

Gender Equality For All

Towards A More Comprehensive Approach to Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence



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A Report Based on a Consultative Dialogue with Stakeholders in Northern Uganda on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

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

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Acronyms

CBW	Children Born of War
CSO	Civil Society
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GoU	Government of Uganda
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICD	International Crimes Division
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector
JRP	Justice and Reconciliation Project
LC	Local Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
RLP	Refugee Law Project
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
TJ	Transitional Justice
WAN	Women's Advocacy Network

Executive Summary

The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) was established with a mandate to ensure that the voices, needs and concerns of the marginalised groups of people affected by conflict in Uganda and the Great Lakes region are brought to the attention of stakeholders and policy makers.

This report is a result of a consultative dialogue between JRP, its partners and stakeholders. It focuses on the complex spectrum of conflict-related violence that continues to affect marginalised victims and survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Uganda.

We acknowledge that, albeit its importance, the dearth of initiatives on SGBV calls for an increase in interventions on conflict related SGBV in northern Uganda. The report argues that violence in general is intertwined with structural impediments that continue to pervasively affect societies in Northern Uganda long after the conflict ended. Inherently the continued prevalence of SGBV is a result of inequality that exists due to unequal power relations between men and women in matters such as land ownership, decision-making and community leadership, among others. Added to this is the importance of acknowledging that the widespread effects of rape and other forms of sexual violence such as forced marriage often result into unwanted pregnancies and children which leaves the majority of women suffering. Among young women who have returned from LRA captivity, the report also looks at the phenomenon of Children Born of War (CBW) whose needs and aspirations are often rarely factored into research and policy.

This report is a result of a series of consultations with stakeholders to disseminate the results of research findings based on fieldwork that JRP undertook over the past two years with funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. It incorporates the workshop deliberations in Lira, Gulu and Adjumani, outlining some of the critical steps necessary in SGBV programming for women, men and CBW as a result of the LRA conflict in Northern Uganda. Part of the vision that is critical for renewed programming is laid out at the end of the report that largely points out that women, men and children should co-exist in mutually empowering relationships; where all are valued as equal and active players in transformative gender relations emanating from social, cultural and economical barriers in society.

Key areas for programming

After engaging participants over three separate days, the following key areas for programming on SGBV were identified:

Embracing new dimensions on victimhood:

Participants noted that everyone irrespective of sex or age can become a victim of SGBV. During conflict times, men too have become targets of SGBV, although the incidence remains prevalent among women and girls in Northern Uganda. More often than not, the mention of SGBV during conflict evokes images of women raped, but not the child born as a result of that rape. In terms of programming, children too must be seen as primary victims of rape, there is a chance that they shall be left out.

Coordination among stakeholders: It is vital to build synergies with other stakeholders, as this would eliminate the disconnect between the various aspects of programming. In particular, coordination is crucial between aspects such as redress for SGBV and others like humanitarian assistance and national/regional development; education; and health. In this way it is possible to identify linkages that are important for subsequent programming and how one programme can make a contribution to others.

Multi-sectoral response: There is need to embark on a multi-sectoral approach by ensuring that all partners play a role in prevention and response of SGBV in order to address unequal power relations that exacerbate violence and entrenches aspects of vulnerability for women, men and children. The multi-sectoral model calls for a holistic inter-organisational and inter-agency effort that promotes participation of all persons concerned and coordination across sectors, including (but not limited to) health, psychosocial, legal/justice and security.

Comprehensive and long-term response to violence:

The importance of looking at the bigger picture of violence in Uganda and capturing its entire spectrum was emphasised. This would ensure that the exclusive focus on SGBV does not reinforce the perspective of women as victims, but also looks at the history, dimensions and manifestations of the conflict that spanned from pre-colonial times and was entrenched along racial and regional lines by successive regimes during periods following independence. This therefore calls for prioritising long-term approaches to address the root causes of conflict through a gendered lens.

Capacity building, empowerment and sensitisation:

These are crucial avenues to ensure that the right human resources and expertise in dealing with SGBV

are available; the local population is well informed to be able to challenge unequal power relations; and that crimes related to gender are openly acknowledged and taken on by society in order to avoid re-victimisation. This would go a long way in ensuring there is collective action at the community level as opposed to continuous dependence on outside support.

Participation and local ownership: It is important to realise that violence usually occurs within a cultural space. It is within these spaces that we need to articulate the needs of victims and survivors. Redress for SGBV should therefore avoid top-down models of programming such that planning, design and implementation resonate with local communities, ensuring that their practices and perceptions are taken into account without reinforcing the cultural identities of men as superior beings. It is also important to integrate programming in ways that are more inclusive and broader taking into consideration the gender perspective of the roles of men and women.





Introduction

Three consultative dialogues on conflict-related SGBV in Northern Uganda were organised in Acholi, Lango and West Nile regions from 8th to 13th September 2016. The events held in Lira, Gulu and Adjumani towns brought together over 120 stakeholders with experience engaging in issues of transitional justice (TJ), especially the aspect of SGBV in Northern Uganda. They included: members of the Women Advocacy Network (WAN), community survivor-based groups, cultural leaders, community based organisations, local government leaders, NGO leaders and other members of the civil society including TJ experts, religious leaders and the media representatives.

This report highlights the key outcomes from the dialogues in which findings from the field were shared. Over the past two years JRP researchers were on the ground within the communities documenting SGBV-related issues under a project supported by MacArthur Foundation. The JRP project was being implemented in Acholi, Lango and West Nile sub regions of Northern Uganda. From the consultative dialogues, important insights emerged, which would be useful for civil

society and other stakeholders in Northern Uganda in implementing SGBV programmes. Even if many of the key outcomes were not new to SGBV programming in Uganda, the results lay a foundation for subsequent future engagements at the organisational level.

Based on the reflections from the dialogue, this report ultimately highlights key proposals for future programming. It is therefore a step in the direction of informing JRP and its partners on the outcomes of the consultation as well as outline the recommendations advanced for best practices.

Background on the Redress for Conflict-SGBV project

JRP has been implementing a three-year project referred to as 'Redress for SGBV on Conflict Related Wrongs'. Started in 2014, the project was initiated to support TJ efforts of survivors of conflict related sexual and gender-based violence in Northern Uganda. This was in recognition of the fact that SGBV remains one of the most rampant and yet less debated aspects of

transitional justice in Northern Uganda. It was funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation under four objectives:

- To undertake community based documentation on SGBV in order to promote advocacy at various levels;
- To strengthen grassroots women survivors to respond to SGBV at community level;
- To undertake survivor led engagements at community levels; and
- To create a platform for advocacy, networking, referral and information sharing.

The local judicial tribunal – the International Crimes Division (ICD) has recently recognised SGBV as an important aspect of the trials for war crimes committed in Uganda, which is a positive step towards providing redress for former young mothers who continue to monitor with interest the outcomes of criminal prosecutions in Uganda. A 2014 petition by JRP’s Women Advocacy Network (WAN) to Uganda’s Parliament indicates that violations that affected women during the conflict still continues to subject them into situations of vulnerability given the absence of concrete measures for redress by government of Uganda

JRP believes that incorporation of SGBV into accountability mechanisms is crucial and that there is need to engage communities on the rights of SGBV victims. Through WAN, JRP has given a voice to victims of SGBV through community dialogues, engagement with local leaders and advocacy theatre in community spaces. Ultimately this should lead to a national level commitment to accountability for widespread and systematic SGBV.

The project has so far enhanced the capacity of female survivors of conflict to form and develop a network through WAN where they can form a critical mass for survivor-led advocacy at the local level. The project continues to offer a one-stop opportunity for victims of SGBV spurring them as advocates for change. At the same time, it is providing community space to engage with local leaders, youths and elders in order to build networks; erase stigma; and discuss challenges and opportunities for justice and reconciliation.

Methodology and purpose of the consultative dialogues

The consultative dialogues discussed some of the critical findings compiled in four reports focusing on women’s agency in addressing SGBV victimisation; engaging men and boys in redress for conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda; and reintegration challenges facing Children Born of War (CBW) and their mothers in Northern Uganda.

The reports offered significant insights into aspects of SGBV that had not been documented before in Northern Uganda. They were used as a precursor for stakeholders to begin to rethink some of the current programming on matters related to SGBV that are

“The incorporation of SGBV into accountability mechanisms is crucial and there is need to engage communities on the rights of SGBV victims.”

conflict-related, particularly those involving survivors of sexual violence committed as a result of the conflict between the LRA and the Uganda Government. The discussions were facilitated by resource persons and moderated by a consultant. Testimonies were given by survivors of SGBV as well as CBW, and expert views shared by focal persons at the civil society level.

