



Justice and  
Reconciliation  
Project

# 2015 Annual Report

Matters



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## About the Justice and Reconciliation Project

The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) was established in 2005 in Gulu, Uganda to understand and explain the interests, needs, concerns and views of communities affected by conflict and to promote sustainable peace through the active involvement of war-affected communities in research and advocacy.

Find out more about JRP at <http://www.justiceandreconciliation.com> or email [info@justiceandreconciliation.com](mailto:info@justiceandreconciliation.com).

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# Acronyms

<b>AYINET</b>	African Youth Initiative Network
<b>CBC</b>	Children born in captivity
<b>CBO</b>	Community-based Organisation
<b>CDD</b>	Community-driven Development
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>CRR</b>	Centre for Reparations and Rehabilitation
<b>EPI</b>	Everyday Peace Indicators
<b>GJU</b>	Gender Justice Unit
<b>GMU</b>	George Mason University
<b>GoU</b>	Government of Uganda
<b>GUSCO</b>	Gulu Support the Children Center
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>JRP</b>	Justice and Reconciliation Project
<b>LRA</b>	Lord's Resistance Army
<b>OPM</b>	Office of the Prime Minister
<b>NUTJWG</b>	Northern Uganda Transitional Justice Working Group
<b>PRDP</b>	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and gender-based violence
<b>TJ</b>	Transitional justice
<b>UNRF</b>	Uganda National Rescue Front
<b>UWOPA</b>	Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association
<b>WAN</b>	Women's Advocacy Network

# Message from the Directors

## 2015 marks ten years of commitment for justice and accountability in Uganda

Over the years JRP has witnessed remarkable growth in its programming for victims and survivors of conflict in Uganda. We have also seen northern Uganda move from a period of armed conflict to a period of relative stability where the stage has been set for justice and reconciliation to flourish in the region. May we also recall the hard times encountered at the initial stages of our work, when the most vulnerable populations lacked a space to voice their concerns simply because they were so pushed to the margins of injustice owing to prevailing insecurity. Our staff were nevertheless brave enough to hop on motorbikes and public taxis during the most insecure times to reach out the diverse regions of Acholi, Teso, West Nile and Lango where victims of conflict cry for justice and accountability.

The call for reconciliation was never in vain, thanks to the efforts of the ever-dedicated staff at JRP who worked tirelessly to document the stories that have never been written before. From the brutal massacres of Atiak in the 90's to the more recent episodes of Barlonyo, Abia, Mucwini, Omot, Palabek, Corner Kilak, Yumbe, Obalanga, and the much disputed events of Mukura, Burcoro, Luwero, Ombaci and Kasese, among others, the stories of pain and agony were relayed to the public. Today as victims witness justice being applied to LRA commanders like Dominic Ongwen we are quick to pay tribute to those who volunteered their views to recount the gruesome episodes of torture, abduction, rape, mutilation and killing in the broad day light as victims remain helpless. Along with the victims, our researchers shared the pain with empathy for the victims as recounted their traumatic narratives. We are proud of the results of your patience with us are beginning to pay off. We shall continue to advocate for more justice.

Through capacity building our goal was to transform pain into agency. We ensured that your voices are not only heard in your local dwellings, but also in Kampala and the capital cities of the world's major powers where decisions on your plight and calls for justice and reconciliation abound. For this we also wish to thank the generous contributions of our donors, the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Uganda Fund, the Compton Foundation and the Royal Netherlands Embassy for past and current support. Many thanks goes to our partners the Liu Institute for Global Issues, the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) for the technical and emotional support over the years.

As you read this annual report you will also note that we are proud to be associated with several victims associations such as the Mukura Victims Association, the West Nile Kony War Rebels Association and the Women's Advocacy Network. Your support over the past years has been in congruence to our commitment for justice and reconciliation for victims in the various areas you continue to work. We shall endeavor to continue with our support to your cause, as we believe that with unity comes strength.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to a number of local government organisations in Acholi, Lango, Teso, West Nile as well as civil society organisations that have over the years worked either in partnership or in collaboration with us. Without your capable contribution JRP would not have made it this far. We look forward to a continued cooperation in the name of sustainable peace. Appreciation also goes to individuals with whom we worked so closely during the Juba peace process between 2006 and 2008 in ensuring that we deliver on our promises for a just and peaceful society. The numerous debates on accountability and rec-



conciliation are surely a result of our joint struggle and we are happy that the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) has continued to embark on a forward-looking transitional justice policy. We however call for a speedy and inclusive process.

Fast forward, 2015 also presented us with important changes as we transitioned from a period of total dependence on donors to a period of relative sustenance. We are proud that JRP now has its own home at Koro – Pida along Kampala road. Thanks to the Royal Norwegian Embassy for its usually generous contribution to this course. However along with this development JRP is now set to say good-bye to its donor the Royal Norwegian Embassy as our longstanding partnership came to an end in November 2015. We will nevertheless appreciate the long-term cooperation we have enjoyed with the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, as this was an important step in setting a foundation for JRP.

Over the next few years JRP shall embark on a process of sustainability in our activities as we roll them to victims and survivors of conflict in Uganda. Our six-year strategic plan is based on an overall goal of supporting efforts of conflict-affected communities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region in realising justice, accountability and sustainable peace. Through research and policy we shall continue to advocate for conflict-affected populations and individuals as we believe this will lead into acknowledgment of wrongs and harms suffered leading to a victim-centered justice and accountability in Uganda. We shall also continue to support and work with local structures we have created to facilitate local redress, healing and reconciliation as we believe this will contribute to the development and implementation of victim-centered justice and reconciliation initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace in Uganda.

And finally we continue to advance gender- and age-inclusive TJ programming in development and service delivery as we trust this will result into a more gender- and age-inclusive approach to justice and reconciliation in Uganda.

As usual we welcome all committed stakeholders in rallying behind this cause. We shall continue to garner resources from like-minded partners to enable the success and continuity of our activities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.

We look forward to working with all of you in future.

*Yours sincerely*

**Boniface Ojok**, Interim Head of Office and Founding Member

**Michael Otim**, Board Chair and Founder



# Introduction

**2015 marks 10 years since the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) was founded to understand and explain the needs and interests of communities affected by conflict in northern Uganda.**

It also marks the introduction of a new strategic plan that guides JRP's work through 2015 to 2020 by developing strategies to address challenges to peace-building, justice and reconciliation and further organizational performance. The year saw JRP implement new objectives, priorities and initiatives under this plan, building on past successes and ensuring that conflict-affected communities continue to be empowered to participate in transitional justice (TJ) processes in the coming years.

With the support of our partners the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, USAID's Supporting Access to Justice, Fostering Equity and Peace programme and Uganda Fund, we worked with communities in 16 districts across Uganda through the year. This report outlines this work according to our new objectives, namely ensuring that:

1. TJ policies and processes are informed by the experiences and needs of conflict-affected populations in Uganda and the Great Lakes region;
2. Local initiatives for redress, healing and reconciliation are supported for conflict-affected communities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region;
3. Gender- and age-inclusive TJ programme development and service delivery are promoted; and,
4. The institutional capacity of JRP is enhanced to maximise programme delivery and promote sustainability.



