# Engaging Men and Boys in Redress for Conflict-SGBV in Northern Uganda

**JRP Field Note 25, March 2017**

www.justiceandreconciliation.com

## 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

All pictures in this publication are courtesy of JRP.

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## Acknowledgments

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# Acronyms

| | |
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| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| ICPD | International Conference on Population and Development |
| ICTJ | International Center for Transitional Justice |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| JLOS | Justice, Law and Order Sector |
| JRP | Justice and Reconciliation Project |
| KII | Key informant Interview |
| LRA | Lord's Resistance Army |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organisation |
| NRA | National Resistance Army |
| NUSAF | Northern Uganda Social Action Fund |
| PRDP | Peace, Recovery and Development Plan |
| RLP | Refugee Law Project |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender-based Violence |
| TJ | Transitional Justice |
| UPDF | Uganda People's Defence Force |
| VSLA | Village Savings and Loan Association |
| WAN | Women's Advocacy Network |

# Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations from widespread consultations by the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) on the conflict experiences of men and boys in northern Uganda and how to effectively engage them in redress for conflict sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

In the last 10 years in which JRP empowered conflict-affected communities in Uganda to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation, especially through the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN), most interventions explicitly targeted women and girls. This was largely because women and girls disproportionately suffered from conflict SGBV. Consequently, men and boys were minimally engaged in redress.

Preliminary discussions that JRP held with the communities in which it works revealed that men and boys often felt neglected in recovery interventions by civil society and government institutions. This led to their resentment and even hostility towards women and girls who were beneficiaries of post-conflict programmes and services.

In August 2015, JRP set out to better understand how men and boys could be engaged in redress for conflict SGBV in northern Uganda. The consultations explored the gendered experiences of men and boys during and as a result of the armed conflict; how it affected gender relations in communities and homes and how men and boys have been and could in future be engaged in redress.

A total of 161 respondents in Dzaipi sub-county in Adjumani district, Atanga sub-county in Pader district, Agweng sub-county in Lira district, and Gulu Municipality in Gulu District were consulted. A desk review was also done to assess comparative models for engaging men in gender-based violence prevention and response.

The report which presents findings and recommendations to inform future interventions by civil society and government, is divided in five core sections: Literature and policy review; the pervasive gender roles and relations in war-affected communities of northern Uganda today; the experiences of men and boys during and as a result of the conflicts; how men and boys have been engaged in redress; and recommendations for incorporating these insights and findings into programming and policies. It is envisaged that this shall guide future programme development for the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) and other civil society actors, as well as inform on-going and future transitional justice (TJ) processes in the country.

Key findings revealed that members of the community recognised men's indispensable role in promoting gender equality and supported male engagement in redress for gendered conflict experiences as well as their involvement in the discourses for TJ, healing and reconciliation.

The recommendations focused on four key areas of improving relationships between women and men in the community; providing greater acknowledgment and redress; engaging men in redress for their experiences; and for engaging men in redress for women's gendered experiences. The specific recommendations are summarised below under each are of focus.

**Improving relationships between women and men in the community**

● Create safe spaces for men and women to discuss issues together such as meetings and gatherings where they would face each other and learn lessons together.
● Organise community dialogue on gender and dealing with the past.
● Provide mixed-sex trainings on conflict resolution and gender equality whereby the men and women would be educated together to reduce on the level of conflict in the homes.
● Promote group sensitisation and peer support for members in the community.
● Form initiatives for conflict mediation, healing and reconciliation through, for instance, peace building groups of duty bearers, communal meals and prayers for reconciliation and forgiveness.
● Attend religious associations.
● Provide support towards economic empowerment through livelihood projects to uplift people from abject poverty.
● Enforce laws strictly especially those prohibiting alcoholism.
● Establish rehabilitation centres to offer psychosocial support, counselling, grassroots information and education.
● Advocate for behavioural change to address moral decadence across all the communities attributed to encampment and urbanisation.
● Provide reparations and/or assistance to victims of conflict.
● Create community projects to bring people together and provide information.

**Providing greater acknowledgment and redress**

● Create community projects in a way that will not only acknowledge the pain of the war but also bring people together.
● Form groups for collective advocacy especially in seeking material support for recovery; for training; truth telling and reconciliation,
● Identify and engage male activists to understand their rights and responsibilities as well as create a better understanding of men's problems in order to get solutions.
● Integrate men's empowerment into programmes of development partners and stakeholders by involving them in community meetings and WAN groups.
● Put in place peer support forums for men to speak out and share their problems and concerns.
● Implement community and family projects as a means of providing acknowledgement and redress.
● Increase support towards formal and

vocational education/training.

● Implement affirmative action targeting men and boys in development and reintegration projects.

● Provide reparation in terms of social services by government as well as awareness creation and legal aid services by NGOs.

● Collect information on numbers and current status of conflict survivors to inform project design and funding support to enable them to receive appropriate support and redress.

● Set up rehabilitation centres for psychosocial support to children and adults with mental health issues.

**Engaging men in redress for their experiences**

● Form male groups for them to get counselling, gather and share opinions on issues concerning them, with influential or role models leading advocacy for the groups and mentoring members.

● Form mixed groups of men and women so that they can share experiences.

● Involve men and boys in training, workshops and other experience-sharing activities of WAN and other stakeholders.

● Engage role models to educate fellow men about the importance of groups; inspire and encourage them to air out their concerns and demand their right to receive recovery support.

**Engaging men in redress for women's gendered experiences**

● Engage men in their spouses' group activities so that they are informed and their understanding is enhanced on women's redress issues in order for them to advocate for women's rights;

curb domestic violence and give views on how to support women.

● Train men and build their capacity on peace building.

● Initiate group projects of men and women for them to understand women's rights; have a common understanding of goals; and share how to collectively achieve them.

● Advocate for behavioural change to refrain from gossip and instead get involved in meetings where women share their stories, experiences and issues.

● Involve men and women in joint Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) as a way to achieve economic independence and in order to allow them to prepare well for their future and that of their children.

● It is hoped that through the report, future interventions that mainstream gender equality would address not only women's gendered experiences, but also that of men and boys, ensuring that efforts for recovery and rehabilitation do not exclude or undermine men's and boys' gendered experiences.

**Improving relationships between women and men in the community**

● Create safe spaces for men and women to discuss issues together such as meetings and gatherings where they would face each other and learn lessons together.

● Organise community dialogue on gender and dealing with the past.

● Provide mixed-sex trainings on conflict resolution and gender equality whereby the men and women would be educated together to reduce on the level of conflict in the homes.

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peer support for members in the community.

● Form initiatives for conflict mediation, healing and reconciliation through, for instance, peace building groups of duty bearers, communal meals and prayers for reconciliation and forgiveness.

● Attend religious associations.

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● Create community projects to bring people together and provide information.

# Introduction

For the last ten years, the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) has empowered conflict-affected communities in Uganda to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation. In 2011, JRP supported the creation of the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN), a forum where more than 500 women come together to advocate for justice, acknowledgment and accountability for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) inflicted on them during Uganda's longstanding conflicts. Over time, JRP has observed that most interventions, including the WAN, explicitly target women and girls since they disproportionately suffered from conflict SGBV in the setting. Engaging men and boys in redress for their own gendered conflict experiences, and the conflict experiences of women and girls, has been very minimal.

Eager to better understand the cause and effect of this programming bias on reconciliation and redress, JRP began discussing the matter with the communities in which it works. Preliminary discussions with WAN members suggested that men and boys often feel neglected in recovery interventions by civil society and government institutions, which are perceived to focus exclusively on women and girls. This has led to [men's] resentment and even hostility of women and girls who are beneficiaries of post-conflict programmes and services, contributing to their sustained revictimisation.[1]

In August 2015, JRP set out to better understand how men and boys could be engaged in redress for conflict SGBV in northern Uganda. The consultations explored the gendered experiences of men and boys during and as a result of armed conflict, how conflicts have affected gender relations in communities and homes and how men and boys have been engaged in redress for conflict SGBV to date and the desire to be engaged in the future. This report summarises these findings and seeks to inform future interventions by civil society and government with insights into how to better engage men and boys in seeking redress for conflict-related wrongs.

