome to the October edition of our newsletter. Since 2005, the **Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP)** has promoted locally sensitive and sustainable peace in northern

Uganda by focusing on the active involvement of grassroots communities in local-level transitional justice.

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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## TJ Election Campaign Cards Now Available

This month, our printed campaign cards finally arrived. Available in both Luo and English, they will assist us and our partners in educating voters on how to put transitional justice (TJ) on the election agenda.

We have already begun distributing the cards to communities and civil society meetings in an effort to challenge voters to vote wisely and ask their candi-

dates where considerations for peace, justice and reconciliation are in their manifestos. The inside of the cards contain six action points for putting TJ on the election agenda.

To download a PDF version of the cards visit our website [here](#).

For comments or to get involved in the campaign, please contact [info@justiceandreconciliation.com](mailto:info@justiceandreconciliation.com). We welcome input and partner-

## JRP Visits War Survivors in Colombia

From October 19 to November 2, JRP representatives Ojok Boniface and Ketty Anyeko visited Co-

lombia in the second phase of exchange visits between survivors of war from northern Uganda and Colombia.

ship with civil society, grassroots communities, contestants in the upcoming Ugandan elections, and any others.

Above: Luo cover of our card to put transitional justice on the election agenda (Credit: Lindsay McClain)



Continued on page 2



“Memory and memorialization by communities can help heal wounds of the past, even when the conflict is still ongoing”

### (continued) JRP Visits War Survivors in Colombia

ited JRP and northern Uganda in July for a similar exchange. Again this time, the exchange was facilitated by two professors from the University of British Columbia, Canada: Dr. Erin Baines (a JRP co-founder) and Dr. Pilar Ri-ano.

The conflict in Colombia has lasted for over 50 years and is still ongoing. The objective of this exchange relationship between Uganda and Colombia is to learn and share work experiences on advocacy, documentation and memory works with victims of violent conflicts.

During the course of the visit, Boniface and Ketty

met with missionaries working for human rights protection in Afro-Colombian communities, held discussions with women's groups and displaced communities, met with organizations working to better the situation of war-affected persons, and met with historical memory groups.

Through this exchange, they learned several lessons based on the Colombian experience, including:

1. Forming alliances is crucial and requires collaborations from civil society;
2. Denunciation of violence from public figures like religious leaders can have a big im-

pact;

3. Memory and memorialization by communities can help heal wounds of the past, even when the conflict is still ongoing;
4. Archiving is very important in recording events of the conflict and recording activities of an organization.

In the future, JRP looks forward to continuing this partnership with war-affected communities in Colombia through exchange and dialogue.

*Above: JRP Programme Coordinator Boniface Ojok presenting a token from Uganda to Guayacan Women's Group in Bellavista, Colombia (Photo Credit: Ketty Anyeko)*

### Workshop with LRA Survivors in West Nile

From October 18-21, JRP's Research, Documentation and Advocacy Team paid another visit to the West Nile sub-region, visiting Arua town. There, JRP met with representatives of the West Nile Kony Rebel War Victims Association and various other victims from the region to learn about their experiences during the conflict and post-conflict struggles.

Though largely overlooked by most NGOs and the Government, the suffering of West Nile over the last two decades has proved to be serious. While Acholi sub-region formed the epicenter of the war, West

Nile suffered its own share of violence over the last thirty years, as various rebel groups have operated in the region.

Many of the survivors we interviewed lost virtually all their means of sustenance in ambushes on the Kampala-Arua Road, and still nourish the trauma of the abductions that oftentimes followed. The West Nile Kony Rebel War Victims Association has made a series of attempts to draw attention to their case, but this has not yet materialized in substantial governmental support. Occasionally government representatives have paid compen-

sation to individual victims, but a transparent and inclusive policy is still lacking.

Though this naturally frustrates the members of the association, the participants expressed a strong desire not to give up their fight for accountability and reparations. They took a very positive stance towards working together with JRP. JRP will therefore continue documenting their experiences and assist in their future advocacy and mobilization efforts.