# 10 years of justice and reconciliation

**JRP was founded in 2005 as a partnership between the Gulu District NGO Forum (GDNF) and the Liu Institute for Global Issues (LIGI), University of British Columbia (UBC).**

With its initial funding, JRP worked with local communities in the Acholi sub-region of northern Uganda to document traditional justice practices in order to contribute to national and global debates on accountability and reconciliation. In 2005, *Roco Wat i Acholi: Restoring Relations in Acholi Land* was published, capturing the opinions of cultural and clan leaders, religious and opinion leaders, and elders on how local mechanisms for resolving conflict could be used to restore social harmony and reconciliation among conflict-affected communities in northern Uganda.

During the launch of *Roco Wat*, officiated by the then chief mediator between the LRA and the Ugandan government, Ms. Betty Bigombe, and the Paramount Chief of Acholi, Rwot Onen David Acana II, a resolution was made to pursue further action for addressing the justice and reconciliation needs of conflict-affected communities. JRP was tasked to take this up through research and advocacy.

## Peace talks

In July 2006, when the Juba Peace Talks between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda (GoU) were initiated by the government of South Sudan, JRP was invited to bring local voices to the table in order to inform discussions on Agenda Item Three on Accountability and Reconciliation. JRP participated in the talks as part of an entourage of accredited observers comprised of religious,

cultural and civil society organisation (CSO) leaders.

During the talks, JRP provided expert information on traditional justice and alternative dispute resolution processes. In 2007, the landmark Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation and its annexure, was signed, paving way for a series of consultations, in which JRP played an active part. JRP mobilised cultural and religious leaders in north and north-eastern Uganda to participate in a series of consultations on local justice mechanisms in Uganda, which led to a number of joint resolutions. Also, in 2008, JRP mobilised CSOs in Uganda to form and participate in the Northern Uganda Transitional Justice Working Group (NUTJWG).

## Growth

In support of JRP's model of active consultation with conflict-affected communities, a five year \$3.5 million USD grant from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala, allowed the organisation to become an independent non-governmental organisation in 2010. An office space was rented in Gulu's Senior Quarters, and a new mission to empower conflict-affected communities to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation, and a vision to promote a just and peaceful society, were adopted.

In the period of 2010 to 2014, JRP's work revolved around **community documentation** of conflict-related experiences and memories of individuals, communities and victims' groups to promote the preservation of history, acknowledgment of loss, reconciliation and healing; **community mobilisation** of individuals, communities and victims' groups to identify what needs to be done to promote community-level justice and reconciliation through capacity-building and training, community-led initiatives, and dissemination of TJ information; and, **gender justice** by paying special attention to the TJ

needs and concerns of vulnerable groups that have been uniquely affected by the conflict because of gendered experiences, such as formerly-abducted men and women, victims of sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) and children born in captivity.

## Contributions

### Policy advocacy

In its initial years as an NGO, JRP continued to play an active role in ongoing civil society and GoU efforts to pursue accountability and reconciliation, such as the support for the passing of Uganda's International Criminal Court (ICC) Act in 2010 to back the formation of the International Crimes Division (ICD), of the High Court of Uganda to try war crimes and crimes against humanity in Uganda. JRP, together with other stakeholders, also successfully consulted on and later advocated for the reinstatement of part two of the Amnesty Act in May 2013.

Also in 2013, JRP backed the drafting and presentation of a petition that led to the adoption of a resolution in the Ugandan Parliament on 9 April 2014 calling for affirmative action by the GoU to implement reparations for victims of conflict in northern Uganda. Through the years, JRP also continued to work closely with the GoU and CSOs to contribute to the drafting of a national TJ policy for Uganda.

JRP has been at the forefront of generating information about conflict in northern Uganda through its catalogue of publications detailing conflict events and experiences of victims. This

has shed light on the unique experiences of different groups, such as formerly-abducted women, children born in captivity and massacre survivors and resulted in increased awareness of human rights violations.

Through the years, JRP explored new methods for promoting healing and reconciliation for conflict-affected communities in northern Uganda. Examples include community theatre, storytelling, peer support, community-led documentation and video letters between victims and perpetrators. These innovative approaches have inspired communities to undertake their own creative initiatives to advocate for justice and reconciliation, many of which JRP has documented.

### Advancing gender justice

JRP has been instrumental in drawing attention to the gender-specific needs of categories of conflict-survivors such as conflict-affected women and children born in captivity. JRP has supported the documentation of their stories, facilitated women survivors to interact with fellow survivors; conducted research into women's gender needs in TJ, created awareness forums for women's groups on TJ, and been instrumental in supporting dispute resolution on issues such as land, child custody, and interpersonal relationships with their families.

JRP built the capacities of conflict-affected women and empowered them to conduct advocacy on their gender needs at community, district and national levels, culminating in the formation of **the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN)**, a forum that brings together groups of conflict-affected women in northern Uganda to advocate for justice, knowledge and accountability for the gender-based violations inflicted on them during war in northern Uganda.



Through numerous workshops, surveys and consultations on relevant TJ themes JRP has gathered and disseminated information at both grassroots and policy levels, resulting in several policy briefs and situational analyses.

### Youth participation and engagement

JRP has engaged youth from conflict-affected regions in TJ discussions, recognising that they are often a vulnerable and marginalised category of people in northern Uganda while being vital to ensuring sustainable peace and recovery. In 2012 and 2013, JRP successfully designed and implemented a youth-focused campaign called the 'TJ Quiz' aimed at equipping youth with knowledge on TJ in addition to training student leaders on peace-building in collaboration with local governments.

### Empowered victims of conflict to undertake victim-led advocacy

JRP created avenues for victims in northern Uganda to dialogue and pursue joint advocacy through exchange programmes between massacre survivors, families of the missing, survivors groups and conflict-affected women. This exposed groups in different regions to other conflict situations and motivated them to engage in joint advocacy on their own.

### Grassroots initiatives for healing and memorialisation

In the past ten years, JRP played a lead role in promoting grassroots healing and memorialisation in northern Uganda by holding memory workshops for various victims' groups aimed at building their capacities to design and implement memory projects in their communities. JRP also supported commemoration days, reburials and local mediation, in communities where massacres were committed such as Mucwini village in Kitgum district.

### Increased awareness of TJ issues through campaigns

JRP created innovative campaigns to create awareness about conflict and its consequences. A campaign on missing persons, named "the Right to Know" was aimed at creating awareness on the plight of people who are still unaccounted for in the aftermath of the conflict. The campaign involves organising families of the missing and CSOs into working groups; conducting studies on missing persons; doing public outreach and awareness; and commemorating the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances on 30 August. Also, during the Ugandan 2011 presidential elections we ran a campaign called, "Putting TJ on the Election Agenda" with the aim of drawing attention to the needs of victims in northern Uganda.

When asked how the TJ Quiz Competition was beneficial, the participating students gave the following responses: It provided a "central point to discuss justice needs"; created **solidarity and understanding** between students from different places; widened their knowledge; contributed to **truth-seeking**; informed them about **gender inequalities**; built **leadership capacity**; and, **restored hope and courage**. Source: Youth Advocacy Transitional Justice Competitions Justice, Justice and Reconciliation Project Issue Report 2, 2013.



Young people from conflict-affected regions are often a vulnerable and marginalised category of people in northern Uganda despite being vital to ensuring sustainable peace and recovery.

## Partnerships

Between 2005 and 2015, JRP implemented the above with generous support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, Gulu Walk, the

Compton Foundation and the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala, and USAID's Supporting Access to Justice, Fostering Equity and Peace program.



# Informing transitional justice policies and processes

JRP works to inform transitional justice policies and processes by documenting and sharing the experiences and needs of conflict-affected populations and individuals in Uganda and Africa's Great Lakes Region. We believe this will manifest itself in greater government acknowledgment of the issues, experiences and needs of these groups, and result in the development and implementation of victim-centred justice and reconciliation initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace in Uganda and the GLR.

