This year, as we join the world in celebration of International Women’s Day, the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) wishes to emphasize the unique peace, justice and reconciliation challenges faces women survivors of armed conflict. In line with this year’s theme, “Connecting girls, inspiring futures,” a member of the Women’s Advocacy Network (WAN)—a JRP-supported forum for conflict-affected women to undertake gender justice advocacy—has prepared a poem that highlights some of the issues facing formerly-abducted women and the need for stakeholders and communities to listen to women’s calls for justice.

**Oduru (Alarm)**
*A Poem by the Women’s Advocacy Network*

Wululu Wululu Wululu
Lutuwa oduru yang ka okok lwak
ringo kama oduru okok iye do
Piny dong oto
Piny dong oto ada

Wa lworo piny calo lee tim malworo
got
Wa lworo piny kwe
Wa lworo Wa lworo Wa lworo

Oduru ki wango doo
Oduru pek
Oduru lit
Oduru longo

Aneno tungi ki tungi
Mtu piny mede ameda
Gwoko ajula dong odoko tek
Lutino ma pe wa yube pire
Anyim gi tika bibedo tye

Anyim gi benen awene
Lweny Lweny Lweny
Lweny, kono yang wangeyo gang pa
meni kono ber
Kadi obed kumeno kwo pud yube

Wun lwak wun gamente, wun NGOs,
wun lutela wa
Wucung kwed wa
Wu pee cing wa
Wuwiny koko wa
Wulok kwed wa

Mon obedo guti
Wu nyut it wa maa
Wek wabed calo dano adana
Wek anyim wa obed maleng
Wawek tim alany
Wek oduru ogik koko
Poem Explanation by the Authors
The poem was written by members of the Women’s Advocacy Network (WAN). Cognizant that the war in northern Uganda affected us, the war-affected women, in various ways, we are calling for justice, healing and reconciliation.

In this poem, we note the ongoing challenges we face, such as the quest for reparations and other forms of redress from various stakeholders, which we compare to a wild animal wondering about the mountains. We also note the challenges in raising children we were not prepared to have (children born in captivity, ajula), whose futures are blurred and who lack basic needs, a cultural identity and access to land.

The poem’s title, Oduru, means raising an alarm. In the past when one would hear a person alarming, he or she would know there was a problem and in turn run to the source of the cry. In this context, we believe that what befell us during the war merits attention, and we hope in hearing our calls you too will run to our side.

As we celebrate International Women’s Day 2012, we call upon stakeholders to respond to our cries for justice, healing and reconciliation for ourselves and our children. Despite the challenges we face, we are hopeful that our futures and that of our children can be bright if you listen and respond to our oduru.

About WAN
The Women’s Advocacy Network (WAN) is a forum for war-affected women to advocate for justice, acknowledgment and accountability for gender-based violations inflicted during war. It was formed in May 2011 with support from JRP and aims to empower women survivors to participate in post-conflict policy debates in Uganda and to engage grassroots communities in gendered discussions on reintegration and reconciliation. The WAN currently comprises of 9 women’s groups from Acholi sub-regions, with plans to expand to Teso, West Nile and Lango in 2012. The WAN meets quarterly to discuss common issues, including the need for compensation and other forms of reparation, the rights of children born of forced marriage in LRA captivity and strategies to end social stigma by communities.

About JRP
The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) promotes locally sensitive and sustainable peace in Africa’s Great Lakes region by focusing on the active involvement of grassroots communities in local-level transitional justice. To learn more about JRP’s work, please visit www.justiceandreconciliation.com. For comments related to this poem, please email info@justiceandreconciliation.com.