The consultations were conducted in a participatory manner in Dzaipi sub-county in Adjumani district, Atanga sub-county in Pader district, Agweng sub-county in Lira district, and Gulu Municipality in Gulu District. A total of 161 respondents (99 male, 62 female) participated in focus group discussions and/or key informant interviews facilitated by JRP. Given the extensive

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[1]Opiyo, LM and Kahunde, CJ. (2014). Establishing the Extent of SGBV Re-victimisation among Female Survivors of Conflict SGBV in Northern Uganda; Report Summary on a baseline Study and Pre-project Assessment on Redress for SGBV on Conflict-Related Wrongs Available at: http://justiceandreconciliation.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SGBV-Baseline-Report-Summary-WEB.pdf

network of the WAN—and JRP's interest in developing better, more holistic programming that benefits the women, their families and their communities more broadly—respondents included 23 WAN members; 28 spouses, 21 sons, 21 male family heads (fathers, uncles, brothers), 18 mothers-in-law or grandmothers of WAN members; and 23 random community members, two civil society representatives and 25 local and district government officials.

A desk review was also done to assess comparative models for engaging men in gender-based violence prevention and response.

Following this introduction, this report is divided into five core sections: Section One comprises of a literature and policy review, Section Two highlights the pervasive gender roles and relations in war-affected communities of northern Uganda today, Section Three explores the experiences of men and boys during and as a result of the conflicts, Section Four explores how men and boys have been engaged in redress, and Section Five provides recommendations and opportunities for incorporating these insights and findings in programming and policies.

# Background

The following section provides insight into conflict SGBV, gender justice and programming to engage men, and an overview of the relevant policy frameworks internationally and in Uganda.

## Conflict SGBV

SGBV can be defined as physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the community, including battering, sexual abuse of children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other cultural practices related to one's gender and sex, non-spousal violence, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere and condoned by the state. [2]Conflict-related sexual violence refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilisation, forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or  boys that is directly or indirectly linked (temporally, geographically or indirectly or casually) to a conflict. This link with conflict may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator (often affiliated with a state or non-state armed group), the profile of the victim (who is frequently a member of a persecuted political, ethnic or religious minority), the climate of impunity (which is generally associated with State collapse), cross-border consequences (such as displacement or trafficking in persons) and/or violations of the terms of a ceasefire agreement.[3]

During northern Uganda's numerous conflicts from the late-1980s to mid-2000s, conflict SGBV was perpetrated against women and men, girls and boys, by a wide range of state and non-state actors, including the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), National Resistance Army (NRA) and Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF), among others. Specific violations include rape, forced marriage, forced pregnancy, sexual torture and sexual exploitation.[4] For instance, during the 2005 Atiak massacre, the LRA rounded up community members and separated the mothers, pregnant women and children from the rest.

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2United Nations General Assembly. December 1993.  Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Available at: http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm

3United Nations. April 2016.Report of The Secretary General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. http://www.stoprapenow.org/uploads/advocacyresources/1464291095.pdf.

4Apio, N. November 2015. ''My body, a battlefield: Survivors' Experiences of Conflict Sexual Violence in Koch Ongako.''JRP, Uganda. http://justiceandreconciliation.com/publications/field-notes/2015/my-body-a-battlefield-survivors-experiences-of-conflict-sexual-violence-in-koch-ongako/

They then massacred the men and childless women, while the separated group looked on.[5]  As such, most experiences, and their enduring consequences, have strong gendered dimensions.

However, gender-based violence and gender justice are typically erroneously understood to mean women's issues due to high rates of violence against women globally and increasingly vocal advocacy and programming to target the advancement of women and girls. While women and girls disproportionately suffered from sexual violations during periods of conflict in Uganda due to the strategies and tactics of conflict actors, men also experienced widespread SGBV. Few initiatives have acknowledged the gendered experiences of men and boys, and their enduring consequences in the present. For instance, even during post-conflict period, there continues to be high rates of SGBV, especially against women and girls, as conflicts have transferred into the home and family spheres.[6]  There is increasing evidence that post-conflict situations encourage and sustain SGBV due to a combination of compounding factors, such as family dissolutions, loss of livelihoods and wartime trauma. Socially, in northern Uganda, women increasingly have adopted traditional "male" roles such as providers and

decision-makers, which has resulted in an increase in men using violence against women out of frustration and unconscious or conscious attempts to reassert power and control.[7] Frances Cleaver calls such "crises of masculinity," citing how changes in the economy, social structures and household compositions result in domestic violence and negotiated gender roles in public and/or private spheres.[8]  This observation holds true in northern Uganda, in which the roles of men and women have evolved greatly throughout the conflict and post-conflict periods.[9]

# Engaging men in gender justice

Gender justice can be defined as:

> …the protection and promotion of civil, political, economic and social rights on the basis of gender equality. It necessitates taking a gender perspective on the rights themselves, as well as the assessment of access and obstacles to the enjoyment of these rights for both women and men, girls and boys and adopting gender-sensitive strategies for protecting and promoting them.[10]

[5]JRP. April 2007. Remembering the Atiak massacre. Liu Institute for global issues and the Gulu district NGO Forum. Available at: http://justiceandreconciliation.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/04/JRP_FN4_Atiak.pdf
[6]Ibid. Opiyo, LM and Kahunde, CJ.
[7]UNFPA. 2012. Sexual Violence in Conflict & Post Conflict: Engaging Men and Boys-Men Engage-UNFPA Advocacy Brief. Available at: http://www.michaelkaufman.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/Sexual-Violence-in-Conflict-Engaging-Men-Boys-MenEngage-UNFPA-Advocacy-Brief-prepared-by-Michael-Kaufman-2012.pdf
[8]Cleaver, F. 2002. 'Men and Masculinities: New Directions in Gender and Development' In Phillip, D(ed). Masculinities Matter! Men, Gender and Development.London, New York: Zed Booksand Cape town pp 1-2
[9]Esuruku,RS. November 2011. Beyond Masculinities: Gender, Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Northern Uganda. Journal of Science and Sustainable Development4(0):25-40. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/5756921/Beyond_Masculinity_Gender_Conflict_and_Post-Conflict_Reconstruction_in_Northern_Uganda
[10]Spees, P. 2004. Gender Justice and accountability in peace support operations. In Valji, N. 2007. Gender Justice and reconciliation. Available at:  http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/05000.pdf. p.7

Globally, there is growing acknowledgment that men must be involved in efforts to achieve justice and equality for women, address structural determinants and to mitigate and prevent SGBV if there is to be any impact or progress in such efforts. This is traceable to the realisation that, at times, rigid gender norms of masculinity discourage men from challenging violence against women and supporting their partners to achieve greater parity. Instead, these norms can encourage men to be engaged in a variety of high-risk and potentially violent behaviours.[11] According to Rachel Jewkes et al.[12], men's use of violence against women and girls is closely related to their use of violence against other men, and in some cases, their own experiences as victims.[13] They (Jewkes et al) further note that ideas and values related to gender affect how men view themselves as men, their social and intimate relationships and institutions and policy frameworks. If men are key actors in SGBV, both as victims and perpetrators, then it is reasonable to assert that they are key actors in any efforts to respond to the causes and effects of this violence.

Unfortunately, this has not been the norm. According to Zainab Salbi, men in conflict and post-conflict societies are often cast in simplistic identities such as violent aggressors, leaders who encourage bloodshed, soldiers who use rape to humiliate their enemies and husband who beat their wives.[14] While it is true that men at times play these roles, little has been done to nuance the social conditioning and victimhood of men and why they may result in such destructive behaviours. While "men" is often synonymous with "perpetrator" when discussing conflict SGBV, one does not think of creating partnerships with both men and women to better the lives of both. However, strategic gender partnerships between men and women are crucial to ensure that men do not become obstacles to development or contribute to sustained gender [in] equality.[15]

While this report looks specifically into engaging men in redress for conflict SGBV, a number of initiatives to engage men have been pioneered globally, covering a number of issues that could offer comparative lessons for future interventions in northern Uganda. Notably, Instituto Promundo from Brazil is recognised for using group education, community-based media and male-friendly health services to promote gender equality.[16] The Coaching Boys into Men programme in the United States uses mentoring approaches and media campaigns to address gender-based violence.[17]

[11]Sonke Gender Justice. September 2013. Men Engage Africa Training Initiative: Masculinities, Leadership and Gender Justice Training Course. University of Cape Town.: South Africa.Available at: http://menengage.org/menengage-africa-training-initiative/

[12]Jewkes, R et al. April 2015. Violence against Women and Girls 3 Series, From work with men and boys to changes of social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: a conceptual shift in prevention of violence against women and girls. Available at: http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)61683-4/abstract?rss=yes

[13]Jewkes, R et al. Novemeber 2015. From work with men and boys to change social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: a conceptual shift in prevention of violence against women and girls. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61683-4

[14]Flood, M et al. 2007. Critical Half Engaging Men in "Women's Issues: Inclusive Approaches to Gender and Development. Bi-Annual Journal of Women for Women International,5(1): Available at: http://wfwmarketingimages.womenforwomen.org/news-women-for-women/assets/files/critical-half/CriticalHalf.pdf.