## Documenting survivors' experiences of conflict sexual violence

This year, we published a field note documenting the conflict experiences of survivors of conflict sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) in two communities in northern Uganda, concluding a process that began in 2013 in Koch Ongako in Gulu district and Romogi in Yumbe. *My Body, A Battlefield: Survivors' experiences of conflict sexual violence* contributes to the growing literature on sexual violations during northern Uganda's conflict by documenting and acknowledging the lesser-known, but systematic, sexual violence that occurred at the hands of state forces and regional rebel groups, such as the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) II in West Nile.

## Sharing victim-centred views through *Voices* magazine

*Voices* magazine is a regular, open platform which allows victims and other stakeholders to dialogue on and inform local and national transitional justice developments. Since 2012, it has dealt with areas such as amnesty, reparations, truth-telling, accountability and sexual- and gender-based violence. This year we published our ninth and tenth issues exploring memorialisation and looking back at JRP's 10 years, respectively. We also launched a special webpage for *Voices* at [voices.justiceandreconciliation.com](http://voices.justiceandreconciliation.com) which archives all older issues.

One story, about a boy from **Abia in Lango sub-region** who fell victim to the war as a baby, was published on *Voices*' website in May and circulated to partners to create awareness about him and the experiences of others like him.

## Working towards gender-just reparations

Following concerted advocacy by the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) and JRP between 2013 and 2014, the Parliament of Uganda passed a unanimous resolution to address the plight of war victims. This year JRP worked to build upon these successes through a campaign that engaged WAN members and other stakeholders to follow-up on the resolution to ensure that its recommendations are actualized.

This has included developing a campaign strategy, carrying out a needs assessment with 16 WAN groups (a report of which is under review and shall be released in 2016), meeting with Delta Partnership, the consulting firm responsible for drafting the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP III), as well as civil society and local government partners, and endeavouring to meet with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association (UWOPA).

On **15 September 2015**, the WAN organised one round-table discussion with 26 local government officials from districts across northern Uganda and members of the WAN in collaboration with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss strategies for war-affected women to benefit from existing and proposed government programmes and policies. It resulted in pledges and commitments from local government officials which were published by JRP in a policy brief titled *Addressing the Unredressed – Gaps and opportunities for affirmative action for war-affected women within local government programmes in northern Uganda*.

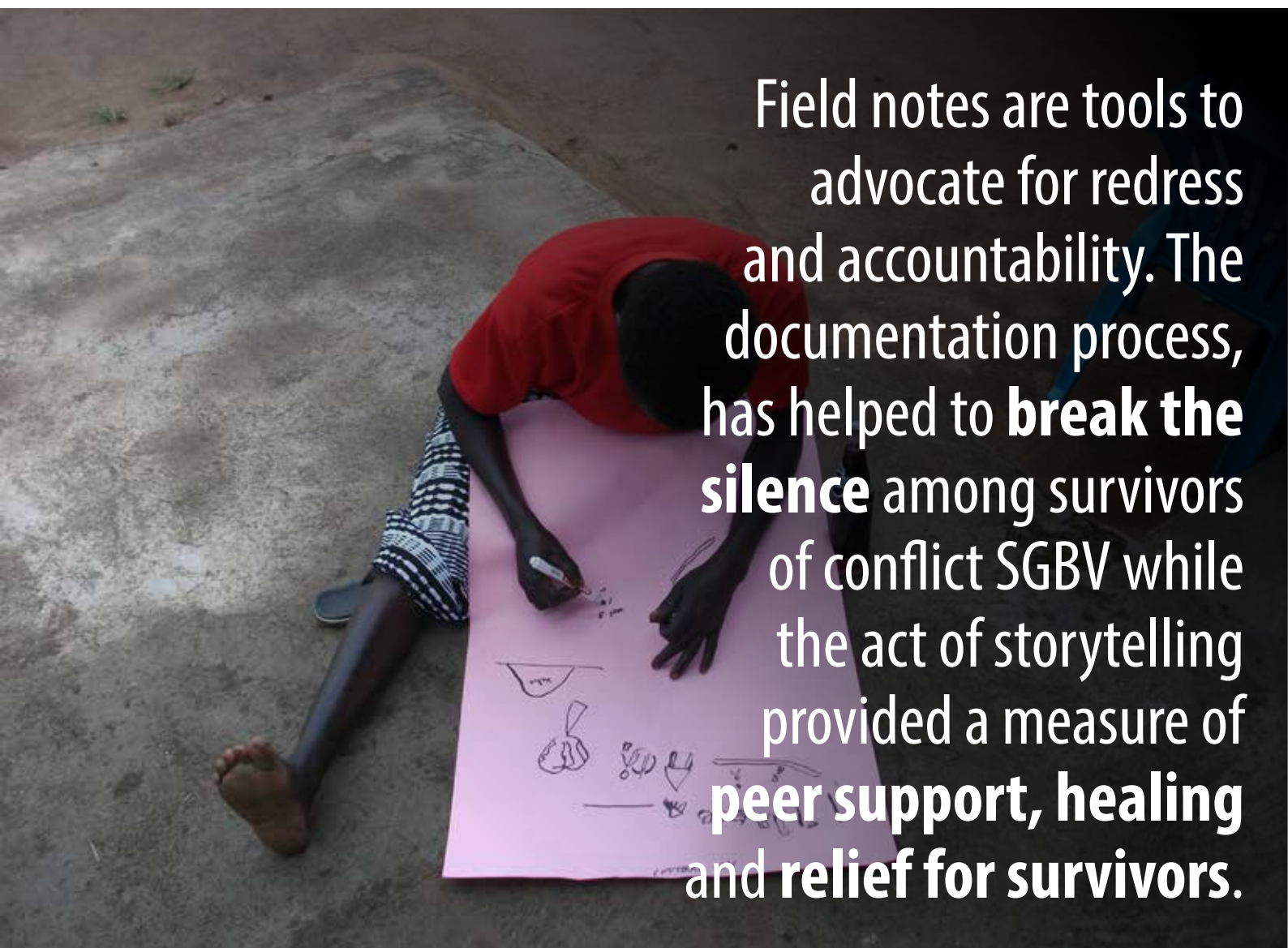
### Campaigning for the Right to Know

During the third quarter of 2015, we facilitated dialogues as part of a campaign aimed at documenting and promoting awareness of the plight of missing persons and the anguish of their families through a campaign called **‘the Right to Know’**.

In August, we organised consultative meetings with civil society organisations in Lango, Teso

and Acholi sub-regions respectively with the aim of forming a consortium to support the campaign. We also conducted community outreach in **Lamogi sub-county in Amuru district** on 26 August to garner community support, **attended by 243 people** including families of the missing, traditional leaders and Local Councilors. During the community outreach, individual family members of missing persons spoke one-on-one with psychologists to help them in their wait for information about the fate of their missing loved ones.

To commemorate the International Day Against Enforced Disappearances on 30 August, we conducted a regional dialogue on **28th August** in **Lira town** to engage the public on how to address the legacy of disappearances in northern Uganda. A procession was held on the streets of Lira, followed by prayers and a candle lighting ceremony in the name of the missing. A panel of transitional justice practitioners from civil society as well as victim representatives from the four sub regions of Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile talked about the circumstances and impact of disappearances in northern Uganda. The panel also used the opportunity to demand



Field notes are tools to advocate for redress and accountability. The documentation process, has helped to **break the silence** among survivors of conflict SGBV while the act of storytelling provided a measure of **peer support, healing and relief for survivors.**

justice and to make recommendations for strategies on how to deal with issues of disappearance, which will be implemented in 2016.