During the second half of the dialogues, participants split into groups to discuss respective questions that arose during the plenary debates; which in the end gave more insights into the findings as well as roadmap for future programming on SGBV in Northern Uganda.

More specifically the objectives of the dialogue were to:

- Reflect on research findings from four reports related to SGBV and children born of war in Northern Uganda;
- Deliberate on how these findings can help shape current programming on SGBV in order to re-think on best way forward to address the issue of conflict-related SGBV in Northern Uganda;
- Inform TJ policy processes at the local district and national levels, especially how this can support the efforts by the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) actors in Uganda; and
- Come up with a report that can inform next steps for JRP work on SGBV.

A keynote address was presented on: National and local processes on TJ in Uganda which highlighted policy updates on TJ and opportunities for redress. There were three panel presentations and discussions based on the key areas of focus namely:

- Redress for survivors of conflict-SGBV: Women’s agency in addressing SGBV re-victimisation
- Engaging men and boys in redress for conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda
- Reintegration challenges facing Children Born of War and their mothers in Northern Uganda.

Dialogue discussions on redress for conflict-SGBV

Current TJ processes in Uganda

A policy update was presented by Mr. Otim Michael, an expert in the field of TJ, who was a former Head of the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) country office in Kampala.

Having keenly followed Uganda's TJ process quite closely and participated in the Juba Peace Talks as a secretary to the observer team of cultural and religious leaders of Northern Uganda, Mr. Otim was able to provide genealogy of events leading up to the current discussions on TJ in Uganda.

Mr. Otim narrated how the current debate spanned from the peace agreement between the LRA and Government of Uganda (GoU) in 2008 under the Agenda Item Three: Accountability and Reconciliation. He noted that between 2006 and 2008, the Government of Uganda and the LRA negotiated significant protocols towards the promotion of peace and justice in Uganda. Although the LRA leader Joseph Kony did not sign the final peace agreement, this development ignited hopes among Ugandans towards government commitment to pursue peace and justice in relation to the conflict. In response, the government set up the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) to oversee the development of a framework on TJ and national reconciliation in Uganda.

The participants were informed that several consultations had so far been carried out across the country and a National Transitional Justice Policy Draft was in advanced stages. Key among the policy recommendations was the need to implement truth telling, prosecution, reparation and traditional justice mechanisms. Among the key developments he noted were:

- The on-going trial of Thomas Kwoyelo a former LRA commander over war crimes under the International Crimes Division (ICD) following the domestication of the Rome Statute in 2010;
- The trial of Dominic Ongwen at the international level in line with Uganda's international obligation under the Rome Statute;
- The unofficial documentation processes of the conflict experiences by JRP in Northern Uganda;
- The memory and documentation centre opened in Kitgum district by Refugee Law Project (RLP);
- The WAN petition to Parliament of Uganda over redress and reparation for women and victims of SGBV; and
- The effort to embark on official national

documentation of experiences of conflict in Uganda by the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Otim also noted that despite this progress, the country still lacked a TJ policy owing to inadequate political will and other government priorities. He noted that there have been delays in implementing some policies which have resulted in delays in providing redress/assistance for SGBV victims and thus affecting the promotion of justice and peace.

Findings from the field

Redress for survivors of conflict: Women's agency in addressing SGBV victimisation

Ms. Nancy Apiyo, a Project Officer with JRP presented the findings on this aspect of the research that JRP carried out in Northern Uganda.

She began by highlighting the methodologies of the research. She noted that in Northern Uganda during the long-standing conflicts, sexual violence was perpetrated against men and women, boys and girls at an unprecedented rate by state and non-state actors and civilians. The violence during the war included rape, forced marriage and pregnancy, sexual exploitation and sexual molestation by rebels. She noted that survivors of sexual violence face challenges such as the lack of meaningful reintegration in the community, rejection and re-victimisation in the society. She expounded citing physical, psychological and economic re-victimisation, such as marital abuse, rape, and domestic violence, fear of the unknown, trauma and poverty as some of the challenges survivors endure.

The presenter said that as a consequence of SGBV, women were left with children they bore and whose fathers many of them did not know nor their whereabouts. With no meaningful support from the local government, these women were left to care for their children single handedly. It was noted that lack of support for the children was a cause of more psychosocial harm for the mothers who struggled daily to care for their children amidst social rejection, abuse, poverty, economic constraints, as well as other challenges.

The increase in domestic violence due to poverty, alcoholism and other war-related factors was also pointed out. Survivors of SGBV were said to be encountering violence in their marriages; and were stigmatised by co-wives, in-laws and even husbands. The domestic violence was also attributed female

barrenness owing to the rape and/or sexual molestation the women suffered and the HIV/AIDS they contracted during the war. Some survivors of SGBV were blamed for HIV in the marriage, especially if it was known that they contracted the disease after being raped. Some men were blaming the women for any health issues they were suffering even without evidence that they were infected by them. The presenter pointed out that all these caused re-victimisation, leading to violence and abuse in the homes.

The research findings indicated that 103 female survivors of SGBV who were interviewed stated that due to the lack of social support, they relied on their own constructive/positive coping mechanisms to prevent and minimise chances of re-victimisation. In the absence of social support, some survivors had adopted negative coping mechanisms, such as abuse of alcohol and other substances. One of the women respondents had revealed that she was not an alcoholic before her abduction but became one after returning from captivity. She said she would fight her husband if he refused her alcohol which to her was her source of psychological consolation and a way of dealing with the stigma she was facing.

The presenter also said despite the meagre support to SGBV survivors, they still faced a myriad of challenges that impeded their access to redress and justice in the community. She cited among others the systematic barriers, such as customary laws, the marginalised role of women in the community, poverty and complicated legal procedures. These were preventing women from

obtaining justice and redress in the communities they live in.

She stressed the need to reinforce the MacArthur project principle of TJ to ensure a smooth reintegration into the community and redress for SGBV survivors through providing reparations for them to have a better life.

Engaging men and boys in redress for conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda

Ms. Claire Kahunde, a Project Officer for the research presented the findings from consultations on engaging men and boys in redress for SGBV.

She started with a brief about the role of JRP in the past 10 years in empowering conflict-affected communities in Uganda to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation. She explained the creation of WAN in 2011 as a platform where more than 500 women came together to advocate for justice, acknowledgment and accountability for SGBV inflicted on them during Northern Uganda's longstanding conflicts. She added that over time, JRP had observed that most interventions, including the WAN, explicitly targeted women and girls, since they disproportionately suffered from conflict-SGBV with minimal engagement of men and boys in redress for the gendered conflict experiences.

The presenter said that in trying to understand the cause and effect of this programming bias on reconciliation and redress, JRP discussed the matter



“Men and boys often felt neglected in recovery interventions. There was **resentment and even hostility** towards women and girls who were beneficiaries of post-conflict programmes and services.”

within the communities whereupon the WAN members suggested that men and boys often felt neglected in recovery interventions by civil society and government institutions which focused exclusively on women and girls. Consequently, re-victimisation occurred as there

was resentment and even hostility towards women and girls who were beneficiaries of post-conflict programmes and services. She said consultations were made widely to understand the conflict experiences of men and boys in Northern Uganda and determine strategies to effectively engage them in redress for conflict-SGBV.

The recognition that men and women were both victims of Northern Uganda's longstanding conflicts was prevalent and that they too needed to be included in acknowledging and redressing the past. The feeling was that they did not have to be only seen as perpetrators of violence, but also as victims of conflict and that it was defeating to exclude men from the discourse for gender equality as they could be significant allies in determining and promoting women's well-being. The consultations further recognised the risks and vulnerabilities faced by men and boys during and after the war and the rigid gender norms that discouraged men from participating in curbing violence against women. Men and boys had observed that most post-recovery and rehabilitation efforts were gender-blind as they seemed to focus mostly on women's gendered needs and experiences. They felt disempowered as only very few initiatives had attempted to understand men's conflict experiences and cater for their needs.

The presenter told the meeting that from the consultations the following issues were highlighted: How the concept of engaging men was being given the considerable attention in policy, academia, and



development agency circles; the gender roles and relations in the communities particularly the societal construct of the roles and relations of men and women and how the dynamics of the conflict and displacement shifted such gender norms and affected relationships. According to Ms. Kahunde, another area of focus was the experiences of men and boys during and as a result of conflict, highlighting how men and boys uniquely experienced conflict and recovery compared to women, and the extent to which their gendered needs and experiences have been acknowledged and redressed. In addition, the consultations explored how to engage men and boys in redress for conflict-SGBV given that it involves both sexes. Recommendations were made suggesting ways of effective male engagement in terms of improving family and community relationships; providing greater acknowledgment and redress; and engaging men in redress for their own and for women's experiences.