[15]Ibid. Cleaver, F. 2002 pp1-25

[16]Unknown. July 2015. When men change: A Promundo film. Available at: www.promundoglobal.org

[17]https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/engaging-men/coaching-boys-into-men/

The Men Stopping Violence programme in Atlanta, Georgia, works to end male violence against women and uses an ecological, community-based accountability model as the foundation of its analysis of the problem of male violence against women and of its work with individual and in communities.[18] In South Africa, Stepping Stones uses participatory learning to build more gender equitable relationships between men and women. Engender Health's Men as Partners programme facilitates men to play constructive roles in promoting gender equality and health in their families and communities, viewing men as clients, partners and agents of change.[19] Men Care+ programme, a tenet of the Men Care campaign by Promundo and Rutgers, collaboratively engages men as partners in maternal, new-born child health and in sexual and reproductive health and rights. The plus (+) represents the targeted effort of bringing men into the healthcare system as active and positive participants in their own health and that of their partners and children.[20] Men's Action for Stopping Violence against Women in Uttar Pradesh in India works to react and reduce incidents of violence against women through cultural and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness and recruit new networks of members who will work for institutional changes in gender relations. All of these programmes have provided their male beneficiaries with a space and platform to practice alternative models of masculinity.[21]

Although there is no universal model for engaging men in gender-related programming, the aforementioned programmes offer insights into best practices in the contexts where they operate, which could be adapted and modified to the situation in northern Uganda.

Admittedly, within the Transitional Justice (TJ) sphere, there is substantially less attention on the gendered experiences of men, or engaging men to seek redress for conflict SGBV. The majority of the existing literature on gender justice focuses on the extent to which women participate in TJ processes and receive justice, overlooking the gendered experiences of men and sexual minorities.[22] The International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), which runs a programme on gender justice, acknowledges that "neglect of gendered patterns of abuse ultimately limits women's and men's access to justice."[23] The Refugee Law Project (RLP) in Uganda runs a unique programme on gender and sexuality that includes support groups for male survivors of conflict sexual violence. In 2013, they hosted the first South-South Institute on Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict and Displacement.[24]

[18]Douglas, U et al. 2008. Deconstructing Male Violence Against Women, The Men Stopping Violence Community-Accountability Model SAGE Journals. Available at: http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/14/2/247.abstract
[19]Unknown. 2016. Available at: www.engenderhealth.org
[20]Unknown. 2016. A global fatherhood campaign. Available at: http://men-care.org/what-we-do/programming/mencareplus/
[21]Stern, O et al. 2009. Working With Men & Boys: Emerging Strategies from Across Africa to address GBV & HIV. Sonke Gender Justice and Men Engage Network. Available at: http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Working_w_BoysMen-Emerging_Strat_from_Afr__Addressing_GBV__HIV_2009.pdf
[22]Although outside the scope of this report, the gendered experiences of sexual minorities in conflict is severely under-acknowledged.
[23]Unknown. 2010. Available at: https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Global-Gender-Justice-2010-English.pdf.
[24]Unknown. 2013. Available at: http://refugeelawproject.org/files/others/SSI_2013_report.pdf.

# Policy frameworks

Internationally, a number of legal instruments have been created to promote gender equality, protect and advance women and girls' rights and protect victims of sexual violence. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. In addition, UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1960, 2160 and 2122 affirm women's participation in peace building and outline practices to protect women and girls from conflict sexual violence.

While the majority of the gender-related international instruments focus on women and girls, there are a number that acknowledge the importance of engaging men. For instance, the fourth principle of the 1995 programme of action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt – which focused on gender equality, equity and empowerment of women – calls for male responsibilities and participation, which is premised on the idea that changes in both men's and women's knowledge, attitudes and behaviour are necessary conditions for achieving the harmonious partnership of men and women. It further stresses that men play a key role in bringing about gender equality, since in most societies men exercise preponderant power in nearly every sphere of life, ranging from personal decisions to policy and programme decisions taken at all levels of government.[25] The programme of action's objective, therefore, was to promote gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community, and to encourage and enable men to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and their social and family roles.

The 1995 Programme of Action of the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen and its 2000 review in Geneva, in their call towards an enabling environment for social development while acknowledging obstacles faced by women, advocated for the establishment of equitable partnership between men and women, involving men's full responsibility in family life and also calling for the change in the prevailing social paradigm of gender to usher in a new generation of women and men working together to create a more humane world order.[26] The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action emphasised that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality around the world.

The 2009 Rio Declaration issued at the First Global Symposium on Engaging Men and Boys on Achieving Gender Equality in Rio de Janiero, Brazil, called for all players (parents, teachers, media, businesses, governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), religious institutions and the United Nations) to mobilise the political will and economic resources required to increase the scale and impact of work

[25]UNPF. September 2014. Programme of action of the international conference on population development. Available at: http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf.

[26]United Nations. World summit for social development programme of action   Available at:  http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/text-version/agreements/poach1.htm

with men and boys in order to promote gender equality. It was argued that this would not only go towards reshaping the policies and priorities that support gender equality and the wellbeing of women, children and men, but also reshape the world of men and boys, and their beliefs and lives generally.[27]

UN Security Council Resolution 2242, the most recent resolution to improve implementation of landmark 1325, reiterates the importance of engaging men and boys as partners in promoting women's participation in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, peace building and post-conflict situations.[28] In September 2014, UN Women launched the He for She campaign, which engages men and boys as advocates and agents of change for the achievement of gender equality and women's rights.[29] In a recent address by the UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngluka on behalf of the UN Secretary General, it was stated that the focus should not just be on what women can do but also on what men can do, as they are ones who are dominant in the spaces.[30] Similarly, Sonke Gender Justice's One Man Can campaign supports men and boys to take action to end domestic and sexual violence and to promote healthy, equitable relationships that men

and women can enjoy passionately, respectfully and fully.[31]

While most of the aforementioned policies and programmes focus on peace building and gender equality more broadly, the UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law (herein after referred to as the UN Basic Principles) specifically focus on redress for victims of conflict, though they do not make special provisions for gender or sex.[32]

Also directly related to TJ, in 2011 the UN Human Rights Council appointed a Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence,[33] who is expected to lead the implementation of a comprehensive approach to the elements under his mandate and help to ensure accountability, serve justice, provide remedies to victims, promote healing and reconciliation and ensure social cohesion.

Nationally in Uganda, the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, which is the supreme law, acknowledges the "equality of both men and women

[27]http://www.bwss.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/TheDeclaration.pdf

[28]UNSC. October 2015. Resolution 2242(2015). Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf

[29]Unknown. 2015. Available at: http://www.heforshe.org/en

[30]UN-Women. October 2015. "Men on the Stand: Men's roles in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325." New York Available at: www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/10/ed-men-on-the-stand-event-speech

[31]Unknown. 2013. One man can campaign. Available at: http://preventgbvafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Introduction_and_Overview.pdf

[32]UNHR. 2005. Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law. Available at:http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/RemedyAndReparation.aspx

[33]UNHR. 2005. Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence Available at: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/TruthJusticeReparation/Pages/Index.aspx
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/TruthJusticeReparation/Pages/Index.aspx

in all spheres of life"[34] and national policies like the Uganda Gender Policy have emanated from there to confirm the government's unequivocal commitment to taking actions that bring about more equal gender relations and are consistent with its long-term goal of eliminating gender inequalities. In the national TJ realm, significantly, Agenda Item No. 3 in the agreement on accountability and reconciliation between the Government and the LRA during the Juba peace process sets the stage for the promotion of national legal arrangements consisting of formal and non-formal institutions and measures for ensuring justice and reconciliation with respect to armed conflict. To this end, the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) has worked on a draft National Transitional Justice Policy that is designed to address justice, accountability and reconciliation needs of post-conflict Uganda, and it is before

Cabinet for approval. The Kampala Declaration is another relevant instrument that shows an undertaking by heads of states in the Great Lakes Region to unite in preventing and ending impunity and providing support for victims of SGBV.[35] While provisions generally acknowledge gender equality, there is no exclusive mention on how men and boys would be engaged.