In the meantime, JRP staff are currently drafting a report from these initial findings to be released in De-

**(continued) Workshop with LRA Survivors in West Nile**

cember or January.

*sharing their personal narratives with a JRP team member (Photo Credit: Lino Owor Ogora)*

*Above: Members of the Kony Rebel War Victims Association*



**Through the Radio: Putting TJ on the Election Agenda**

On October 16, JRP's campaign to put transitional justice on the election agenda was shared on Uganda's airwaves through Mega Fm's "Te-Yat" programme. From 10am-12pm on that day, six panelists joined Mega Fm presenter Steve Balmoi in discussing issues facing northern Uganda's war-affected communities.

Panelists on hand that day included:

- **Mr. Richard Todwong**, Presidential Advisor on Northern Uganda
- **Mego Betty Aol Ochan**, Gulu Woman MP
- **Mr. Komakech Henry Kilama**, Advocate
- **Mego Rosalba Oywa**, Women/Peace Activist
- **Mr. Oduny Samuel**, NRM Supporter
- **Mr. Lino Owor Ogora**,

JRP Representative

During the programme, excerpts from previous JRP community dialogues were played and panelists responded to community members' comments, questions and concerns. These sound clips set the stage for much of the discussion.

JRP representative Lino Owor Ogora discussed our TJ election campaign and highlighted the six actions points needed for a successful TJ process in Uganda. Mr. Yusuf Oduny and Mego Rosalba then further highlighted the need for incorporating transitional justice on the election agenda, citing several examples from the field trips they had made with JRP.

Attention was then shifted to the three panelists vying

for elective positions. Mr. Todwong reiterated the need to pursue compensation, Mr. Komakech Justin Kilama praised JRP's TJ election campaign, and Mego Betty Aol cited frustrations she had met in regard to working with fellow Members of Parliament to put northern Uganda on the agenda.

It was generally a good interactive session with many of the panelists highlighting the need to push for post-conflict interventions in northern Uganda. Many listeners who called in were also given the chance to ask questions or make their comments.

*Above: JRP representative Lindsay McClain introducing the campaign to put TJ on the election agenda at the Anaka community dialogue on September 25 (Photo Credit: Ronald Okello)*




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**Reconciliation through Community Theatre**

During the month of October, JRP's sister project *Ododo Wa: Our Stories* held two theatre sessions with women's groups to explore how theatre can be used as a vehicle of self-expression for victims of war. *Ododo Wa*, a joint

initiative between JRP and the Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Canada, works with women and children who suffered gross violations of human rights during the war. Among others, the project documents their

experiences through storytelling and theatre works, and builds their capacity to advocate for justice needs facing women and children. The objectives of the theatre sessions were to:

- Encourage the women



### (Continued) Reconciliation through Community Theatre

to have fun and relax

- Build networks and relationships
- Tell personal narratives
- Promote reconciliation

In addition, theatre has helped the women to solve

problems, set goals, express feelings, and improve interpersonal skills and relationships. Having moments of joy, fun, laughter and discussion together has helped create a bond of friendship and trust among the women and

*Ododo Wa*. This method has also taught us more about the specific justice concerns facing women affected by the conflict.

*Above: Women during the 'Web of Unity' exercise at an Ododo Wa theatre workshop (Photo Credit: Lindsay McClain)*



### Updates from the Lukodi Core Team

JRP has continued its engagement in Lukodi through the ongoing initiative to develop a community reconciliation model there. In October, JRP's Community Mobilization Department was invited to attend a reporting and planning meeting of the Core (Community Recon-

ciliation) Team in Lukodi. The meeting was held at Child Voice International's (CVI) Lukodi office. At that time, it was planned for the launch of the team's Community Outreach Programme to take place in late November and early December.

In addition to the interaction with the Core Team, JRP's Documentation Department has continued to collect personal narratives for their upcoming report on the Lukodi massacre.