### Engaging communities on their perceptions on Dominic Ongwen

Following the transfer of alleged Lord's Resistance Army commander Dominic Ongwen to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands, JRP sought to assess the views of two communities linked to Ongwen and the charges leveled against him. In March 2015, JRP conducted consultations in **Lukodi** and **Coorom** villages in Gulu and Amuru districts respectively during which community members shared their views on Dominic Ongwen, the ICC, accountability for international crimes, reparations and reconciliation.

In May, JRP launched a report on the views of community members titled '**Community perceptions on Dominic Ongwen**'. The report, a situational brief published on JRP's website, highlights community views on areas related to Dominic Ongwen's case and provides commu-

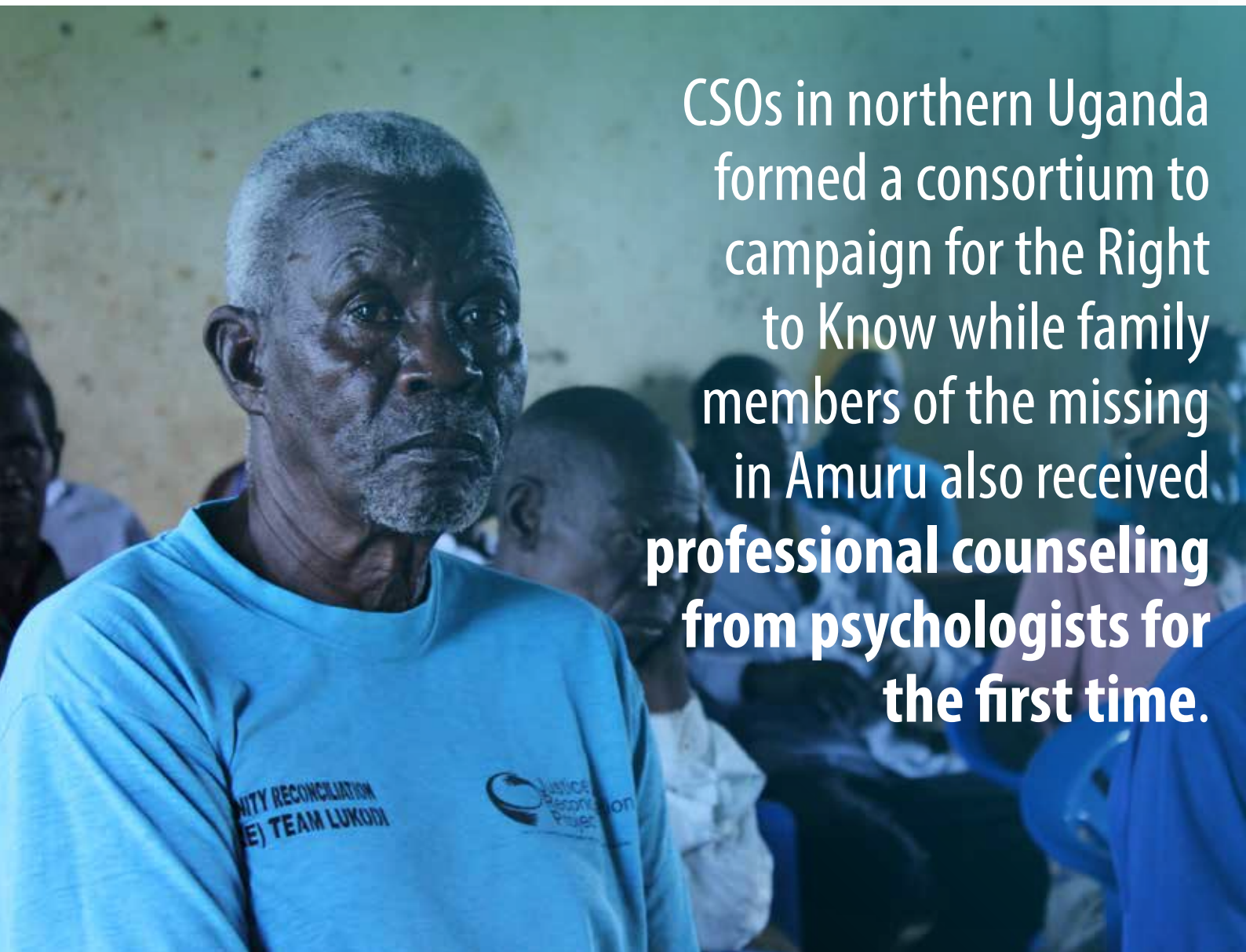
nity and civil society recommendations.

As a follow up to JRP's consultations with communities tied to Dominic Ongwen's case, JRP consulted with war-affected women on their views with assistance of the Women's Advocacy Network. The findings of these consultations will inform a report dealing with the perceptions and experiences of women in relation to the case and is slated for 2016.

### Investigating indicators of peace

The Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI) project is a three-year initiative of George Mason University (GMU), the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, and the University of Manchester. Its aim is to investigate alternative, bottom-up indicators of peace over time. JRP is one of four project partners in Uganda, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Colombia implementing the project in communities.

In June and July, JRP conducted a second round of EPI surveys in **Atiak, Kanyagoga** and **Kasubi** parishes in Gulu district; and **Odek** sub-county, Gulu.



CSOs in northern Uganda formed a consortium to campaign for the Right to Know while family members of the missing in Amuru also received professional counseling from psychologists for the first time.



# Supporting local initiatives for redress, healing and reconciliation

**Supporting local initiatives we believe will manifest in conflict-affected communities and individuals reporting increased attainment of redress, healing and reconciliation**, and contributing to the development and implementation of victim-centred justice and reconciliation initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.

## Joining communities to commemorate memorial days

This year, between May and July, with funding support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala and the USAID SAFE program, we supported the organising committees for commemoration prayers in **Atiak** (Amuru district), **Lukodi** (Gulu), **Parabongo** (Amuru), **Mukura** (Ngora), **Obalanga** (Amuria district), **Ombaci** (Arua) and **Namokora** (Kitgum) through technical and material support to their memorial events.

Over the last 2nd and 3rd quarter, we initiated an evaluation of these events in order to develop a community-based strategic plan for sustainable community's remembrance. In May and June, we met with the committees responsible for organising remembrance events in **Atiak**, **Lukodi**, **Obalanga** and **Mukura** to identify best practices and opportunities to raise funds to effectively organise memorials. Each of the various memorial committees developed a five year strategic plan which will be launched and adopted by local leaders and communities members for implementation.

## Supporting family tracing and reunification for children born of war

Many families in northern Uganda acknowledge that children should know and relate to their paternal lineage due to cultural and social norms that exist here. In 2015, JRP carried out **eight family-tracing and reunification processes** for children born in captivity (CBC) so as to provide the children with a sense of identity and belonging, and to reconcile relatives. In these processes maternal or paternal relatives of CBC were supported to travel for family meetings involving the other side.

Between April and September 2015, JRP worked with WAN to reunify and mediate discussion between maternal and paternal sides of CBC's families with the fathers, mothers and children in **Agago, Kitgum, Pader, Gulu and Oyam districts**. In some instances, the different sides were welcomed and opportunities were created to dialogue and clarify the circumstances of what happened in the past. In other instances, traditional welcoming and cleansing rituals, such as *nyono tong gweno* ('stepping on the egg'), were called for, organised and performed. In one case, the maternal relatives of one CBC used the opportunity to request fines and livestock to account for the children being born out of wedlock for upkeep and management of the children and for rituals and cleansing in terms of local cultural norms. JRP also worked with other partners, such as the Gulu Support the Children Center (GUSCO), to help resolve disputes involving CBC.