The body of literature and policies on the importance of involving and engaging men in gender justice, especially in relation to addressing conflict SGBV, is emerging though not yet as extensive as other engagements like in sexual and reproductive rights. In a discussion on a series, titled "The Other Side of Gender," in response to why men should be involved in discussions about women in conflict, a panelist noted that men are too often left out of discussions about the targeted victimisation of women in



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[34] Article 21 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.1995

[35] Declaration of the Heads of State & Government of the Member States of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region at the 4th Ordinary Summit & Special Session on Sexual & Gender Based Violence, Kampala, 15th-16th December 2011.

[36] US Institute of Peace,www,usip.org/events/the-other-side-gender

conflict and that the extreme sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) brought this gendered lens to the forefront.[36] It was agreed by the panelists that any proposed solution to the problem is incomplete without understanding the underlying predicaments and motivations of men and boys as well as the complex relationships between men and women in these societies. Involvement of men benefits both men and women since gender is relational.

[36]US Institute of Peace,www,usip.org/events/the-other-side-gender

# Gender Roles and Relations in War-Affected Communities

This section presents the different roles attached to being male or female in surveyed communities in northern Uganda, which represent a reflection of varied societal norms, constructions and expectations, as well as biological factors. Although such gendered constructions vary greatly within and across societies, this research reveals the prevailing norms and expectations among communities in northern Uganda, which were heavily affected by the LRA insurgency. Still, it works on the premise that while these societal constructions of gender roles can be held constant, they can also be changed by the dynamics of conflict and displacement, as well as modernity. This premise is further buttressed by many interviewees that made reference to a certain way of being that was acceptable or ideal prior to conflict in relation to gender roles that were changed, lost, diluted, or reversed due to conflict.

## Roles and expectations of men

Most groups have almost the same perceptions with regard to the roles and expectations of men, which mostly point to their responsibilities as heads of families, except for the community members who added that aside from being leaders within the family circle, men also have responsibilities within the communities, and should ensure that family members conform to acceptable community behaviours.

Men are perceived to be strong, authoritative, action-oriented, and decision-makers, thus representing cultural, traditional and modern trends of masculinity. In the family and community spaces, men are revered as the stronger sex and more the dominant figure, displaying physical and emotional toughness. One respondent stated "men are biologically different from women and were created by God with different strength and abilities. Culturally, men are considered powerful." [37]

Men are recognised as leaders who exercise control and authority at home, set house rules and policies, and plan for the family. "Everyone at home is under the authority of a man,"[38] shared a local leader from Gulu, manifesting how even in the leadership structures, men are seen as authoritative figures.

[37]Male spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[38]Local leader respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015

As decision-makers, their opinions are often considered final, and this applies even on deciding how many children a wife should bear. A community member said that "men decide on the number of children and women are expected to obey such decisions and not dissent, otherwise they will be described as disrespectful."[39] Men are also considered problem-solvers, as they are expected to handle domestic issues, mediate family conflicts and help solve community problems.

At home men are regarded as providers and protectors as they are expected to be breadwinners who provide the family's basic needs such as food, shelter and education, and ensure the family's wellbeing and welfare is taken care of. Men are expected to be physically stronger than women, and more physically challenging activities in the domestic sphere such as digging, construction, gardening, farming, gathering wild fruits and hunting animals are assigned to them. Men are also expected to protect women, their family members, their homes, their communities, and their clans. The protection ranges from unlawful intrusion to their territory, to interference in their family and community's privacy.

Men are further expected to establish and nurture harmonious relationships with women as well as treat them with respect. A respondent suggested that, "Before spending money to buy farm implements, a husband should first discuss such decision with his wife in order to avoid conflict."[40] Respecting women, it was noted, would include helping them in attending to domestic responsibilities and also maintaining good health by not acting as carriers of sexually-transmitted diseases like Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome HIV and AIDS.

# Roles and expectations of women

Most respondents pointed to the subsidiary role of women to men, when asked about women's roles and relations in society. Women are often expected to obey and support men by taking care of and satisfying the men's needs and remaining faithful to them. Unlike men who are seen to be competitive and have many abilities, women were seen as not being able to act with urgency based on their perceived physical and emotional weaknesses. Stereotypes against women described them as weak, soft, obedient, submissive and faithful. A WAN member from Lira objected to such perception, complaining that in her community, "Even if men do something bad, women should do something good to earn men's respect."[41]

Women play the role of childbearing and upbringing and as such are expected to nurture and raise their children, making sacrifices for them to grow and succeed. Believed to a natural mothering instinct, women must ensure their children's health, safety, education and wellbeing, as these are important responsibilities they cannot abandon. More than a mere domestic responsibility, however, it is believed that it is the women's natural

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[39]Community member respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015

[40]Family head respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015

[41]WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015

love and affection for their children that make being a mother their ultimate vocation. Regarding his mother with utmost respect, a respondent shared, "My mother takes care of me, and I know she will be there with me from my childhood to adult years. If I get sick, I know she will be there to accompany me to get proper treatment. She works really hard, so she can pay my school fees and I can go to school without interruptions."[42]

Household or domestic responsibilities are largely left for women and these may include sweeping the compound, cleaning the premises, planting vegetables and fruits in the backyard, collecting fire wood, cooking meals, making their homes beautiful, washing dirty clothes, etc. Keeping the cleanliness of the home and welcoming visitors warmly and giving them the best hospitality are considered an important duty for women. Women are also expected to extend respect the clan members and maintain good and harmonious relationships with them. They are barred from doing activities that can bring disgrace to the family and clan. Considered as a crown to her husband, a woman must exemplify virtues that her husband can be proud of and brag about among the members of the clan. But when she does shameful acts, she is considered a disgrace to the husband.

Others in society deduce women as mere objects, whose value can be quantified and which a man can purchase to assume ownership. This relates to the tradition of paying bride price, which is pecuniary in most cases and can be manipulated to force women to act or behave in a certain way by her husband or his family. Expressing his objection to such an abuse of tradition, a family head from Pader observed that, "Women are considered property because they are bought like objects using bride price."[43] Bride price is determined by a woman's family based on her perceived value.

# Changing roles due to conflict

The LRA insurgency disrupted countless lives, bringing both men and women into battle zones, and led to changes in the understanding and construction of gender roles. Women and girls often bore the brunt of sexual violence, as they were targeted and used as weapons of war by different conflict parties. Thousands of women were tortured, subjected to rape, forced into marriages with rebels and subjected to sexual exploitation in the camps, among other violations. Due to their status in society as nurturers, women bore and continue to bear the primary duty of taking care of their families and children, including those born out of conflict sexual violence. They are expected to carry out these roles without social and economic support, as they are often denied access to land, have little-to-no skills to access gainful employment and suffer health complications that make it difficult for them to engage in hard casual labour. These problems, together with the violations they suffer, make them vulnerable to continuous SGBV.

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[42]Son respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[43]Family head respondent, focus group discussion, Pader town, August 2015

Men, on the other hand, also suffered violations and were targeted for abduction, forced to carry heavy loads, and were subjected to sexual violations meant to demean and humiliate them. Like women, they also languished in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, missed opportunities to go to school, lost their families and livelihoods, suffered physical and mental injuries, lost access to land and some contracted HIV and AIDS. An unknown number of men were killed during the conflict, leading to a rise in female-headed households and a shortage of positive male role models for children growing up with only their mothers. According to one respondent, "I have not seen my father, so his role in raising and guiding me as a boy has been missing. This is why I miss the love coming from a father so much."[44]

Other men remained physically present but neglected their wives and children or abandoned their family responsibilities due to physical and psychological trauma or the changes in lifestyle caused by the war. For instance, as recounted by a local leader, "During encampment, while men enjoyed the benefits of relief assistance, they always feared for their lives. They thus restricted their movements, in which case, they became even lazier to do their responsibilities because they no longer enjoyed certain levels of freedom which they once had prior to insurgency."[45] This often left women to assume the men's roles of protector and provider, increasing their workload and aggravating the many forms of abuses against them due to increased vulnerabilities as well as resentment from men. Many men felt

[44]Son respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[45]Local leader respondent, focus group discussion, Pader town, August 2015

disempowered and demoralised when they were stripped of their ability to provide for and protect their families, and they turned to alcohol and drugs as a defense and coping mechanism to deal with the effects of war. Very few civil society or government initiatives during the conflict and post-conflict periods have tried to understand these men's lived conflict experiences and design programmes to include and cater for their needs.