*Above: Members of the Lukodi Core Team during their October meeting (Photo Credit: Ronald Okello)*

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**“Although some of the victims' families have been given their compensation, at least two families have been left out.”**

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### President Museveni Meets with Mukura Survivors

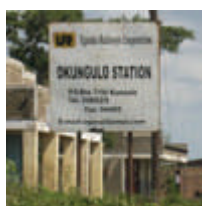
On October 12, H.E. President Yoweri Museveni visited Mukura in Kumi district and delivered 200 million shillings in cash to Woman MP Hon. Akiror to disseminate to families of victims of the 1989 Mukura massacre.

According to local sources, President Museveni visited Mukura Primary School and the Mukura massacre memorial monument and spent a few minutes there talking with the local leaders. A representative of the massacre survivors group presented the president with a one-page memorandum expressing their grievances. The president then handed over 200 million shillings in cash to the woman MP, who in turn handed it to her aide, who went and banked it in Centenary Bank. The president later addressed the community and apologized for the Mukura incident, blaming it on young, inexperienced soldiers.

Although some of the victims' families have been given their compensation, at least two families have been left out. In addition, there is unrest amongst the survivors because they have not been included in the reparations scheme. Only those who perished in the incident are being compensated, although many of survivors live with debilitating physical and emotional trauma from the torture.

To help Mukura in pursuing holistic compensation that includes all survivors and victims, JRP has assisted KUNEDO and the victims' group in creating a detailed

As you may recall, JRP has been working with the Mukura massacre survivors group for many months, helping them to organize their demands for compensation. In late October, JRP's Documentation Team Leader, Lino Owor Ogora, traveled to Mukura to follow-up on outcomes of the president's visit.



**(Continued) President Museveni Meets with Mukura Survivors**

register of all survivors of the massacre. There is hope that this register will lead to follow-up meetings with Hon. Akiror and His Excellency President

Museveni.

*Above: A signpost of the Okungulu railway station, where on July 11, 1989, the 106th Battalion of the NRA (former name of the national army) rounded-up 300*

*men suspected of being rebel collaborators against the NRA regime and incarcerated them in a train wagon. By the time they were released, 87 had suffocated to death. (Photo Credit: Lino Owor Ogora)*

**JRP partners with BOSCO & KUNEDO**

In October, JRP finalized partnerships with two civil society organizations: Battery Operated Systems for Community Outreach (**BOSCO**) and Kumi Network of Development Organizations (**KUNEDO**).

These partnerships will allow JRP to further its mission to work for justice and reconciliation with a diverse network of grassroots communities.

**BOSCO** focuses on providing innovative information and communication technology (ICT) solutions to foster socio-economic development and peace building in rural communities in northern Uganda. BOSCO has partnered with JRP on the campaign to put TJ on the election agenda and has disseminated cards via its online forum and to its 25 ICT centres in the Acholi sub-region.

**KUNEDO** is a network of CSOs in Kumi district, eastern Uganda, that seeks for community involvement in development processes. KUNEDO and JRP have a history of engagement on justice issues in Mukura and will continue to work together for transitional justice in Teso sub-region.




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**JRP in the News**

During the month of October and into early November, JRP's Documentation Team Leader, Lino Owor Ogora, appeared in several media outlets, discussing issues facing war-affected communities in northern Uganda.

To read these articles, please visit the following links:

- [There are more than 13 who fought for peace in the north](#), *New Vision*, October 27
- [Letter to presidential candidates](#), *Daily Monitor*, November 8
- [New Hope for Northern Ugandans Seeking Reparations From the Government](#), *ugandansabroad*, October

13

In addition, our friends at [Resolve](#), a Washington, D.C., based think-tank, featured our campaign to put TJ on the election agenda in their [weekly roundup](#) for October 16-22.



## Monthly Newsletter from the Justice and Reconciliation Project

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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.

**Working for justice and reconciliation with war-affected communities**

**Visit us on the web!**

**[www.justiceandreconciliation.com](http://www.justiceandreconciliation.com)**