The key findings as presented by Ms. Kahunde were that:

- Members of the community highly supported male engagement in redress for gendered conflict experiences and their involvement in the discourses for TJ, healing and reconciliation.
- The community recognised men's indispensable role in promoting gender equality but their engagement was hindered by the unavailability of platforms and avenues where they could express their gendered needs and experiences, share their grievances, and learn about upholding and respecting women's and children's rights.

She said the key recommendation from the consultations was the formation of male advocacy groups and networks for men and boys to discuss and find solutions to achieving redress for gendered experiences; and for opportunities for capacity building, livelihood assistance, and psychosocial support to reach their full mental, psychological, physical, emotional and economic capacities to strongly advocate for women's rights and to fight against SGBV inflicted on women and girls. Through this, it was hoped that future interventions to mainstream gender equality would address not only women's gendered experiences, but also those of men and boys, ensuring that efforts for recovery and rehabilitation include their experiences too.

Reintegration challenges facing Children Born of War and their mothers in Northern Uganda

Mr. Oryem Nyeko, the Communications and Advocacy Team Leader of JRP presented the highlights of two reports: "Alone Like A Tree: Reintegration Challenges Facing Children Born of War and Their Mothers in Northern Uganda" as well as "We are All the Same: Experiences of Children Born into LRA Captivity".

The reports, focusing on CBW were compiled from a consultative process undertaken by JRP from September to November 2014, which engaged mothers of CBW and key community stakeholders in

“Owing to the lack of attention to children born of war from the various stakeholders, both at the local, national and international levels, JRP embarked on consultations in order to fill the knowledge gap of TJ actors in Uganda.”

Acholi, Lango and West Nile sub-regions, in order to identify emerging needs and challenges. Owing to the lack of attention to CBW from the various stakeholders, both at the local, national and international levels, JRP embarked on the consultations in order to fill the knowledge gap of TJ actors in Uganda on CBW.

Mr. Nyeko recognised that there was a growing interest in working with CBW, but the acknowledgement of and redress for the broader category of children born as a result of conflict-SGBV and their mothers was largely lacking in TJ discourse in Uganda. He said the JRP consultation sought to understand the daily challenges female survivors of SGBV faced in caring for CBW; as well as the physical, psychological, economic and socio-cultural challenges CBW faced in their daily lives; and to document the numbers and needs of CBW being cared for by members of the WAN. This was in the belief that if policy makers and stakeholders were better informed about the challenges and needs of CBW and their mothers, they would develop and implement policies and programmes to address them, thus providing the much-needed redress.

Explaining the methodology of the consultations the presenter said 13 focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with 125 mothers of CBW from Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya, Pader, Lira, and Adjumani districts in Northern Uganda; and three story-telling sessions held with 100 WAN members from groups in Pader, Lira and Adjumani. Six FGDs and 8 interviews were held with 60 local leaders (48 male, 12 female) from the target districts, including sub-county chiefs, local council (LC) IIIs, local councillors, religious and cultural leaders, elders, police officers and teachers, purposively selected for their local jurisdiction over matters relevant to CBW and their mothers; and 380 individual surveys with members from the 13 member groups of the WAN.

One male child born in captivity appeared at the site of a FGD and informally shared his views.

Mr. Nyeko told the dialogue participants that the consultation gathered views of 447 respondents in total. Interviews and FGDs were conducted in a combination of English, Luo or Madi, depending on the respondents' preference, translated and transcribed into English.

However, Mr. Nyeko said there were some limitations including the fact that views of mothers of CBW in the WAN may not have reflected the views of all mothers of CBW in Northern Uganda's conflicts; and not all CBW were under the care of their mothers as some were in the custody of other people, such as in-laws, strangers, fathers and grandparents whose concerns and challenges might have been different from the mothers'. He also pointed to the likely difference in views between mothers and their children. The JRP considered the sensitivity of discussing with children and youth the circumstances of their birth even when some of them had no prior information about the issue and thus focussed on mothers as the primary caregivers and the champions of WAN-identified advocacy recommendations.

He said the study considered Conflict-SGBV as a violation that is inflicted upon a person on the basis of his or her sex or gender and occurred during, or as a direct result of, armed conflict. CBW were defined as those conceived as a result of conflict-related SGBV and included those born in captivity; from war-related rape, defilement or sexual exploitation.

The key findings as presented by Mr. Oryem included:

The stigmatisation and rejection of female survivors of conflict-SGBV and their CBW by the family and the community that was greatly affecting their day-to-day lives. Most of the women that tried to settle with new partners after captivity were having stormy relationships and suffering abuse because the slightest disagreement with the spouses would be blamed on the women's past. Similarly, CBW suffered because their existence would be a major topic in marital disputes; and for many of them, their step-fathers did not want to pay their school fees; were often insulting them; and they were continuously ostracised and isolated in some homes.

The question of identity was a big problem in society as many CBW were becoming adolescents or coming of age without any knowledge of their fathers or fathers' clans. Twenty-two percent of the women respondents predicted that identity would be the number one challenge of CBW as they grow into adults. Many CBW had begun to ask very many questions, creating a dilemma for their mothers.

The close link between identity and access to land was affecting the livelihood opportunities of the CBW and their mothers. Some women were chased away from their family homes or their new partners' homes and had no land for themselves or their children. This was proving to be more problematic as the children come of age. Of the 283 respondents on the future of CBW, 145 (51%) predicted that land

access would be the greatest challenge they face as they grow into adults.

Community leaders admitted to having very little data on the CBW living in their areas.

In outlining the recommendations of the research the presenter called for more data on the numbers and needs of CBW in order to inform interventions, especially at the sub-county and village levels; better understanding of the challenges of CBW from their own perspectives and not those of their parents or guardians, thus a more direct engagement with CBW in future; as well as counselling and social support for CBW for them to come to terms with their complex identities since many were exhibiting signs of trauma and emotional distress. The Government of Uganda was urged to prioritise support to CBW and their mothers in areas such as medical care, education, child and family tracing, land and housing as well as livelihood support.

Plenary discussion, reflections and feedback

Following the presentations, participants got an opportunity to react and contribute to the discussions. The following issues emerged from the participants' comments and concerns raised in the three dialogues:

- The ideals of the current developments in the TJ process in Uganda today were questioned.
- The government's role in the provision of services to the people of Northern Uganda which was also questioned.
- The lack of clarity on reparations for victims of conflict and the confusion of the concepts of reparation and compensation especially in Adjumani. The participants in Gulu and Lira were much more conversant with the concept.
- The rights of a land owner to sue government for his land currently occupied by refugees fleeing the conflict in South Sudan.
- The need to expand the focus of interventions from the LRA crimes and put into perspective other conflicts when dealing with the issue of Northern Uganda, so as not to leave out any victims and survivors. In all the three regions examples were cited of government soldiers who also perpetrated SGBV crimes but most got off scot-free; and other conflicts by the West Nile Bank Front, UNRF I and II as well as cross border conflicts between Uganda and South Sudan.
- Testimonies from some survivors that shared their different experiences of SGBV which confirmed that most of the issues raised in the reports such as rejection of CBW, denial of access to land, the changing gender roles, among others had spoken directly to their experiences. They also confirmed the effects all these issues had on the CBW and their mothers. The issue of lack of a platform for the SGBV survivors to speak about their problems was also pointed out and that was why they



had welcomed and joined WAN because it had provided the opportunity.

- Testimonies from CBW and the confirmation that their lives have largely depended on the goodwill of their mothers' new spouses/boyfriends who supported them when they wished but in most cases left them and their mothers to fend for themselves. They also confirmed that their mothers enter into abusive relationships upon return from captivity and this negatively affected the children preventing them from properly fitting in the new families. They demonstrated how they were segregated and abused by their step fathers. Notably in Teso/Amuria district a child survived death because of outrage by the community about his identity as a child of a rebel. His grandmother had to forbid him from eating at the neighbours' and later relocated him to another community for fear of death.
- The need for joint efforts in addressing the recommendations that were raised in the report was raised by most NGO participants who called for partnerships / coalitions and synergies in dealing with the issues that affect the various groups of men, women and children. There were calls for referrals and a few organisations present expressed willingness to take on some of the issues. In Lira, Concerned Parents Association (CPA) pledged to support education and training of CBW within their on-going programmes; and in Gulu and Adjumani, Refugee Law Project committed to continue working with JRP to ensure

that referral pathways for victims of torture or those with bullet wounds, gynecological problems as a result of abuse are supported under their programmes.

Experts response to the research findings

Following discussions and reflections on the research, a group of three members of the civil society were asked to provide some technical responses to the issues raised. The experts who participated in all the three dialogues were instrumental in shaping the discussions towards the direction of programming for SGBV; and the role of stakeholders. They comprised one independent expert and two others drawn from ICTJ - Children of Hope Uganda and Refugee Law Project. The responses are summarised below.