# Relationships between men and women in the post-conflict period

While the conflicts in northern Uganda brought unimaginable horrors, the post-conflict scenarios have been fraught with challenges and suffering as well. Over time, the protracted conflict between the LRA and government greatly changed gender roles and norms, affecting the relationships between the sexes up until today. The emasculation of men that occurred during the conflict has largely continued into the post-conflict period. Men are regularly associated with negative behaviours like violence and drug and alcohol abuse, and it is said that a "war mentality" and lifestyle in the camps led them to become "spoilt," "drunkards" and "womanisers." These behaviours have led to increased tension between men and women, especially in the home, and allegations that both men and women have less respect for one another. One respondent alluded to this by saying, *"There is no love within the family. We may sleep on the same bed but without open communication. Few men show respect to women."[46]*

Many men still hold on to pre-conflict gender norms where men are a source of leadership and strength in the family, whilst an increasing number of women demand for more equitable power and influence. In northern Uganda, there are wide range of targeted interventions and mass sensitisation by civil society and government actors to empower girls and women, which have increased women's participation in decision-making and enhanced recognition of women's rights. However, because these actions largely target women and girls as beneficiaries and participants, there is a gap in bringing men into the process, leading to suspicion, misunderstanding and tension between men and women, and change that is slow to trickle down to more equitable family dynamics.

Respondents in this study noted that there is still a power imbalance in many relationships in the communities in which *"household assets are sold by men without consulting women causing conflict and violence."[47]* Many men are reluctant to cooperate with women in solving family problems. The situation is often worse for female survivors of conflict related SGBV who have children born of war, and divorce rates are high. *"People used to respect religion and clans, and divorce was rare, but now due to poverty, divorce and family separation are becoming rampant."[48]* Respondents were asked for their views on what is causing the persistence of such conflict and tension within relationships between men and women in the post-conflict period. The common answers were:

[46]WAN Member , Focus Group Discussion, Adjumani , August 2015
[47]Civil society respondent, key informant interview, Gulu town, August 2015
[48]Former spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015

● Psychological factors such as lack of trust and understanding, trauma, women's denial of men's sexual needs (which is construed as abuse and disrespect), loss of hope and motivation, violent tendencies and neglect of duties due to alcoholism;

● Power imbalance such as competition over who should head the family which can lead to violence when a man feels he is not recognised as holding that role;

● Economic reasons such as disagreement as to how to spend families' resources, rivalry on the management of resources, conflict during harvest times where men get more produce than the women, selling property without women's approval, men not providing for the needs of the home, poverty and lack of access to education and employment;

● Behavioural problems such as alcoholism, gossiping, verbal abuse, laziness and not showing affection for children;

● Domestic issues such as loss of property and taking away property without the consent or knowledge of the other party;

● Relationship challenges such as disunity, adultery, illicit affairs, infidelity, jealousy, polygamy, failure to come up with common agreements, not enough sensitisation on how important it is to keep peace in the family and community, misunderstanding, divorce, ignorance and lack of respect for others;

● Health conditions such as contracting HIV/AIDS; and

● Natural disasters such prolonged drought.

# Positive relationships and sources of peace in the post-conflict period

Conflict may be devastating but it also brings with it opportunities for social transformation. Post-conflict interventions by government structures, civil society organisations and other players in gradually sensitising communities about their rights and responsibilities have improved gendered constructions and created spaces for discussions in the communities about issues that may have been brought up by the conflicts and encouraged assertion of rights which were once violated.

Families make efforts to maintain peace, love and unity despite the odds by helping one another and doing activities together like eating, working and playing. Some spouses do address issues together and find ways to reach a common understanding. Children also support their parents and help in doing household chores. For example, a son from Gulu shared that, *"In the past, cleaning the house and sweeping the backyard were considered women's jobs, but now, men share these responsibilities, as we all now have understood that responsibilities at home have to be shared in order to develop more teamwork and harmony."*[49]

In cases of conflict, many families call meetings to help address issues, resolve conflicts and restore relationships. A spouse from Pader shared how effective open communication can be in resolving disputes, saying that, *"There*

[49]Family member respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015

*is free speech in such family gatherings and anyone can express their opinion."[50]* A spouse from Lira commended his wife and children because they *"give me renewed energies despite being old and weak, and thus I am grateful."[51]*

Seeing how conflict silenced women in various ways, their participation in community decision-making structures is being advocated for and adopted in the post-conflict phase, even if this does not always happen in families. A family head from Adjumani shared, *"In terms of domestic relationships, men are still dominant, but in terms of community participation, women are gradually becoming more empowered and successful than men. Women's sensitisation and increased awareness lead them to participate in organisations' activities and community meetings, where they discuss their rights and their campaigns against domestic violence."[52]*

Therefore, while conflict can affect relationships negatively, there can be ways to establish peace within the family and the community, and not to allow the prevalence of fear and anger caused by war to defeat the hopes for peaceful and harmonious life. Respondents shared various perspectives on how to transform relationships that were affected by conflict and asserted that upon the confluence of the following efforts, peace is possible and can be maintained:

● Respect, love, faith, unity and understanding are key to successful relationships. A spouse from Gulu gave the example of *"refraining from the use of abusive language."[53]* A district officer from Lira added that *"recognition and appreciation of efforts"* are vital.[54] A spouse from Adjumani emphasised "sharing of ideas and of responsibilities."[55] A family head from Adjumani suggested "men's acknowledgment of their role to ensure their family's success uplifts relationships."[56]

● Transparency and openness are also important values to achieve peace. When couples are informed of their rights, they make collective efforts to claim and assert them. When transparent efforts are made to fight against domestic violence and resolve internal issues, family members cooperate. A community member from Adjumani shared how *"family meetings are organised to discuss family conditions and help build strong faith in the family and in the community."[57]*

● When couples are engaged in religious and spiritual activities, there is also peace, instilling the virtues of humility, patience, and compassion in their day-to-day living.

● Couples understand the value of maintaining the family's wellbeing.

● Sufficient resources to sustain family needs bring stability. A savings culture, for instance, has not only helped improve the cooperation between spouses, but also brought peace of mind to family members.

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[50]Spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Pader town, August 2015
[51]Spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015
[52]Family head respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[53]Spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[54]District officer respondent, key informant interview, Lira town, August 2015
[55]Spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[56]Family head respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[57]Community member respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015

● It is important to agree on a common decision. A WAN member from Gulu suggested, *"Before one sells land, discuss it first as a family. That is showing respect."*[58]

# How victimisation affects relationships

The dynamics of relationships in the family and community are affected in different ways when either or both man and woman are victims of war, including when they are formerly abducted or were sexually or physically abused. Victimisation can happen when the knowledge of the other's experiences changes one's perceptions towards the other and causes negative assumptions or behaviours. Respondents shared how such victimisation affects relationships as follows:

**Stigmatisation:** Reintegration into normal community life has been difficult for some formerly abducted persons due to various forms of stigma present in the society. Formerly abducted women in particular are often perceived negatively and labelled as "wives of Kony," "rebel," "killer," or "mad person." A son from Gulu shared that, *"Victims are feared, discriminated and disrespected in the community, and are blamed for their own fate as abductees."*[59] A local leader from Lira expressed that, *"There are stigmas on returnees and men think that formerly abducted women are infected with sexually transmitted diseases."*[60] Others presume that those who have returned from the bush have violent tendencies and unstable mentalities, thus affecting the family's peace. A woman who has returned from the bush can be rejected by her husband because of fear that she had sexual relationships with several men during her time in captivity. Although both men and women can be stigmatised for the time spent with the rebels, respondents suggested that communities more readily accept than women.