## Working with the Women's Advocacy Network

The Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) at JRP is a forum where more than 500 war-affected women come together to advocate for justice, acknowledgment and accountability for sexu-

al- and gender-based violations inflicted upon them during conflicts in northern Uganda. Founded by conflict-affected women in 2011, WAN is now comprised of 13 grassroots women's groups within the Acholi, Lango and West Nile sub-regions, it meets quarterly to discuss advocacy issues, work towards consensus and develop strategies to ensure that issues of contention are addressed.

In February 2015, WAN registered as a community-based organisation (CBO). It has a leadership structure comprising of an elected chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer and committee representatives from the different groups.

WAN receives funding from JRP and other partners to conduct storytelling, documentation, advocacy, and economic empowerment activities. Its member groups also maintain group savings and loan schemes that promote a savings culture and responsible borrowing practices.

From 17-18 November 2015, the WAN held its second annual general meeting at the **Comboni Animation Centre in Gulu**. The meeting was attended by **109 WAN members, 10 JRP staff and 3 guests, for a total of 121 participants**. The purpose of the meeting was for the 16 WAN groups to share updates on the past year and plan priorities for 2016. A training was also held on leadership and savings and loan schemes on day two. This activity was co-sponsored by RNE and the MacArthur Foundation.

In 2015, JRP also supported **three WAN leaders** in advancing their English proficiency through weekly English lessons in Gulu. Other continued learning was supported through referrals. As the WAN continues to grow, continued learning for members helps advance the network's advocacy and sustainability by building skills in reading, writing, typing, record-keeping, and partner engagement.

### Fostering regional reconciliation in Acholi and Lango

*Across Ethnic Boundaries* is a one year initiative that focuses on promoting community conflict memory and fostering reconciliation at community and regional level in northern Uganda's Lango and Acholi sub-regions. With support from USAID's Supporting Access to Justice, Fostering Equity and Peace project (SAFE), the project is a replication of best practices and learning from JRP's *Bearing Witness* project in 2014 which was focused on local truth telling and memory in Atiak sub-county, Amuru district.



Memorialisation allows communities acknowledgment of their conflict experiences, healing and reconciliation. During the launches of the monuments in Odek, Burcoro and Abia local government officials pledged to connect victims groups with government programmes and the Office of the President



This year we worked in seven sub-counties where widespread violation of human rights occurred - **Lukodi, Burcoro, Odek** in Gulu, **Parabongo** in Amuru, **Barlonyo** in Lira, **Abia** in Aleptong – and involved community members, local, traditional and religious leaders, as well as government officials in the process.

In April, we conducted a **baseline survey** to assess possibilities for regional reconciliation in Lango and Acholi.

As part of *Across Ethnic Boundaries*, we **formed seven Community Reconciliation (CORE) teams** consisting of members of each of the communities and conducted **two capacity building workshops** to enable them to facilitate community memory and reconciliation initiatives in their communities. CORE team members developed a memory plan on their own as a result of skills learned from the training and mobilised their respective community members to identify their ideal project to be implemented to memorialise their conflict experiences.

Based on this, we facilitated the implementation of **nine community-based memory projects** in the seven communities between July and December 2015. The projects were implemented by the CORE teams in collaboration with victims of conflict in their respective communities, with monitoring and evaluation done by JRP.

Through the year, a monument and murals depicting conflict events in Abia was completed, the monument in **Barlonyo** was fenced and beautified, and monuments in Odek, Burcoro and Parabongo were built. In Atiak, a list of people killed in the 1995 massacre was collected, verified, engraved and placed on the monument there while in Lukodi, a conflict memory book was written by community members.

Following the completion of the projects, we supported **the launch of the monuments in Odek, Burcoro and Abia** to officially unveil the monuments constructed at the three sites and to connect local leaders with the communities to allow them to provide social and material support to boost their recovery process.

Also as part of the memory project, we facilitated the Atiak CORE team to **conduct community outreach** to sensitise community members on the role of memorialisation in post conflict reconstruction. They organised eight outreach activities in September in **eight parishes in Atiak with 630 attendees**. Awareness was created to the community on roles of memory in post conflict reconstruction and because of this, community members supported



the CORE team members in collecting list of those killed in Atiak massacre of 1995. Victims groups have also embarked on routine maintenance of Atiak memory site.

In May and June, we conducted seven community dialogues and grassroots experience sharing meetings in the seven communities. The seven dialogue meetings were attended by **643** participants, with **271 male and 372 female** in attendance.

In June, we trained **48 traditional and religious leaders from Acholi and Lango** sub regions on **transitional justice processes** on how to promote locally sensitive mechanisms for justice and reconciliation.

In August, we organised a dialogue in **Lira** with **39 religious and cultural leaders from Acholi and Lango** to discuss obstacles to regional reconciliation and to brainstorm ideas on how to deal with the legacy of broken social fabrics in northern Uganda. Following this, we **conducted two stakeholders' dialogues** in **Gulu and Lira districts** for Acholi and Lango sub regions respectively in October to discuss a strategic action plan and strategies that was developed during the inter-cultural/religious leaders' dialogue in August.

We facilitated **two exchange, learning and solidarity visits** for victims of conflict in Acholi and Lango sub regions to connect victims of war across the regions and build social cohesion and foster reconciliation. The first exchange was hosted in **Gulu in Acholi sub region** on **29 and 30 July** and involved a dialogue on the role of formal justice mechanisms with **transitional justice practitioners from civil society, representatives of the ICC, religious and traditional leaders** participating in a panel discussion. There were also site visits to five memorial sites in Acholi sub region attended **by 65 participants from seven communities**.

The second exchange was hosted in **Lango sub region** on **29 and 30 September** and was attended by **61 victims' representative from Acholi and Lango** sub regions. During the exchanges, victims' representatives engaged with local government officials on how to access local government program to aid recovery process of victims of conflict. There were also **site visits** to Barlonyo and Abia memorial sites and to the paramount chief of Lango chiefdom.



Exchange visits between Lango and Acholi helped clarify misconceptions about the war and changes of attitude towards the other ethnic groups. During the exchanges, a **combined victim's task force to work together for justice** was proposed, and participants **learned skills from one another.**

# Promoting gender- and age-inclusive approaches to transitional justice

**We believe that gender- and age-inclusive approaches to transitional justice and service delivery will result in participating community members reporting that TJ programmes and services they access are more gender- and age-inclusive,** and thereafter in the development and implementation of victim-centred justice and reconciliation initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace in Uganda and the GLR.

## Creating gender- and age-sensitive policies and programmes

On 28 July 2015, the JRP's Gender Justice Unit organised a day training on gender- and age-mainstreaming for JRP staff facilitated by Ms. Teddy Atim of the Feinstein Center at Tufts University. The purpose of the meeting was to build JRP's capacity in gender- and age-mainstreaming. The workshop explored key concepts regarding gender and age such as gender equality and mainstreaming. It was agreed that a gender task force would be formed to review JRP reports for mainstreaming and to develop a checklist for activities. A follow-up workshop is planned for early 2016. This workshop increased staff knowledge on best practices and principles in gender- and age-mainstreaming, which shall improve the quality of their work.