Children Born of War – ICTJ, Children of Peace Uganda

Perspectives from Children of Peace Uganda

The Executive Director at Children of Peace Ms. Jane Ekadu, shared her experience working with CBW in Lango region confirming that the issue of SGBV and CBW which were under discussion were not new. Quoting a 2014 UNICEF estimate, she said over 230 million children lived in countries and areas affected by armed conflict and the picture of Uganda was grim. Acknowledging how difficult it was to establish the exact number of CBW in Uganda and specifically in

Lango, Acholi, Teso and West Nile sub regions, Ms. Ekadu said the homogeneity of the challenges created by the war and any other armed conflict that happened in Uganda was not in question. She noted that the first casualties of war were usually children and women, and this badly impedes their access to their basic rights such as education for children, settlement, health care, economic security and general way of life.

The challenges she raised regarding CBW included:

- The **failure to fully integrate CBW, their mothers and care givers due to stigma and rejection** of the children with biological links to the rebels, armed worriers, or government soldiers. She emphasised that children should never be punished because of their fathers' or mothers' perceived sins or biological lineage.
- **Economic insecurity associated with child-mothers who were abducted and defiled.** It was noted that majority of them lacked education or sustainably gainful skills because they lost their formative and empowerment years of their lives and therefore were unable to engage in any meaningful education or economic activity.
- **Lack of opportunities for these children to go to school** except the few who benefited from the responsible guardians and/or NGO sponsorship.
- The **identity crisis and struggles of these children that forced them to live very withdrawn lifestyles** thus affecting their self-esteem and socialisation. It was noted that they were targets of name-calling and being referred to as *kony, olumolum, rebels, killers, Otti* and *Icholin* (as the children born in LRA captivity are called in Teso) among others.
- The **negative consequences of such stigma on their performance at school** for those who had the opportunity.
- The crisis of the children **not knowing their biological fathers which was also traumatising to their mothers** who were still unable to bring themselves to reveal this to their children.
- Serious **discrimination and stigma that the children have had to endure** because their mothers chose to stay silent and the children kept getting information though wrong sources i.e. neighbours, village mates, teachers, teasers from school mates among others.
- The inability of community members to deal with such a situation owing to **the collapse of the clan system which used to be a centre of reference for any challenge.** The war led to the demise of the pillars of the community leaving mainly young people with no significant sense of direction. In addition it also sucked in clan members into the conflicts thus further helping to decimate the cohesion that had existed before the LRA war and others.
- Subjecting children to **child labour, sexual abuse and all other forms of degrading treatment** by people who should know better; including making them house girls and shamba boys and making

them do house chores or garden work beyond their capacity as children.

- Land inheritance issues whereby **children were continuously getting engulfed in succession wars.** Since land inheritance in most of the target communities was usually through the paternal lineage if the mother was traditionally married by the biological father of the child, the unclear paternal lineage of CBW left them highly vulnerable. In the case of the girl child communities still believe she is not supposed to inherit her parents' estates. This also applied to mothers of CBW who were not allowed to inherit their fathers' or husbands' estate and so they could not to pass them on to their children.
- The absolute **powers of the clan or the brothers of these young mothers to determine who inherits** the property of their parents were making children miss out on inheritances simply because the clan or family member did not recognise or know them. They did not appreciate that a child should never be a subject of marriage agreements or lack of them.
- The **dilemmas that would arise when the CBW became youths and then adults** in need of education, families, land to settle and acceptance, among others, yet they were denied belonging owing to their paternity.

She challenged the participants to acknowledge these challenges and draw strategies for addressing them. She proposed the following:

1. Providing education for CBW as a priority;
2. Empowering mothers and immediate care givers of CBW with gainful economic skills and start up;
3. Building the capacity of the mothers and immediate care givers to tell their children's paternity story without harming themselves or the children;
4. Sensitising clans and communities on succession laws both traditional and legal;
5. Intensifying advocacy on the issues;
6. Establishing psychosocial support and peace building mechanisms;
7. Compiling adequate data on CBW;
8. Fighting stigma through sensitisation in schools and within communities.

In conclusion, she highlighted the achievements made by CPU including sponsorship for 138 children at primary, secondary and tertiary institutions; psychosocial support to 3000 children; provision of livelihood start up in apiary to 86 households, 10-14 beehives, fish farming, fruit tree planting; surgeries and other general medical care to over 500 children and youths; support to child-headed households on basic needs like food and non-food items; advocacy within and outside Uganda including participation in community peace dialogues with cultural, religious and opinion leaders, the Expert Consultations on the Office of the ICC Chief Prosecutor's Draft Policy on Children- Hague

Netherlands in July 2016 and addresses to the UN General Assembly.

ICTJ reflections on CBW and its place at local national and international levels, Gulu and Adjumani

Reflections on the consequences of SGBV

Addressing the Gulu dialogue, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)'s Ms. Sarah Kasande commended the JRP research saying it would contribute to the global conversation that was long overdue. She said the phenomenon of CBW was not new but had existed as long as conflict had. She said SGBV happened in most conflicts with CBW emerging as a consequence and this had happened in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Bosnia Herzegovina among others.

She said a lot of global attention had been paid to SGBV, but not to its consequences, particularly the CBW. According to her, information and statistics on CBW were usually subsumed and having a child was assumed to be a natural consequence so it was not usually considered in light of SGBV. Societies that abhor abortion and where there is limited access to family planning or contraceptives aggravate the situation. She said that studies had shown that the CBW phenomenon occurred at an extensive level in Northern Uganda where violations are visited on the mothers and their children.

She attributed the lack of policy specifically addressing CBW at the global or regional level to the lack of sufficient information on them which had hindered the necessary understanding of the phenomenon, thus the limited national and global response. Consequently, there is no national legal and policy framework in Uganda to address the issues of CBW.

Expounding on the key challenge of stigma, Ms. Kasande said it was rooted on the one hand in the circumstances of existence because children were born out of rape; and on the other hand it was linked to their paternal lineage whereby children were born of combatants but also had to confront the deeply entrenched gender roles, norms and hierarchies. CBW whose fathers were unknown and therefore they could not access land; or who were identified as combatants suffered severe consequences including stigma and rejection for being perceived as the perpetuation of the lineage of rebels which represented torture and atrocities. She said some ICTJ studies had found that boys/males were particularly affected and male CBW were more vulnerable than their female counterparts.

She also pointed out the challenge of patriarchy, which she said denoted unequal power relations that promote male privilege. However, she noted that male privilege comes with added responsibility and expectations and that add to the vulnerabilities, risks and challenges of the male CBW. The challenges persist due to the absence of studies and research to address some of the issues.

She further confirmed the challenges caused by the question of identity and nationality which the JRP

research had also established. She illustrated this with the dilemma that CBW face in fulfilment of the requirements of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau to register their births. The fact that they may not have been able to name their fathers on the certificates as required or explain how they came to be born in South Sudan, caused CBW problems in getting nationality or other necessary documentation that could contribute to statelessness.

Explaining the question of intergenerational trauma, Ms. Kasande said the mothers of CBW also suffered which affected their right to proper parenting, given that their children represented a symbol of abuse. Citing the high percentage of infanticide in Rwanda, Ms. Kasande said CBW were killed because they were seen as a horrific reminder of the abuse that was meted on their mothers.

Ms. Kasande said there were a number of instruments and policy documents at the national level, but singled out the National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children as the relatively closest to protecting this category of children. However, she said it falls short of addressing the concept of CBW although it acknowledges the concept of children affected by conflict without elaborating the extent and the uniqueness of their peculiar challenges. Similarly, she said the Children's Act also provides generally for non-discrimination, welfare and well-being of children and their education but does not have specific and targeted measures to give effect to these norms with regard to CBW.

At the regional level, she cited the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which provides for non-discrimination, protection of the best interests of the child, survival and development and also prohibits the recruitment of child soldiers. She acknowledged the significant advancement of norms, policies and interventions as well as information and studies on the recruitment of child soldiers; but noted that a distinction should be made between the children affected by armed conflicts and children that come into existence as a result of armed conflicts. She called for targeted and specific attention to the peculiar aspects of the challenges that CBW face.

Ms. Kasande informed the dialogue about the recent study of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children on the impact of armed conflicts on children that was undertaken in recognition of the severe and damning impact that conflicts across the continent have had on children.

The study which was still on-going was assessing how the existing continental normative framework could respond to the challenges or enact policies at the regional level that could inform mechanisms at the national level. She hoped it would address the phenomenon of CBW.

At the international level, she cited the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 4th Geneva Convention, the additional protocols which expressly prohibit recruitment of child soldiers and urges state parties to put in place special measures to protect children

“There is a need to explore a multi-sectoral intervention centred on gender that would involve incorporating an understanding of how being male or female in a specific situation contributes to vulnerability and defines capacities.”

affected by conflict. The welfare and best interests of children are provided for just as rebuilding communities affected by conflict and ensuring that children within those communities have access to education and family reunification. However, she said a gap remained in terms of consideration of CBW.