*"If a man is abducted, relationships are fine, but when a woman is abducted, it is used against her,"*[61] shares a WAN member from Lira. A civil society representative from Gulu added that, *"When one is abducted, his or her relationships are affected due to the tendency to isolate, to resort to violence and to get psychologically affected due to stigmatisation."*[62] Although tens of thousands of people are believed to have returned from captivity over the years, receiving communities have not been adequately prepared or sensitised to welcome and host former combatants.

**Shame:** This is a psychological state that also affects marital relationships and hinders peaceful socialisation. Shame makes someone feel unaccepted. Although shame affects men and women, this study found that shame is mostly associated with women whom society perceives to have lost their dignity and purity as a result of the war. For instance, men feel ashamed of women who returned from the bush, and before they accept to reunite with them, they often ask the women to undergo medical check-ups

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[58] WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[59] Son respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[60] Local leader respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015
[61] WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015
[62] CSO respondent, key informant interview, Gulu town, August 2015

to ensure they have not been affected by sexually transmitted diseases. Shame is also associated with loss of pride and integrity. One example was shared by a random community member from Adjumani who observed that, *"Victims feel demoralised to see themselves incapacitated to pursue their dreams due to physical and psychological challenges, while their contemporaries are advancing their education and careers."*[63]

**Abuse:** Different forms of abuse affect relationships between men and women, and verbal and sexual abuse is persistent in many families. A son from Pader said, *"Relationships are strained, especially for women who get fearful when their husbands get aggressive due to arguments."* [64] A local leader

from Pader also shared, *"Children born of war are mistreated by women outside of their current relationships."*[65]

**Trauma:** Many men and women in northern Uganda are traumatised and their actions and emotions are hostile. Some victims cannot move on peacefully with post-conflict life because they are always haunted by the bad memories of war, which cause episodes of violence towards themselves and others. Trauma and fear cause some victims to trigger fights with family members. A WAN member from Adjumani suggested that, *"Some of the victims engage in relationships or marriages, but eventually cannot sustain them due to violent tendencies causing conflict."*



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[63]Random community member respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[64]Son respondent, focus group discussion, Pader town, August 2015
[65]WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015

# Experiences of Men and Boys during and after Conflict

The following section highlights the experiences of men and boys during and after conflict as described by respondents.

## During conflict

Conflict in northern Uganda has been experienced and suffered by men and boys in sometimes unique ways due to their gender roles and norms and the ways in which rights violations were committed and understood in light of those roles and norms. The following is a summary of the conflict experiences of men and boys as shared by the respondents:

**Abduction:** Men and boys were targeted for abduction and taken to the bush for forced military training. Their experiences in captivity were often characterised by hard labour and being forced to carry heavy luggage, and if they showed signs of weakness or seeking to escape, they faced torture and brutal death. If they complained, their mouths would be padlocked and genitals cut. In order to survive, they were forced to raid communities to steal food for their daily sustenance. Those who were spared to live did not escape the horrors of death, especially if they were forced to kill their loved ones or drink the blood of their dead relatives. Young boys were trained to become soldiers, forced to fight in the battlefield and kill civilians.

**Sexual violence:** The conflict associated men and boys with different forms of sexual abuse, either as perpetrators or as victims. As perpetrators, they were sometimes forced to abuse, harass and rape women. As victims, rebels and soldiers sexually assaulted them; although they hardly talk about it because male rape is considered taboo in Ugandan communities.

**Forced displacement:** Forced displacement and life in the IDP camps encouraged laziness, alcoholism and theft among men and boys. Relief support was unreliable for men because most women controlled the ration cards, and some men and boys resorted to stealing other people's food and property. Due to the long stay in stay in camps, reliance on relief support is further said to have diminished men and boys' creativity to find their own means for living. Encampment also affected their self-esteem as very cramped spaces discouraged energies to find ways for survival. A respondent explained that during encampment people felt disempowered because, *"They were*

*living like animals as there were no proper sleeping arrangements.*"[66]

Other reported violations against men include: physical abuse and torture, loss of opportunities and education and loss of property, among others.

Women, like men, faced similar violations, but the circumstances and consequences are varied. For instance, some abducted women were subjected to forced marriage and pregnancy. For both men and women, reporting experiences of sexual violence was challenging due to social and cultural norms around sex and sexuality. Some people do not believe men can be raped – a notion that is supported by the definition of rape in Uganda's Penal Code – and a man that admitted that such occurred to him was often ostracised by his family and community. As a form of self-preservation, many male victims of conflict sexual violence have chosen to remain silent, leaving them with untold psychological and physical wounds and excluding them from receiving reparative services or redress.

# After conflict

Like during the conflict periods, the post-conflict era has also resulted in different experiences for men and women based on gender norms and responsibilities. The following is a summary of the post-conflict experiences of men and boys faced as shared by respondents:

**Scarred relationships and family breakups:** For some men, the loss of family members and/or the real or perceived loss of control and authority within the family sphere has greatly affected their relationships at home and in the community, and even led to divorce and family abandonment.

**Abject poverty:** Many men report that the war's resultant poverty denied them a decent life because they lack education, employment and livelihood opportunities that could uplift their standard of living. Because the war devastated thousands of properties, some men left the camps to find infertile land back home which they could no longer use and cultivate for survival. Some men have been unable to rebuild and even have no places to stay and have remained homeless. The consequences of poverty have severely limited men in fulfilling their role as providers of their family's needs.

**Physical illnesses or impairment:** Because social norms construct men as possessing great physical strength, conflict parties often committed violations against men that would render them physically incapacitated or disabled. As a consequence, many men continue to suffer from different forms of physical impairment, affecting their ability to work and live an independent life. The limited health services in northern Uganda means that even those with physical disabilities that could be remedied are unable to access the much-needed medical treatment and rehabilitation. With such conditions, many men have been unable to satisfy society's expectations of them to be strong, physically fit and capable of filling the role of the more dominant figure in the family and community. A respondent said that, *"Physical impairment limits*

[66]Gender officer respondent, key informant interview, Lira town, August 2015
[67]WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015

*men's capacity to live life anew and [leads to] loss of confidence to socialise with family and friends."*[67]

**Psychological issues:** Trauma, fear, anxieties, frustrations, and demoralisation are among the psychological challenges that men and boys face in their communities in the post-conflict era. Even when safely resettled in their homes, some continue to live in fear that the armed groups will return at any time to re-arrest them, or they feel haunted by the spirits of those they killed. Because of this lingering and prolonged trauma, they tend to separate from their friends and families, resort to drug and alcohol abuse, and suffer from severe depression. Access to psychological counselling and support is even more restricted than access to medical care for physical ailments. Further, in the changing social landscape where women are asserting more independence and authority, many

men feel women are disempowering them. As stated by a respondent, *"Men become violent to women because they think that empowered women are disrespectful and not worthy of becoming a good wife."*[68]

**Criminal activities:** Some men in the post-conflict period are engaged in committing criminal acts of sexual immorality such as defilement and incest, while others have resorted to theft to survive and addiction to drugs and alcohol. This is likely connected to the psychological issues described above, including trauma and feelings of worthlessness and despair.

**Reintegration challenges:** Upon return from captivity, some formerly abducted men have found it difficult to reintegrate into their communities. Those who have been rejected by their clans are often forced to run away and stay in urban centres and distant places

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[67]WAN member respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015
[68]CSO respondent, key informant interview, Gulu town, August 2015

without any support for recovery. Others who returned to their home villages after years in captivity found their property destroyed and their children living an impoverished life. They suffer from stigma from a community that views them as burdens and criminals. A respondent in Gulu notes that, *"To even claim the opportunity to rent houses is denied of them because of fear they may only spread violence within the premises due to their experience of the war."*[69]

Another respondent added, *"Those who returned to the community after ten to fifteen years in captivity could not find access to land where they could peacefully settle."*[70]

**Lost opportunities:** Since rebels often targeted young boys for abduction, many men lost opportunities for formal education, and without good education, they are unable to access decent jobs. Many displaced boys experienced similar interruptions in their schooling, when schools were closed or parents were unable to pay their fees. Young boys also lost the experience to grow up in a normal environment without restriction to movements. In the pursuit

of protecting children from the radar of rebels, parents would remove them from their villages and take them to places far from the rebels' reach. For those whose mothers were abducted, their fathers were overwhelmed with domestic responsibilities, making them even more miserable. Some boys who were orphaned at a young age resorted to early marriage and perpetrated domestic violence to express their frustrations in life.