## Ensuring redress for SGBV on conflict-related wrongs

In March 2014, JRP received generous support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur

Foundation to implement a three-year project titled, "**Redress for Sexual- and Gender-Based Violence on Conflict-Related Wrongs**" to promote the reintegration of victims of SGBV in their communities in northern Uganda. The project was developed to ensure that gender issues are woven into the fabric of TJ in Uganda at the earliest possible stage, believing this will ensure the development and implementation of TJ mechanisms that are responsive to gender concerns. To do this, JRP and the WAN engage survivors, communities, opinion leaders and policy-makers on the experiences of SGBV survivors, how to respond to SGBV in their spheres of influence, and how support efforts to combat stigmatisation and marginalisation of SGBV survivors.

In the first quarter, JRP embarked on a process to document individual stories and narratives of WAN members in **Adjumani, Pader and Lira** on redress for sexual- and gender-based violations following the project's baseline findings that found few of the women had sought or received redress for their experiences due to limited avenues for reporting and ongoing revictimisation.

**Four members** from each of the groups in **Dzaipi, Agweng and Atanga sub-counties** were identified to participate in the exercise following group-wide storytelling sessions that occurred in March and April 2015. They were selected based on their past experiences in order to capture varied personal experiences. Between March and April, a mixed-method approach of focus group discussions and individual interviews was used at the preference of the women and follow-up visits were made October.

In March, we conducted experience-sharing and healing sessions with WAN members in **Dzaipi, Agweng, Atanga** who were invited to share their experiences of seeking redress for the SGBV they experienced to inform the afore-

mentioned publication to be released early next year. From the sessions, we identified psychosocial support for alcohol and drug abuse and trauma as areas for referral.

In July and October we also conducted storytelling with groups in **Arinyapi, Aromo and Acholibur**, where WAN members from long-standing groups in Gulu town also participated, offering peer support and taking the lead in conducting the sessions. The sessions aimed at breaking the silence around SGBV issues and to promote healing and confidence-building among the participants. Storytelling and body maps were used to facilitate the discussion. During the exercise, the participants also discussed issues that they wished to discuss the following day during dialogues with their community leaders.

Based on last year's consultations on children born of war (CBW), JRP released a situational brief, ***Alone Like a Tree: Reintegration Challenges Facing Children Born of War and Their Mothers in Northern Uganda*** on the Day of the African Child on **16 June 2015**. The briefing points out the redress challenges and needs of CBW and their mothers.

In addition, in 2015, the JRP carried out consultations on engaging men in redress for conflict SGBV following feedback about interest in the project by men and findings that close male relatives and community members are often perpetrators of revictimisation in the lives of female survivors of conflict SGBV. The consultation aimed to better understand gender roles and relations in the communities in which we work, the experiences of men and boys during and as a result of the conflicts in northern Uganda, how to engage men in redress for conflict SGBV, and what men's perceptions of JRP and the WAN are.

In March, JRP supported survivors of conflict SGBV to **form three new groups under the WAN** in **Arinyapi** sub-county in Adjumani district, **Aromo** sub-county in Lira district, and **Acholibur** sub-county in Pader district. The groups have also been supported to register in their sub-counties to be recognized and eligible to receive government support.

In May, **202 WAN members** in newly-formed groups in **Arinyapi, Adjumani district; Acholibur, Pader district and Aromo, Lira district**, benefited from trainings on leadership, net-

Dialoguing with local councilors, sub-county chiefs, community development officers and cultural and traditional leaders enabled leaders to **hear firsthand from survivors** on the challenges they experience in the communities.



working and advocacy to create a foundation to support their future advocacy and outreach. Also in May, members of the new groups benefited from trainings on how to respond to SGBV in the communities. The trainings sought to equip SGBV survivors with knowledge about the existing frameworks and interventions in place to respond to SGBV. Community development officers (CDOs) in each of the areas facilitated the trainings using a UN training manual as a guide. Topics covered included: the meaning of gender, SGBV, power and use of force and how they relate to SGBV; cycles of violence; causes and consequences of violence; health and safety needs after SGBV; and responding to survivors of violence.


In October, we organised dialogues between war-affected women and community stakeholders in **Arinyapi, Aromo and Acholibur**. The objective of holding the dialogues was to undertake survivor-led engagement between the group members and their leaders. During the dialogues, survivors shared the revictimisation challenges they face, and the leaders deliberated on ways in which the challenges facing the survivors can be minimised.

In September JRP conducted a training in **Gulu** on community theatre for **all 16 WAN groups** to strengthen survivor networks and prepare them for community engagement using theatre in a bid to address their challenges like stigma and other socially related problems. The areas covered included overview and importance of theatre, theatre as a way of healing and reconciliation, developing skills for advocacy using theatre, documentation of theatre processes, publicising the theatre, planning logistics and lobbying for support. Participants were also trained on how to plan for community theatre performances. This covered areas like sharing and analysing each other's stories, creating theatre performances, directing and rehearsing performances, mapping resources for the theatre activity, conducting theatre performances and evaluating theatre performances. Following this, the three new WAN groups utilised this knowledge in the community dialogues that took place in October 2015 by performing a drama before their communities.

To support its members, WAN leaders have been holding **periodic meetings** with the WAN groups and specific categories of women. This includes quarterly meetings, the WAN AGM and WAN chairperson visits to groups. In 2015, **16 meetings** took place to, among others, plan the way forward for the gender-just reparations campaign; address challenges arising in the groups; assess views on justice, redress and reconciliation; and preparing to open a bank account for WAN.

Periodic meetings strengthen the WAN by reconnecting its members to one another and the vision of the network. They also build the capacity of the groups in leadership and enable **joint planning of activities and advocacy strategies.**





Trainings conducted by sub-county resource persons strengthened connections between the groups and their local leaders, which will help them access other resources in the future.

In the course of its work, the JRP often identifies survivors of SGBV whose needs are outside the mandate of JRP. In order to facilitate holistic support, the GJU refers such persons to partners in civil society and government. In 2015, an estimated **255 people** were referred to organisations such as **FIDA Uganda** for strategic litigation; **RLP**, for its ongoing medical support program for victims suffering from the remains of bullets and shrapnel in their bodies, and gynaecological complications as a result of rape; **African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET)**, also for medical rehabilitation; **Afrinspire**, a UK based charity for adult literacy lessons and grants for income generating activities; **Sinfa**, for computer literacy programmes; **local governments** for CDD grants; the **Centre for Reparations and Rehabilitation (CRR)** for legal support to war-affected persons; and **GWED-G** for medical support for land-mine survivors.

### [Increasing redress for female victims of SGBV in northern Uganda through economic empowerment](#)

In 2015, the WAN at JRP implemented a one-year project supported by Uganda Fund. The project, titled “**Increasing Redress for Female Victims of SGBV in Northern Uganda through Economic Empowerment**,” supported WAN groups in **Gulu, Pader, Adjumani, and Lira districts** in activities which increased their economic opportunities to meet basic needs, improved their knowledge of vocational practices to improve livelihoods, and contributed to their agency to plan for the future.

During the process, **five WAN groups** in **Awach sub-county (Gulu), Ongako (Gulu), Dzaiipi (Adjumani), Atanga (Pader) and Agweng (Lira)**, were supported with start-up capital to implement income-generating activities (IGAs). The groups elected to focus on agriculture, goat-rearing and/or a grinding mill as their activities. Items procured include: goats, hoes, seeds and pangas, an ox-plough, and oxen, among others. Through the IGAs, the groups were able to economically empower their members. Profits from the activities have been invested into future IGAs and divided among group members to increase household income.