She concluded by calling for more work in this area particularly in addressing stigma more holistically given that it manifests differently across cultures, regions, and ethnicity. She said any interventions to address SGBV must of necessity pay particular attention to this.

Reflections on processes of redress for CBW at the international and local levels

In Adjumani, Mr. Michael Otim started by sharing some of the current definitions of SGBV and why it usually happens.

He cited the various laws and policies in Uganda for addressing SGBV including: The Constitution of Uganda which prohibits torture, cruel or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and obliges the state to provide facilities and opportunities necessary to enhance the welfare of women to enable them realise their full potential.

Some of the other legislations he cited were: The Penal Code Act that outlaws rape and other forms of SGBV such as defilement, and other sexual crimes with minors; the Domestic Violence Act which criminalises any form of domestic violence; the Children’s Act; and the ICC Act 2010 that recognises international crimes in Uganda’s domestic legislation.

On the policy framework, Mr. Otim cited the Orphans And Vulnerable Children’s Policy (OVC), the National Policy on SGBV, the Health Policy, the Universal Primary Education Policy that provides

for prevention and mitigation of GBV as well as child labour through Ministry of Labour Social Development Policy among others.

At the regional level he outlined the International Conference on the Great Lakes Protocol (2000) which provides protection for women and children against impunity for sexual violence in the Great Lakes region. At the international level, Mr. Otim cited the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which provides for respect of fundamental human rights of every human being including rights in social, economic, civic, political and cultural arena.

Similarly cited were the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) which protects minors under age of 18 years in health, education, legal, civil and social services; as well as the Rome Statute of the ICC (1998) that recognises rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes.

Finally at the local community level, Mr. Otim recognised the Local Council Courts that operate as alternatives to tackle SGBV. He acknowledged civil society that provides legal aid, holds community dialogues, and undertakes documentation and advocacy on the need to tackle SGBV.

Understanding Gender Based Violence

Ms. Sylvia Opinia an Independent expert on Gender and Development who previously had worked for JRP led a discussion on redress for Gender Based Violence.

She started by defining gender as socially defined roles, expectations, rights and privileges of males and females in a society or community. She said these social differences that are learned were deeply rooted in culture determined by social factors such as history, culture, tradition, societal norms and religion. They could be experienced at individual, community and societal levels which in turn could determine the framework and approaches for GBV response which would be rights-based, community-based or survivor-centred.

Ms. Opinia called on stakeholders to explore a multi-sectoral intervention centred on gender whereby it would involve incorporating an understanding of how being male or female in a specific situation contributes to vulnerability and defines capacities. She said a gender analysis was important to distinguish the roles, the access to and control of resources, activities, potentials and constraints of females relative to males in a given socio-economic group.

Finally from a gender lens, Ms. Opinia pointed to the need for mainstreaming to make the concerns and experiences of women and men (boys and girls) an integral part of design, implementation, and Monitoring and Evaluation of policies/programmes. This would ultimately lead to gender equality.

Engaging men, the approach of Refugee Law Project

Refugee Law Project (RLP)’s Mr. Jackson Odong and

Mr. Benard Okot Kasozi addressed the three dialogues on the issue of understanding SGBV during conflict and engaging men.

Regarding conflict, Mr. Odong said a popular perception was that women were seen as sexual slaves; boys as recruits; and men as signs and symbols of conquest. He explained the SGBV forms including forced sex and its high risk of sexually transmitted infections, e.g. HIV, Hepatitis, cancers. Other risks were unintended pregnancy, infertility, idleness/unemployment of survivors due to incapacitation; arrests, court proceedings, imprisonment and associated costs; high costs of health service e.g. medical care and treatment of STIs; loss of livelihoods; family disruption and dysfunctions such as conflicts, divisions, separation, divorce; and the intergenerational effects of violence. He said these could have physical/biological, psychological, socio-economic and legal consequences.

However Mr. Odong also warned that apart from this level of awareness, there were still prevailing realities in Uganda today including some harmful cultural practices such as widow inheritance, gender roles as assigned to boys and girls; and the risk of assuming that women are entirely victims and men are perpetrators during conflict.

Using the story of one Okwera, the expert demonstrated how men were also victims. Okwera was a victim of male rape having been repeatedly raped at his home by several soldiers. He is said to have lived with the pain and bitterness all his life. Narrating how RLP first met Okwera three years ago, Odong said he had described himself as a dead man walking. The story presents a survivor's journey through pain, despair and hope; but also a lesson that men too could be victims and should be supported.

Odong highlighted the 5 pillars under which to engage men as survivors, namely:

- Care work, whereby men should also support in domestic work such as baby sitting
- Child upbringing
- HIV/AIDS; encouraging testing, and identifying a role to play when living with HIV
- Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (marital consensus agreements)
- Men as role models

He challenged the participants to ask key questions in engaging men including how the responses would be actualised; how these commitments would become a reality at the various levels; and what the various stakeholders would bring to the table.

Similarly in Adjumani, Mr. Bernard Okot presented on some of the ways in which RLP was engaging men as survivors of SGBV. He started by highlighting the importance of engaging men and boys in redress emphasising the need to deal with collective attitudes and perceptions of men in the area of SGBV which have always been negative; as well as the importance of an inclusive response and programming with men and boys as key stakeholders.

He said the RLP, under the SGBV-ODG project with the University of East Anglia, had worked with men as agents of change in understanding, redress and prevention of SGBV; particularly in engaging men and boys in discussions on masculinity issues and how they relate to SGBV.

Specifically the RLP had:

- Engaged men and boys as allies, partners, survivors, victims (Men of Courage) rather than as sole perpetrators;
- Created men-only spaces / safer spaces/forum for men, to encourage them to question their environment, cultural norms and learn positively, before mixing them with women;
- Carefully packaged messages/information rather than criticising men;
- Empowered male activists and movements for men for peace and the respect of human rights;
- Encouraged exposure visits/learning;
- Undertaken documentation such as the documentary: 'Gender Against Men, They Slept with me'.

Mr. Okot concluded by emphasising that SGBV was neither exclusively a woman's concern, nor a man's but a society-wide issue.

Participants' feedback on the discussions by experts

Participants reacted to the presentations of experts and raised the issues summarised below.

- The need to address trauma and the psychological impact of violence by devising various psychosocial interventions such as counselling.
- The need for JRP to work together with other NGOs to ensure that the available programmes support CBW.
- Ensuring education for CBW as a priority to rehabilitate their minds so that they are considered useful members of society.
- Government was urged to revisit its policies on special needs education and school fees to ensure that some of the orphans and CBW would no longer be chased away from school or denied admission because they could not afford.
- The need to acknowledge that everyone (men and women) have equal rights by virtue of humanity; and empowering one side would cause tensions between men and women especially as women and their children grew stronger leaving the men feeling undermined.
- Taking cultural values into consideration in every effort made to assist victims of conflict, especially taking care not to shift the role and values of men and women.
- Getting cultural leaders and elders involved in addressing the issue of land access by CBW given that they are key players on matters related to resource allocation, especially when it comes to

ancestral land.

- Addressing issues related to gender justice taking into consideration culture and customs and engaging cultural leaders.

A discussion on civil society pathways: Group participation

Participants were divided into three groups to address specific questions in order to come up with a way forward in tackling the issue of redress for SGBV against men, women and CBW. The questions were:

- Suggest some practical strategies/actions that can help reduce the socio-cultural effects of violence on men, women and children?
- How can stakeholders work together in preventing and responding to SGBV re-victimisation (practical steps and who should be involved?)
- What challenges affect the successful integration of SGBV/CBW in schools and other educational institutions today? What can be done to minimise these effects?

The discussions and recommendations from the three group participants are presented in table form below.



Group One: Suggest some practical strategies/actions that can help reduce the socio-cultural effects of violence on men, women and children?