Women, like men, experience physical and psychological challenges in the post-conflict period. Oftentimes, they are uniquely burdened with caring for the family and children, and this is especially true of women who bore children in captivity. However, unlike for men, there are numerous interventions that target war-affected women that provide them with livelihood skills, psychosocial counselling and support for schools fees for their children. These programmes have largely excluded men, leaving them feeling resentment and suspicion of the women in their lives. This exacerbates tensions between the two, and could even lead to further physical and emotional abuse.

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[69]Spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Gulu town, August 2015
[70]Former spouse respondent, focus group discussion, Lira town, August 2015

# Engaging Men in Redress for Conflict SGBV

After understanding gendered norms and conflict experiences of men and boys, it is important to understand how the engagement of men and boys in redress for conflict SGBV is a necessary action towards achieving redress for men and boys' own gendered experiences and those of women and girls.

## Extent to which the experiences of men and boys have been acknowledged and redressed

The conflict in northern Uganda occasioned widespread and systematic crimes that were committed against the communities, the suffering of which must be acknowledged and redressed to repair the harms inflicted upon the communities. Outside of the anticipated official mechanisms that will be established after the TJ legal framework is operationalised, several interventions were set up by the government, its development partners and non-governmental organisations to respond to immediate needs of the communities affected by conflict. Many of these interventions had a bias towards persons deemed the most vulnerable and consequently a lot of focus was placed towards women, children and the disabled. Few interventions targeted

men and boys. This section interrogates the extent to which experiences of men and boys have been acknowledged and redressed based on the understanding and perception of the respondents who shared their perspectives.

**No acknowledgment or redress:** Most respondents shared sentiments that neither acknowledgment nor redress has been made to repair the harm suffered by men and boys during and after the LRA conflict. A respondent in Adjumani noted that, *"Nothing much has been done to acknowledge the suffering of men and boys."*[71] Many men and boys interviewed reported feeling that the government does not fully understand their situation or even made an effort to ask about their conditions and problems, especially after they returned to their villages following years of captivity.They tend to believe that society does not consider their suffering as important and that the cases of women are given priority.

They are feared and perceived as

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[71]FGD Local Leaders, Adjumani, August 2015

perpetrators. They feel left out in most programmes designed by the government and civil society, and that their voices are not heard or solicited, so they tend to keep quiet. A respondent in Pader stated that, *"The government and NGOs are aware that men had bad experiences since they helped while in the camps but they sometimes feel that the government thinks they are the ones responsible for doing all the bad things because all the support is given to women."*[72]

**Some acknowledgment but no redress:** Some respondents shared that while the government is aware and has acknowledged the unique experiences of men and boys during and after the conflict, the acknowledgment has been insufficient and no redress has been made. They feel not much has been done to acknowledge and redress the suffering of men and boys, who have not benefited from interventions that could support them. They feel most project designs and affirmative action strategies do not target men and boys, and instead mostly women and girls are targeted because of their vulnerability. They feel NGOs have displayed poor attitude towards men and boys, and even leaders have been reluctant to follow-up on NGOs and government redress programmes. A respondent in Lira noted that, *"Nothing much was done about men, the only help given to men in the camps was food but nothing was done to give back their lost properties including animals and the government should have knowledge about that and that's why other people*

*are still crying out loud that there is no help being given to men."*[73] They also feel that most rehabilitation efforts are concentrated in Gulu, and but not in their areas like Adjumani.

**Great acknowledgment and redress:** A few respondents otherwise believed that acknowledgment and redress has been done, citing government programmes such as the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) and Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) as proof of such.

They believe these programmes have been instated to support conflict-affected communities to recover and rehabilitate by reforming the youth, providing support for livelihoods, and improving community infrastructure such as through the installation of water sources and construction of roads. The Community Development Officer in Lira reported that, *"As far as the district is concerned, efforts are made to integrate men and boys into our community-driven programmes."* [74]Others cited community memorialising efforts as evidence of acknowledgment and redress. According to some from Adjumani, *"There is acknowledgment, as there are publications and reports in the sub-counties on information regarding individuals, men and women, who were killed during the war, who are given remembrance and memorialisation."*[75]

No respondents reported a degree of redress without acknowledgment.

[73]FGD Family Heads, Lira, August 2015
[72]FGD Spouses, Pader, August 2015
[74]Community development officer respondent, key informant interview, Lira town, August 2015
[75]Son respondent, focus group discussion, Adjumani town, August 2015

# Engaging men and boys for their gendered experiences

Many respondents resoundingly affirmed the need to engage men and boys in redress for their gendered needs due to the following reasons:

**Conflict was experienced by both men and women:** A respondent in Adjumani stated, *"Why target only women? The conflict was experienced by both men and women, so why single out women? They both suffered from the war. They faced the same challenges as the women. Leaving them out will cause more harm and burden to the community."*[76] Others called for men to also be protected and included, so that their concerns are known and heard in groups. *"Men should be consulted to address the challenges they faced during the war,"*[77] noted another respondent from Adjumani. The mothers-in-law advised that, *"Men should not be segregated. They should also be protected."*[78] A respondent from Lira added that, *"men and boys should be engaged through different activities and at the preliminary stage, they should be isolated and their individual needs fulfilled."*[79]

**Men have the right to form groups:** In Gulu, WAN members stated that, *"Men and boys also have the right to form groups/associations and to air out their concerns and talk about their problems, and they should be trained on how to manage their families, so that they can help in areas of family planning, maternal health, etc."*[80] A respondent from Lira noted that, *"Men don't know their rights. They only know human rights and rights of women."*[81]



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[76]Family Heads FGD Adjumani
[79]KII, Vice LC V Lira Town, August 2015

[77]Sons FGD Adjumani
[80]WAN FGD Gulu

[78]Mothers-in-law FGD Adjumani
[81]Random Community FGD Lira

It was also observed that some men and boys do not know how they were affected, and that active participation in formal associations or groups would enable them participate in issues that affect them. In Lira, the WAN members urged that, *"Men should not be left out. Otherwise, they would not understand the sufferings of women."*[82]

**Men are seen as perpetrators:** All respondents agreed that men are often only seen as perpetrators yet they also suffered. They called upon the government and other partners who have not been engaging them to bring them together to amplify their voices and to enable them to receive help for the improvement of their homes.

**Men are family heads:** In Adjumani, family heads asked, "Why target only women, when men are considered drivers of the family and the community?" They further noted, *"Even if men's roles in handling family issues are diminished, they still play the role as the family heads and there are still decisions that they make that must be followed."*[83] As such, they believe men and boys need to be engaged for redress for their gendered experiences. Given the above views, respondents raised suggestions on how men and boys should be engaged in redress for their own gendered conflict experiences. This includes:

**Form community action groups:** Men and boys should be organised into groups so that they can become responsible members of the community and so that they can stop abandoning their responsibilities at home. There was also a call to make men understand the value of being mobilised into groups so that they could choose their leaders to represent their issues to enable them to easily seek support. They can also share ideas, express grievances and find solutions to their problems through such groups.

**Provide access to education:** Men and boys should also be sent to school for education and training, where, among others, they should be taught how to express themselves.

**Bring men and women together:** Both men and women should be brought together as a family to bring harmony among all the members. There was a call to train men together with the women during conferences, seminars and workshops so that they all could speak out, share experiences and learn from one another. However, separate conferences should also still be organised from time-to-time so that men and women have an opportunity to express their concerns freely. Moreover, mixed groups must be carefully selected since men's presence could suppress the confidence of women to speak out.

**Lead community sensitisation:** Men and boys should be encouraged to speak out through radio programmes to sensitise and train others on how to live in society and respect women. There are "influential men" such as peer educators, child protection committees, village committees, etc in the villages, parishes, sub-counties and community structures who could be involved in sensitisation projects.

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[82]WAN FGD Lira          [83]Family Heads FGD Adjumani

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**Offer economic empowerment:** Men and boys should be economically empowered to enable them to fight poverty. Currently, the majority of special initiatives and programmes target women, and while these are needed, men and boys are also affected by poverty and need support.