From 9 to 11 March 2015, the WAN facilitated **five vocational skills trainings with 174 female victims** of SGBV in the project’s five participating groups. The trainings were conducted **with the technical support of sub-county resource persons**, who were identified during the baseline activities. The training was purposefully implemented prior to the group receiving their IGA materials, so that the new knowledge they obtained could be put to use during all stages of implementing their IGAs

On 28 September 2015, a sum of **530,000 shillings** was deposited into the bank accounts of each of the **five participating groups** to support their revolving loan and savings schemes. This support and members’ participation in the scheme shall enable them to better plan for their futures and meet their basic needs. In July and August, we facilitated financial management trainings with the groups with **163 WAN members** participating.



# Enhancing JRP's institutional capacity

**We seek to enhance the institutional capacity of JRP to maximise programme delivery and promote sustainability**

through establishing a permanent office premises securing future funding and increasing confidence and capacity of the organisation to carry out its mission, and thereby contributing to the development and implementation of victim-centred justice and reconciliation initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace in Uganda and the GLR.

## Monitoring and evaluation

In 2015 we conducted a survey across Uganda to establish baseline data for indicators set under JRP's 2015-2020 strategic plan. After five months of planning, design and implementation the survey was finally concluded in July. As part of the process, interviews with civil society, community members, government and JRP staff were conducted in **Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile sub-regions**.

Similarly, monitoring and evaluation was conducted for individual projects to ascertain achievements, impact, best practices, and lessons learned. With the USAID SAFE funded *Across Ethnic Boundaries* project, this was done by an independent consultant, while the *Increasing redress for female victims of SGBV* project benefited from planning visits, a project baseline survey, mid- and end of project surveys, as well as monitoring visits by project partners Uganda Fund and the WAN.

As of the end of July, a total of **131 interviews were conducted across Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile sub-regions** as part of a baseline survey to inform JRP's future work and ensure the development and implementation of victim-centred justice and reconciliation.

### Online insights and metrics

In 2015, JRP's website **justiceandreconciliation.com** continued to be a resource for information about transitional justice, redress, healing and reconciliation in Uganda and Africa's Great Lakes region. This year it received **29,664 page views** (an increase by **26%** from 2014's 23,549), with **10,145 users** (an increase by **35%** from 2014's 7,527) engaging with the site for **15,551 sessions**. Out of these 15,551 sessions **40% were by users in Uganda**, followed by the **United States with 17%**, the **United Kingdom with 5%** while others included **Indonesia 3%**, **Kenya** and **South Africa with 2%** of our visits.

Page views increased by **25.97%** (29,664 vs 23,549) while the number of visitors increased by **34.78%** (10,145 vs 7,527),

The most viewed JRP's publications in 2015 online:

	Page Title	Year	Views
1	Community Perceptions on Dominic Ongwen	2015	341
2	Alone Like A Tree: Reintegration Challenges Facing Children Born of War and Their Mothers in Northern Uganda	2015	324
3	The Lukodi Massacre: 19th May 2004, FN XIII	2011	217
4	My Body, A Battlefield: Survivors' Experiences of Conflict Sexual Violence in Koch Ongako	2015	169
5	Forgotten Victims: Recounting Atrocities Committed in Odek Sub-County by the LRA and NRA	2014	155
6	Complicating Victims and Perpetrators in Uganda: On Dominic Ongwen, FN VII	2008	154
7	We Are All The Same: Experiences of children born into LRA captivity	2015	142
8	Voices Magazine – 10 years of justice and reconciliation	2015	124
9	2014 Annual Report	2015	120
10	The Mukura Massacre of 1989, FN XII	2011	118

We also launched a special webpage for *Voices* at **voices.justiceandreconciliation.com** which archives all older issues. In 2015, the new website received **4,919** individual page views with **1,130** visitors.

#### Social media

At the close of 2015, JRP's followers on **Twitter** increased by 63% with **852 followers** (2014 had 521) and followed **500 accounts** with **758 tweets** on its **twitter** account (@JRP\_Uganda).

JRP's **Facebook** page's followers **increased by 47%** with **1,063 followers** compared to 2014's 724

On **SoundCloud**, JRP had **204** plays of two tracks (as





compared to the 165 in 2014). These were the song *Anino Ku (I Don't Sleep)*, recording by the Families of the Missing Group as part of the Right to Know campaign, and a new podcast talking about transitional justice. We also had 25 downloads of the audio posted on the page.

JRP's new **LinkedIn** page attracted **53 followers**.

At the close of 2015, JRP's e-newsletter had a circulation of **1876 contacts**.

### Board of Directors

Michael Otim, Margaret Ajok, Tonny Komakech and Innocent Aloyo.

### Staff, interns and volunteers

#### Administration

Boniface Ojok, Interim Head of Office

Eunice Lawino, Finance Consultant

Harriet Apoko Lakwo, Admin and Human Resources Assistant

Patrick Odong, Program Driver and Logistics Assistant

Paul Olanya, Program Driver

Andrew Manirakiza, Finance Assistant

Irene Aber, Office Assistant

David Oloya, Office Assistant

#### Communications and Advocacy

Oryem Nyeko, Team Leader

Harriet Aloyocan, Research Assistant

Calvine Kilama, Volunteer

#### Community Mobilisation

Isaac Okwir Odiya, Team Leader

Grace Acan, Project Assistant

Joyce Abalo, Project Assistant

Shilpi Shabdita, Intern

#### Gender Justice

Lindsay McClain Opiyo, Team Leader

Nancy Apiyo, Project Officer

Claire Kahunde, Project Officer

Victoria Nyanjura, Project Assistant

Evelyn Amony, Project Assistant

Docus Atyeno, Project Assistant

Christine Sumog-oy, Intern

Vincent Komakech, Project Manager, Civil Works

### Financial income and expenditure

INCOME FOR THE YEAR	
Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE)	1,199,051,800
Uganda Fund (UF)	61,417,020
MacArthur Foundation (MAC)	299,000,000
Every Day Peace Indicator (EPI)	23,735,100
ICTJ	31,152,000
SAFE	296,610,442
Total Grants	1,910,966,362
EXPENDITURE / TOTAL EXPENSES	1,615,853,155





Thank you!



# Appendices

## 2015 publications

### Field notes

My Body, A Battlefield: Survivors experiences of conflict sexual violence in Koch Ongako, JRP Field Note 22, November 2015

We Are All the Same: Experiences of children born into LRA captivity, JRP Field Note 23, December 2015

### Situational briefs

Community perceptions on Dominic Ongwen

Alone Like A Tree: Reintegration challenges facing children born of war and their mothers in northern Uganda

### Policy briefs

Addressing the Unredressed – Gaps and opportunities for affirmative action for war-affected women within local government programmes in northern Uganda

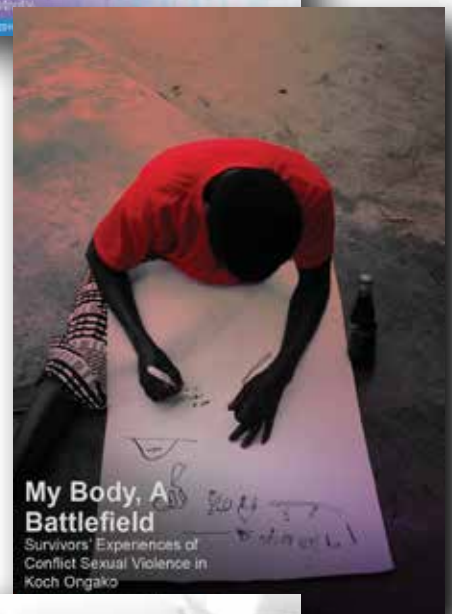
### Magazines

Voices issues 9 and 10

## Geographical scope

In 2015, JRP worked in the following areas (District, sub-county)