Place of dialogue	Strategies suggested by group members
Adjumani	<p>Participants first defined Socio-cultural effects of violence as poverty, alcoholism, lack of education, divorce, jealousy, infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS), low productivity and conflict appropriate implementation of laws (by-laws, ordinances & national laws) and addressing loopholes in the implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent sensitisation of the community on socio-cultural effects of SGBV (change of mind-sets); ● Community policing; ● Gender planning mainstream; ● Social inclusion; Research and documentation for informed advocacy and pragmatic interventions; ● Identity acknowledgment and integrating cultural practices into interventions; ● Collaboration between CSOs and cultural leaders and consistent stakeholders' dialogues; ● Integration into school/university curriculum and IEC materials the promotion of girl-child education.
Gulu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revisit cultural practices and develop SGBV-sensitive guidelines; ● Adopt positive cultural norms (revisiting the teaching of positive cultural practices through family elders to both boys and girls); ● Creating awareness on existing standards by cultural institutions to minimise the effects of violence; ● Institutionalising incentives that deter the socio-cultural effects of violence; ● Creating intra-cultural awareness programmes between different cultures; ● Creating a CBW community sensitisation aimed at changing attitudes of community members towards returnees from captivity; ● Engaging cultural leaders in the reintegration process of CBW and all children in general; ● Promoting support of cultural institutions to supplement the efforts of child tracing; and ● Creating ordinances / by-laws to respond to the socio-cultural effects of violence.
Lira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides a forum representation of voices of the marginalised groups/survivors: ● Promote participation of survivors at the local level in order to change attitudes towards survivors: and ● Provide an opportunity for experience sharing as one way for community members to become aware of the problem and begin to mobilise resources to support survivors.

Group Two: How can stakeholders work together in preventing and responding to SGBV re-victimisation (practical steps and who should be involved?)

Place of dialogue	Practical steps for working together as suggested by group members	Who should be involved
Adjumani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collecting data on survivors of SGBV re-victimisation; ● Disseminating information and sensitising stakeholders on the issues; ● Apportioning tasks and responsibilities amongst various stakeholders; ● The need to draft by-laws (ordinances) to address the issue of SGBV; ● Building networks amongst stakeholders; ● Economic empowerment for SGBV survivors from families, communities and cultural institutions; ● Cultural institutions to take lead in looking after CBW without identity as part of their traditional roles in society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Victims ● Perpetrators ● Families ● Local communities ● Cultural institutions ● CBW ● CSOs (NGOs) ● The international community

Gulu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders should map-out their different roles, referrals and avoid duplication for proper service delivery; ● Advocating for redress and against re-victimisation; ● Holding stakeholders dialogues, collaborate and share experiences, resources, expertise, lessons and responses; ● Government should give updates on existing programmes; ● Service providers should share their existing programmes with survivors of SGBV; ● Develop guidelines on documented lessons, best practices to improve service delivery; ● Strengthen the capacity of local and cultural leaders to respond effectively to SGBV re-victimisation; ● Budgeting for SGBV (mainstreaming gender in budgeting); ● Pushing for gender sensitisation policies and laws through mass mobilisation and involvement of partners; ● Disseminating policies to end users at grassroots level; ● Local interventions approaches to re-victimisation; ● Government should ensure the return of victims that are still in captivity; ● Encouraging on-going international advocacy; ● Holding perpetrators of re-victimisation accountable; ● Strengthening structure that ought to respond to SGBV re-victimisation, e.g. police; ● Educating and equipping SGBV victims on how to respond to re-victimisation; ● Intense counselling and psychological support for SGBV and peer support for SGBV victims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders ● Government ● Service providers ● Local leaders ● Cultural leaders
Lira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders should ensure that survivors are budgeted for; ● Medical rehabilitation through medical interventions and hospitals; ● Addressing the roots cause(s) of sexual violence; ● Ensuring representation of SGBV in programmes; ● Conducting research to identify challenges SGBV face daily; and Advocating for national/governmental guidelines on SGBV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders ● Medical workers ● Government ● Survivors

Group 3: What challenges affect the successful integration of SGBV/CBW in schools and other educational institutions today? What can be done minimize these effects?

Place of dialogue	Challenging affecting integration	What can be done
Adjumani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulties in paying school fees and obtaining scholastic material; ● Stigmatisation and rejection; ● Child labour; ● Lack of identity; ● Poor health [meeting requirements]; ● School environmental challenges [Communication behaviour]; and ● Systematic trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy support of scholarship sourcing; ● Engagement in economic/livelihoods activities (Children, parents & guardian); ● Psychological support (counselling, e.g. systematic family therapy); ● Experience sharing for CBW; ● Empathy clubs for CBW; ● Adoption; ● Identity tracing by cultural leaders; ● Access to health services (free); ● Specific interventions to target the mental health of families; and ● Target systematic trauma

<p>Gulu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stigmatisation; ● Gaps in early childhood development; ● Gaps in rehabilitation processes; ● Emotional, psychological torture; ● Strictness in sponsorship programs; ● Inability of mothers of CBW to pay for their children’s school fees; and ● Child-headed households where children take up responsibilities to provide for their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopting a culture of community theatre performance as a form of awareness creation to educate children; ● Stakeholders should avail opportunities where children can voice out their opinions; ● School outreach; ● Introduction of peace clubs; ● Role models approach; ● More psychological support to CBW; ● Supporting the livelihoods of CBW and parents; and ● Capacity building for educational practitioners, e.g. teachers.
<p>Lira</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of available funds to support the education of CBW; ● Lack of specific and stable living (lack of land); ● Lack of supervision by parents; ● Remarriage by mothers of SGBV; ● Child marriage; ● Child violence and trauma which affect their academic performance and an enabling environment in schools due to stigma from both students/pupils and teachers ● Cost involved in paying school fees ● Lack of time to focus on school work; ● Lack of parental guidance, ● Age; ● Fear of stigmatisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitisation of communities and step-parents to change their negative attitudes towards CBW; ● Developing specific programmes at school for both teachers and CBW; ● NGOs and civil society should continue to help victims of war and CBW; ● Educating custodians on how to answers questions on the identity of CBW.

Overall reflections and conclusions

All conflicts among communities in Northern Uganda have impacted on gender relations. Participants agreed that the longstanding conflict between the LRA and Uganda army severely destabilised gender identities and assumptions more than any other conflict even though each region, community and individuals affected by war has unique experiences of violence. Furthermore, it was noted that many women especially in IDP camps assumed positions that would have been unacceptable prior to the conflict. They became family heads, enrolled in informal business sectors, were trained by NGOs in tailoring, micro-finance savings and other ventures. Consequently, the men were left in the cold and took to drinking. Many young women began selling charcoal and opening small businesses while young boys and girls also participated actively within the LRA due to abduction, rape and forced marriages. Due to this it was unanimously agreed in the dialogues that the conflict in Northern Uganda has ‘forced’ women to assume the positions that were previously the exclusive domain of men.

The dialogue participants also acknowledged that even

“Like women, men were survivors of SGBV as some had been raped, and continued to live in a situation of victimhood without any support.”

if the LRA conflict devastated the lives of people, the shifts in roles and identities to some extent opened up spaces for women for new opportunities that could be maximised for social transformation in Northern Uganda. Just like men, single women could now run a family and pay school fees for their children. A survivor testified to obtaining training from many NGOs and



joining groups which enabled her to fend for herself and children after her man abandoned her for having returned from the bush with “*cen*” a spiritual possession caused by evil vengeance.

Regardless of these new roles, participants noted that men also suffered during the conflict. Like women, men were survivors of SGBV as some had been raped, and continued to live in a situation of victimhood without any support. The men interviewed by JRP reported that they too should be acknowledged as victims and should begin to participate alongside other survivors of SGBV. The feeling was that men had to be engaged in processes of redress for SGBV in order not to hamper the little opportunity put in place to support the women since they had experienced the same atrocities. Some men were said to still be subjected to abuse because they did not have the space or chance to come out. They knew that help from police would not be forthcoming due to the gender-based perception that a man cannot be beaten by a woman.

Many participants pointed out that following the cessation of LRA violence government needed to reconstruct the physical infrastructure as well as the social infrastructure, including broken relationships among people and between citizens and the state. However, a lot was still required in transforming the

actual relationships between men and women in view of how each group was affected disproportionately by the LRA conflict. The post-war Northern Uganda provided an opportunity for transforming unequal power relations and furthering gender justice.

Nevertheless, many participants conceded that the excitement they initially felt for the prospects of social transformation of Northern Uganda was dying out as men and women who survived SGBV have to still live in fear and isolation. It was also acknowledged that the peace negotiations in Juba as it is in other peace processes did not exclusively reflect on matters related to gender as the parties devoted all their efforts in consolidating the ‘bigger picture’ of peace, usually narrowly defined by the silencing of the guns. Nowhere in the agreements was there an inclusive reflection of gender mainstreaming in the Accountability and Reconciliation Agreement. Where there was any mention, it only referred to “efforts geared towards including women and children” in the process of reconciliation without necessarily delving onto the unique circumstances that ought to be deliberated on.

A question perhaps not fully answered during the dialogue that would take a long time to address was how these TJ mechanisms could serve as an opportunity for furthering gender justice.



Proposals for future programming for conflict-related SGBV

The key proposals for future programming for conflict-related SGBV, drawn from extensive group discussions and enriched during the plenaries of the dialogues are summarised below:

Embracing new dimensions on victimhood:

Participants noted that everyone irrespective of sex or age can become a victim of SGBV. During conflict times, men too have become targets of SGBV, although the incidence remains prevalent among women and girls in Northern Uganda. More often than not, the mention of SGBV during conflict evokes images of women raped, but not the child born as a result of that rape. In terms of programming, children too must be seen as primary victims of rape, there is a chance that they shall be left out.

Specifically it was noted that:

- Awareness programmes have to be developed to ensure that communities understand the diverse experience of men, women and children with regard to SGBV during conflict.
- Investments should be made in longer-term research and programming aimed at developing approaches that not only focus on women, but on gender in a holistic manner using a gender analysis that goes beyond women. This would entail how gender intersects with other identity factors such as age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background.
- Programmes that are geared towards the prevention of SGBV should involve men as both beneficiaries and resource persons or facilitators in the communities.
- New manuals for participation of men and women in SGBV which reflect the context of Northern Uganda should be designed to support the role of both sexes in addressing issues of violence in society, without losing focus on the root causes of

violence.

- The important role of men and boys as agents for peace should be embraced, fronting examples of men and boys who embody non-violence in contexts of violence as best practices for prevention of SGBV.
- Programmes should be designed to discourage negative gender norms by engaging men, boys, youth and local leaders to reduce harmful expressions of masculinity through violence.
- A safe space should be created for CBW and their mothers who as a result of their predicament as survivors fail to locate themselves within current discourse on redress and yet are still marginalised by their association to fighting forces as or women of the enemies.

Multi-sectoral response: There is need to embark on a multi-sectoral approach by ensuring that all partners play a role in prevention and response of SGBV in order to address unequal power relations that exacerbate violence and entrenches aspects of vulnerability for women, men and children. The multi-sectoral model calls for a holistic inter-organisational and

inter-agency effort that promotes participation of all persons concerned and coordination across sectors, including (but not limited to) health, psychosocial, legal/justice and security.

These include:

- Working with the health sector to ensure that there is training of service providers to recognise and address violence against women and girls.
- Ensuring that psychosocial programmes are ongoing and are modeled on providing a safe space for women, men and children who are victims of SGBV.
- Programmes on accountability and prosecution that incorporate aspects of legal counselling, representation and other court support to women and girls who have been exposed to violence. This calls for review and revision of laws that reinforce violence against women and girls as well as the current international crimes that have been committed in Northern Uganda such as war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- The security organs such as the police, the military should provide a support role and should be educated about violence against women and girls and trained on how to appropriately intervene in such cases. This requires setting up safe spaces to interrogate victims in ways that ensure confidentiality to avoid re-victimisation.

Coordination among stakeholders: It is vital to build synergies with other stakeholders, as this would eliminate the disconnect between the various aspects

of programming. In particular, coordination is crucial between aspects such as redress for SGBV and others like humanitarian assistance and national/regional development; education; and health. In this way it is possible to identify linkages that are important for subsequent programming and how one programme can make a contribution to others.

The following could be done:

- Working with existing institutions and using available structures.
- Harnessing the potential of readily available institutions like schools, hospitals, and churches in order to widen the scope of influence and magnify the potential for improvements in available programmes; for instance including aspects of SGBV in the curricula.
- All stakeholders and existing networks should consider adopting and presenting a common message on gender equality, the importance of including men and CBW to ensure that when a given programme ends, another stakeholder can continue promoting the same messages.
- Where possible strategic partnerships and alliances could go a long way in ensuring that stakeholders jointly mobilise for resources and engage in coordinated efforts on SGBV.

Comprehensive and long-term response to violence: The importance of looking at the bigger picture of violence in Uganda and capturing its entire spectrum was emphasised. This would ensure that the exclusive focus on SGBV does not reinforce the perspective of women as victims, but also looks at the history, dimensions and manifestations of the conflict that spanned from pre-colonial times and was entrenched along racial and regional lines by successive regimes during periods following independence. This therefore calls for prioritising long-term approaches to address the root causes of conflict through a gendered lens.

This involves:

- Ensuring a gendered analysis of violence, focusing on political and economic drivers of conflict, including community level insecurity and negative conceptions of masculinities and SGBV;
- Paying attention to region-based dilemmas of conflict and the diverse experience of communities that have to co-exist during times of conflict, such as the refugee population from neighbouring countries;
- Ensuring that the diverse groups of civil society, including youth, local leaders - both women and men – get involved in gender responsive conflict preventions measures that tackle notions of masculinity/femininity and conflict;
- Supporting women-led as well as gender-sensitive initiatives, such as those currently being led by WAN at JRP and empower them to play an active role in addressing the root causes of violence and suffering as identified by them. In addition, supporting their structural violence prevention

efforts and peace building initiatives that aim to transform key socioeconomic, political and institutional factors that drive conflict at the local and national levels in Uganda. Learning from the experience of the WAN petition to the Ugandan Parliament would be a good starting point.

- Working to gradually reduce the cultural effects of severed gender relations by ensuring that societal norms and practices that promote exclusion and vulnerability are progressively transformed to promote co-existence.

Capacity building, empowerment and sensitisation:

These are crucial avenues to ensure that the right human resources and expertise in dealing with SGBV are available; the local population is well informed to be able to challenge unequal power relations; and that crimes related to gender are openly acknowledged and taken on by society in order to avoid re-victimisation. This would go a long way in ensuring there is collective action at the community level as opposed to continuous dependence on outside support.

Specifically:

- There is need to create a multi-level entry point within communities, so that there are on-going efforts to scale up programmes at the local level; for instance, through incorporating gender in local education programmes in schools.
- Community leaders and resource persons need to receive continuous trainings on SGBV so as to become 'exemplars' in promoting redress for SGBV.
- There is an urgent need to address the educational and informational needs of marginalised groups of women and CBW by providing educational opportunities relevant for their growth and development in society.
- Support to action-oriented research and documentation should be sustained to ensure that gender-based experiences and perspectives of conflict are readily accessible to the general public and are used to inform advocacy and policy.
- Research methodologies should be ethically appropriate and in most cases generally applicable and acceptable to the various stakeholders to avoid the risk of raising suspicion the data obtained on SGBV.
- Information sharing should be enhanced in order to avail stakeholders with the much needed statistics to inform programme design and implementation.

Participation and local ownership: It is important to realise that violence usually occurs within a cultural space. It is within these spaces that we need to articulate the needs of victims and survivors. Redress for SGBV should therefore avoid top-down models of programming such that planning, design and implementation resonate with local communities, ensuring that their practices and perceptions are taken into account without reinforcing the cultural identities of men as superior beings. It is also important to integrate programming in ways that are more inclusive

and broader taking into consideration the gender perspective of the roles of men and women.

This can be expedited through:

- Ensuring the participation of women and girls of various age groups right from the onset of programme design and ensuring that they maintain an active role throughout programme monitoring, evaluation and on-going programme development.
- Focusing on women's equal participation and the promotion of gender equality in peace and security decision-making processes, including at local, national, regional and international levels.
- Supporting all efforts, including concrete incentives, to ensure women, including those in rural communities, are included as gender experts and stakeholders in prevention and redress of SGBV.

Annex 1: Agenda for consultative dialogue with stakeholders on conflict related SGBV in northern Uganda

St. Lira Hotel, Lira; Doves Nest, Gulu; and Multi-Purpose Training Centre, Adjumani (8th – 13th September, 2016)

Time	Activity	Person Responsible
8:20 - 9:00	Arrival and registration of participants	Docus Atyeno/Vicky
9:00 – 9:30	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome, introductions & agenda Background and purpose of meeting 	Isaac Okwir Boniface Ojok
9:30-9:45	Keynote: National and Local Processes on Transitional Justice in Uganda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Updates on Transitional Justice and opportunities for redress 	Michael Otim, Former Head of Office, International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
9:45 -11:00	Panel Presentations and Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redress by Survivors of Conflict-SGBV: Women's agency in addressing SGBV re-victimisation Engaging Men and Boys in Redress for Conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda Reintegration challenges facing Children Born of War (CBW) and their Mothers in Northern Uganda 	Nancy Apiyo Claire Kahunde Oryem Nyeko
11:00-11:15	Plenary discussions and feedback	
11:15 – 1:30	Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience Sharing from survivor of conflict-SGBV Experience from CBW Reflections on GBV in response to JRP research Response from CSO engagement with men Reflections on CBW and its place in the local, national and international agenda 	Sylvia Opinia, Independent Expert Refugee Law Project ICTJ, Children for Peace Uganda
	Plenary discussions and feedback	
1:30-2:30	Tea/coffee break	Hotel
2:30-3:30	Discussions on Civil Society Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redress by Survivors of Conflict-SGBV: Women's agency in addressing SGBV re-victimisation Engaging Men and Boys in Redress for Conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda Reintegration challenges facing Children Born of War (CBW) and their Mothers in Northern Uganda 	Boniface Ojok Group Participation
3:30 – 4:30	Presentations and discussions	Boniface Ojok
4.30 – 5:00	Recap and way forward for policy and programming	Boniface Ojok
5:00-5:30	Official Closure	Michael Otim/District Leader