- **Adjumani** – Arinyapi and Dzaipi
- **Agago** – Lukole, Odoko Mit and Parabongo
- **Aleptong** – Abia
- **Amuria** – Obalanga
- **Amuru** – Atiak, Lamogi and Coorom
- **Arua** – Arua, Ombaci
- **Gulu** – Awach (Burcoro), Bungatira (Lukodi), Gulu (Kanyagoga, Kasubi), Koch Ongako, Odek, Pabbo and Palaro
- **Kampala**
- **Kitgum** – Namokora



- **Lira** – Agweng (Barlonyo), Aromo, Lira
- **Ngora** – Mukura
- **Nwoya** – Alero
- **Oyam**
- **Pader** – Acholibur, Atanga, Pader, Pajule
- **Soroti** - Soroti
- **Yumbe** – Romogi

### Community, victim and survivor groups

**Okanyo Can Victims Group**, Barlonyo, Agweng sub county, Lira district

**Abia Massacre Survivors Association**, Abia sub-county, Aleptong district

**1991 Burcoro Military Operation Victims Association**, Awach sub-county, Gulu district

**Kica Ber Victims Group**, Odek sub-county, Gulu district

**Lukodi Memorial Site Committee**, Bungatira sub county, Gulu district

**Parabongo LRA Massacre Association**, Lamogi sub-county, Amuru district

**Namokora United Relatives of the Massacred and Survivors Association**, Namokora sub-county, Kitgum district

**Mukura Memorial Development Initiative**, Mukura sub-county, Ngora district

**Ombaci Massacre War Victims Association**, Ombaci sub-county, Arua district

**Atiak Victims Forum**, a combination of six victims groups in Atiak sub-county, Amuru district

**Obalanga Women victims group**, Obalanga sub county, Amuria district

### Social media properties

Facebook - <http://facebook.com/justiceandreconciliation>

Twitter - [http://twitter.com/JRP\\_Uganda](http://twitter.com/JRP_Uganda) and <http://twitter.com/VoicesJRP>

SoundCloud - <http://soundcloud.com/justiceandreconciliation>

Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/JRPUganda>

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/justice-and-reconciliation-project>

Flickr - [https://www.flickr.com/photos/jrp\\_uganda/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/jrp_uganda/)

**Justice and Reconciliation Project**  
Policy Brief No. 8, September 2015

**Addressing the Unredressed**  
Gaps and opportunities for affirmative action for war-affected women within local government programmes and services in northern Uganda

**Introduction**

On 18 September 2015, the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) at the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) convened a round-table meeting between 24 local government officials and 16 WAN members. The purpose of the meeting was to explore opportunities for war-affected women to benefit from existing and proposed government programmes as an interim measure for redress for conflict-related wrongs they experienced during northern Uganda's long-standing conflict. The meeting was attended by sub-county chiefs, community development officers (CDOs), district community development officers (DCDOs), chief administrative officers (CAOs) and district speakers from Adjumani district in the West Nile sub-region; Gulu, Amuru, Pader and Nwoya districts in Acholi sub-region; and Lira district in Lango sub-region.

The meeting was supported with funding from the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), through a grant from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women as well as the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE), Kampala. The objectives of the meeting were to share findings of a recent needs assessment survey conducted by JRP to explore opportunities for war-affected women under current and proposed government programmes, and to facilitate discussion between war-affected women and their leaders on matters of justice, reconciliation and redress.

The following policy brief draws upon the discussions and recommendations that emerged from the meeting and seeks to inform local governments across Uganda on the avenues through which they can work with their existing structures to better meet the unredressed justice needs of war-affected women through targeted development initiatives. It is divided into four sections: a background on transitional justice (TJ) including the main structural programmes in the country, conflict sexual violence and the advocacy of the WAN at JRP; the needs and challenges facing war-affected women in northern Uganda; gaps, challenges and opportunities for local government. In its concluding section, the brief presents specific recommendations made by the communities JRP consulted with for the ICC, the Ugandan government and other actors to take into consideration.



**Justice and Reconciliation Project**  
Working for justice and reconciliation with grassroots communities

**2014 Annual Report**

### Community Perceptions on Dominic Ongwen

Situational Brief, May 2015  
Written by Deyem Nyeko and Harriet Aloyocan

**Justice and Reconciliation Project**

**Community Perceptions on Dominic Ongwen**  
Situational Brief, May 2015  
Written by Deyem Nyeko and Harriet Aloyocan

**Introduction**

Following the surrender and transfer of Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) commander Dominic Ongwen to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) sought to assess the views of northern Ugandans on both Ongwen and international justice. A rapid assessment survey was carried out in the village in which Ongwen's charges at the ICC stem from, Lukodi, his home village of Coorom and with civil society in Gulu during March 2015. The information gathered from the study informs this situational brief by highlighting the perceptions of respondents towards three key areas related to Dominic Ongwen's potential trial at the ICC: Dominic Ongwen himself, a trial of Ongwen should it happen, and accountability for international crimes. In its concluding section, the brief presents specific recommendations made by the communities JRP consulted with for the ICC, the Ugandan government and other actors to take into consideration.

**Note on methodology**

In March 2015, two separate focus group discussions of 30 and 14 people were held with community members in Lukodi village, Bungatira sub-county, in Gulu district, and Coorom village, Lamogi sub-county, Amuru district respectively. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with four Gulu-based human rights organisations working in the field of transitional justice, summing a total of 60 respondents. Community-based respondents were asked open-ended questions based on the three areas the study sought to assess: first, their thoughts on Ongwen, including whether he should be tried by the ICC and what feelings they harbour to the ICC charges against him; their views on a possible trial of Ongwen, including what their expectations are for participation and what their main sources of information about the process are; and finally, their views on accountability for international crimes. Respondents from three civil society organisations' were asked to share their views on Ongwen's potential trial, the impact of such a trial to their target communities and beneficiaries, the charges levelled against Ongwen, and the context of the proceedings in transitional justice in Uganda. They were also asked to provide recommendations for victim participation in the Ongwen proceedings.

"If I am told to point him out, I will do that."  
Male respondent, focus group discussion, Lukodi

**On Dominic Ongwen**  
**Responsibility and culpability**

During the focus group discussion in Lukodi, JRP spoke with individuals that were survivors of or that had lost family members during the Lukodi massacre of 2004. Many of the respondents spoke of the proceedings against Dominic Ongwen as an opportunity for accountability for what happened then.

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The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) was established to understand and explain the interests, needs, concerns and views of communities affected by conflict and to promote sustainable peace through the active involvement of war-affected communities in research and advocacy.

© JRP Situational Brief, May 2015

## ***Objectives***

Transitional justice policies and processes are informed by the experiences and needs of conflict-affected populations in Uganda and the Great Lakes Region

Local initiatives for redress, healing and reconciliation are supported for conflict-affected communities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region

Gender- and age-inclusive transitional justice programme development and service delivery are promoted

The institutional capacity of JRP is enhanced to maximise programme delivery and sustainability

## ***Vision***

Envisioning a just and peaceful society

## ***Mission***

Empower conflict-affected communities to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation

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