Annex 2: List of participants in Lira meeting, 8 September 2016

Name	Sex	Organization/Location/District
Ogwang Moses	M	Barlonyo
Abu Molly	F	Barlonyo
Alimo Emma	F	Gulu
Amony Evelyn	F	JRP
Ongora Brian Yoko	M	Unity FM
Anuarite K. Flungu	F	JRP
Lamwaka Esther	F	Awee I Koko (Aromo)
Amito Kevin	F	Awee I Koko (Aromo)
Awari Judith	F	Kuc Odwogo – Barlonyo
Adoko Dickens	M	Rwot Ateke Amolatar
Acawa Judith	F	Women’s Initiatives for Gender Justice
Agwang Florence	F	NECPA
Agwang Charles	M	ACOBUT OYAM
Agato Evelyn	F	Agweng Sub County
Ronnie Mwanga	M	NTV- Uganda
Odur Denis	M	AYINET
Sylvia Opinia	F	Focal person
Aceng Theopista	F	LDLG
Micheal Otim	M	JRP
Ongom Christ	M	UVP
Apitta Daniel	M	FIRD
Minyom Hellen	M	Radio Lira 95.3
Frank Jean Okot	M	Daily Monitor
Komakech Emmanuel	M	LDLG Aromo
Elich David	M	Aromo C/P LCIII
Olobo Lawrence	M	Concerned Parents Association
Jane Ekayu	M	Children of Peace Uganda
Atoke Besay		CDO Aromo
George Okello Ayo	M	L C V Lira
Okello Francis	M	Ag DCDO Lira
ASP Orech Michael	M	CLO Lira Police
Ogwan Raymond	M	Cultural leader Aromo
Owori Ogiffe Franklin	M	Lira
Ngwenomol Tonny	M	Lira/ Agweng S/C
Harriet Adong	F	FIRD
Odong Jackson	M	RLP
Apiyo Nancy	F	JRP
Atyeno Docus	F	JRP
Boniface Ojok	M	Consultant
Odong Patrick	M	JRP
Odongo Micheal	M	LCIII
Ogang Marino	M	LCIII Agweng
Otim Denis CH	M	CAO
Otwil Isaac	M	Red Pepper
Lydia Akello Famile	F	Laydet Otuke
Ebetin Bachi	M	Obaya Community Association
Acola Susan		Kuc Odwogo
Akello Grace	F	Sec WAN

Suzan Okabo	F	Barlonyo Women Peace Club
Opio Morish		Lira
Claire Jean Kahunde	F	JRP
Nyanjura Victoria	F	JRP

Annex 3: List of participants in Gulu meeting, 9 September 2016

Name	Sex	Organization/Location/District
Odokonyero Augustine	M	Caritas Gulu Archdiocese
Okot Vincent Stephen	M	PDLG (Atanga Sub County)
Acan Esher	F	Rwot Okonya
Auma Lilly	F	Rwot Okonya
Odokonyero Aggrey	M	TPO Uganda
Sylvia Opinia	F	Focal Person
Okot Francis Odwong	M	GWED-G
Boniface Ojok	M	Consultant
Ocakacan Alfred Poromia	M	CFPU/ Police
Okello Caide Balmoi	M	KKA
Amito Lucy	F	PDLG
Opolot Joseph	M	PDLG- Acholi Bur
Micheal Otim	M	JRP
Hellen Mshilla	F	MM \$BC Gulu
Solomon Okello	M	Uganda Fund
Okot Simon Peter	M	PDLG
Ongee Galdino	M	Atanga S/C Pader
Akello Franka	F	WAN/ Pader
Akongo Sunday	F	WAN/ Pader
Okello Mark Lamson	M	PDLG
Apiyo Nancy	F	JRP
Atim Angele L	F	Watye Ki Gen
Loum Bernard	F	CEED- Uganda
Rwandarugali Priscilla	F	CRR-Gulu
Kidega Martin	M	C/P LCIII Atanga S/C
Raymond Odonga	M	CARE/ GULU
Nyanjura Victoria	F	JRP
Amony Evelyn	F	JRP
Kasande Sarah	F	ICTJ
Rose Atim	F	UHRC
Turuho Elly	M	ACCORD
Amony Magdalen	F	GRG
Francis Opio	M	GRG
Kilama Charles	M	WORUDET Pader
Amony Jennifer	F	WAN
Oweka Dickens	M	CBW
Okumu Robert	M	C/P LC.3 Acholi Bur
Okello Stephen	M	Daily Monitor
Auruku Job	F	World Vision- Gulu
Opiyo Boniface	M	Gulu district NGO Forum
Pamela Kamlega Akello	F	FIDA Uganda
Aber Rose	F	WAN
Alal Single Dora	F	THRIVE GULU
Odong Jackson	M	RLP- Kitgum
Arnest Tumwesige	M	Vision Group

Okello John Samuel	M	K.K.A
Atyeno Docus	M	JRP
Ayaa Cynthia Komakech	F	HURIFO
Pauline Kabagenyi	F	Save the Children
Acaye Prossy	F	WAN
Arach Jannet	F	Watye Ki Gen
Adong Alice	F	WAN
Okwir Isaac O	M	JRP -
Okulu Job	M	CARITAS
Ladur Jacky	F	Rwot Okonya
Abedkwe Evaline	F	Yap Wangi
Lakot Christine	F	Rwot Okonya
Anek Lillian	F	Yap Wangi
Oromo Concy	F	Rwot Okonya
Lawino Alice	F	
Otim John Bosco	M	Pader

Annex 4: List of participants in Adjumani meeting, 13 September 2016

Name	Sex	Organization/Location/District
Kareo Celina Akulu	F	Amandrea Dzaipi Adjumani
Aciti Stella	F	Amandrea Dzaipi Adjumani
Marido		Amapara Arinyapi Adjumani
Auo Beatrice		Amapara Arinyapi Adjumani
Adibazoto Nancy		Arua district NGO Network
Amal Sabina		O/C Child and Family Adjumani
Okot Moses	M	Gulu District
Oyeru Eunice	F	RICE-WN
Capt. M Waku	M	Culture chief Yumbe
Okot Bernard Kasozi	M	Refugee Law Project
Amony Evelyn	M	JRP
Micheal Otim	M	JRP
Sylvia Opinia	F	Focal Person
Wokorach Simon Peter	M	JRP GULU
IGA Stephen Fallon	M	Arinyapi LG/ ADJ
Odong Patrick	M	JRP
Vuchiri Bosco	M	DZAIPI LG/ ADJ
Atyeno Docus	M	JRP
SABI YAZID Jackson	M	Arinyapi S/C Adjumani
Amoko Richard Amo	M	Arinyapi S/C Adjumani
Loka Festo Macadam	M	Elder Dzaipi S/C ADJ
Kojoki Concy Jane	F	Dzaipi S/C ADJ
Anyanzo John. A	M	ADLG VLCV
Kulia Stella	F	CEFORD- ADJ
Amoko Sunday	F	Amani Fm 89.1 Fm
Moses Musisi	M	DRC
Namutebi Mirriam	F	DRC
Legi James	M	District chairperson

Sabuni John	M	DLC Arinyapi S/County
Akumu Sarah Twindi	F	Dzaipi CDO
His Royal Highness Drani Stephen Izaram	M	Cultural Leader /MADI
Mawadri Rawadhan	M	ADLG- DHQ DCDO
Rex William	M	Dzaipi Clan Chief
Vazso Paulino	M	ADEFO (Elders Forum)
Adrani Mark	M	Radio Pacis
Abio Hellen	F	WAN
Mociruku Harriet	F	WAN
Moriku Betty	F	WAN
Kuni Lucy	F	WAN
Edma Peter	M	Adjumani
Nyanjura Victoria	F	JRP
Draga John	M	Religious Leader
Andiga Martin	M	District Councilor Arinyapi



About the Justice and Reconciliation Project

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.

Mission: JRP's mission is to empower conflict-affected communities to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation. **Vision** A just and peaceful society.

Objectives: We work to ensure 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 for conflict-affected are supported in communities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region • gender- and age-inclusive transitional justice programme development and service delivery are promoted • and our institutional capacity is enhanced to maximise programme delivery and promote sustainability.

Contact Plot 176 Pida-Koro, P.O. Box 1216, Gulu, Uganda. Email info@justiceandreconciliation.com or visit www.justiceandreconciliation.com to learn more.