**Provide rehabilitation for drug and alcohol abuse:** Programmes are desperately needed to reform the minds of men, especially male youth, who are struggling with drug and alcohol abuse.

# Engaging men and boys for women and girls' gendered experiences

As men have a role in determining and promoting women's wellbeing, engaging them in redress for women's gendered experiences is crucial. The reasons advanced by respondents include the following:

**Women's rights must be fully achieved:** Men should speak up for the protection of women's rights, and as shared by a family head in Adjumani, *"If only women advocate for their rights, without men's involvement, the goal is only partially achieved, but if both men and women speak the same language, more meaningful results will be achieved."*[84] Everyone should grow up knowing the rights of men and women.

**Domestic violence must be curbed:** Another respondent noted that, *"The problem lies in not involving men not only in government programmes, but also in curbing violence. Men themselves should understand that domestic violence is evil, so that they can participate in reducing it."*[85]

**Men can benefit from teachings in women's groups:** Men should be engaged so that they understand teaching women get from their groups. There was a call that, *"Everyone should move at the same pace,"*[86] so that they know about the problems and find interventions.

**Men must help:** The local leaders noted that, *"The men can help in making hard decision for the women so the men should not be alone and the women should not be on their own."*[87] Another stated that, *"Some women are becoming notorious and selfish due to trauma, thus they should be helped; both should be on same path to forget their suffering."*[88]

**Peer support is needed:** It is appropriate to engage both men and women together since they both went suffered. There could be a powerful peer dynamic if men and women were engaged together on some occasions. One respondent stated, *"The men have got good ideas because there are things that a man can say but a woman*

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[84] Family Heads FGD Adjumani
[85] Family Heads FGD Adjumani
[86] Random Community FGD Lira
[87] Local Leaders FGD Pader
[88] Local Leaders FGD Adjumani
[90] Random Community FGD Adjumani

*cannot. This sharing of ideas will help both men and women."*[89]

**It boosts men's confidence and self-esteem:** Some respondents felt that men have to be included because they are the heads of families, and they should be concerned with their families welfare. Supporting and targeting women alone affects the confidence and self-esteem of men as heads of the families, hence causing conflict.

**It saves marriages:** Projects targeting women should also include men in an effort to save marriages and reduce conflicts in homes. *"If only women* are given material support, they may decide to divorce their husbands, hence causing family break-ups,"*[90] a grandmother from Pader shared.

Considering the above reasons for male engagement in redress for women and girls' gendered experiences, respondents shared some suggestions to realise such:

**Form mixed groups of men and women:** It was noted that when women and men are brought together, they would share ideas and get support and encouragement from each other. In mixed trainings and meetings, joint



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[89]WAN FGD Pader
[90]FGD Grandmothers Pader

participation and sharing of leadership roles would help them heal from their pain and begin instilling the power of love and forgiveness and give them peace in their hearts. It was noted that this approach would also help men understand the plight of women. However, many grandmothers and mothers-in-law opposed the idea of joint groups, stating that that *"Women would fear to air their problems in the presence of men."*[91] Another respondent called for formation of men-only groups first, where they could be *"trained and heard as men,"*[92] and later on merge with women's groups for periodic joint sessions.

**Form men action groups:** There should be formation of men action groups, where in situations of gendered conflict, women could seek advice from men. These action groups could also carry out sensitisation on the need for redress for women's conflict experiences on radio talk shows and in the communities.

**Educate men on gender equality:** Men should be provided with specialised education and training opportunities, so that they can raise their awareness on gender equality and the experiences of women and girls.

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[91]WAN FGD Pader
[92]FGD Grandmothers Pader

# Recommendations

Since the dynamics of conflict and displacement were gendered and affected societal gender norms, which in turn defined most recovery and rehabilitation programmes, this research recommends ways for improving relationships between men and women in the community, for providing greater acknowledgment and redress, and for engaging men in redress for their own conflict experiences and for women's experiences. Discussions with the various categories of respondents produced a wide range of recommendations that broadly covered the topical areas that were the subject of research as stated below:

## For improving relationships between women and men in the community

**Create safe spaces for men and women to discuss issues together:** There was a call for mutual discussions between the men and women in families aimed at arriving at agreement on the way their homes are run and in case of disagreements to have others intervene. A respondent in Gulu stated that relationships would improve if there is *"sharing of ideas and perspectives as a family, seeking help from relatives and being open and honest."*[93] At the community level, it was proposed that meetings and gatherings be organised where men and women would face each other and discuss their issues and learn lessons together.

**Organise community dialogue on gender and dealing with the past:** This avenue was also suggested to create resilience and hope for the future. Respondents in Pader advised stakeholders to *"bring community*

*members together and counsel them about the past in order to…secure peace for the future."*[94]

**Provide mixed-sex trainings on conflict resolution and gender equality:** Respondents strongly called for educating the men and women together to reduce on the level of conflict in the homes. A respondent in Pader advised that, *"Men and women should be trained together to improve on their relationship."*[95] Another respondent in Lira noted that, *"If only women are involved in trainings and workshops, they come home to furious husbands who do not want to accept or tolerate their new knowledge or skills."*[96]

**Promote group sensitisation and peer support:** There was a spirited call for the formation of groups to offer peer support to members in the community. Some of these groups would be single-sex, while others would be mixed-sex. The purpose of the groups would be for members to advise one another on how to mitigate re-victimisation,

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[93]FGD WAN Gulu
[96]FGD WAN Lira

[94]FGD Sons Pader

[95]FGD WAN Pader

stigmatisation and re-traumatisation by showing love to partners, promoting harmonious relationships, sharing ideas and perspectives as a family, working together in raising children, and knowing the responsibilities of children, parents, and leaders. A leader in Pader advised, *"There should be continued sensitisation and male engagement in a bid to address issues that bring conflict in the home."*[97] These groups could also engage in outreach campaigns and networking, such as through radio talk shows, workshops, drama and exchange visits, where victims of conflict SGBV could witness and hear other people's experiences. According to a respondent in Lira, *"Men should be linked to other men all over northern Uganda and share each other's experiences and listen to each other's testimonies."*[98]

**Formation of conflict mediation, healing and reconciliation initiatives:** It was recommended that peace building groups be formed by duty bearers where men and women can be taught about forgiveness, conflict mediation and resolution (handling of grievances within the family), sharing to derive comfort. Respondents in Adjumani called for *"communal meals"*[99], and *"community prayers for reconciliation and forgiveness"*[100] as a way of improving relationships in the community. Local leaders were enjoined to step up their efforts in mediating conflicts (family or domestic) to foster forgiveness (especially for victims of conflict) and to exercise humility in settling conflicts.

**Attend religious associations:** Attending church and having a closer relationship and association with God was noted as being humbling and a way of improving relationships between men and women in the community.

**Provide support towards economic empowerment:** The Government and other partners were called upon to provide support towards livelihood projects to economically lift people from abject poverty to prosperity since it would help in curbing violence and improve relations in families and communities in the long run.

**Enforcement of laws:** Strict enforcement of laws by the government e.g. prohibition of alcoholism was highly called for since *"the vice is rampant in many communities."*[101]

**Establishment of rehabilitation centres:** Establishment of rehabilitation centres to offer psychosocial support and counselling, grassroots information centres, and vocational schools is also highly recommended since many people are still undergoing recovery.

**Advocate for behavioural change:** Since there is a noted decay of morals across all the communities due to encampment and urbanisation, parents and caretakers were encouraged to change their behaviours by avoiding fighting in front of their children, avoid using abusive language and reducing alcoholic intake.

**Provide reparations:** The government should provide reparations and/or assistance to victims of conflict. Respondents in Adjumani called for *"compensation for loss of properties,"*[102] another stated that *"government should provide livelihoods and shelter to give*

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[97]KII Gender Officer Pader     [98]FGD Spouses Lira
[99]KII Individual Leader Adjumani     [100]FGD Mother-in-law/grandmothers Adjumani     [101]KII Adjumani

peace in the heart,"[103] while another called for *"getting land and putting all children together and opening a project to support them."*[104] NGOs and other partners were equally called upon to continue assisting communities especially those that are still traumatised and lost property.

**Create community projects:** Community projects should be created to bring people together and provide information on what is good and bad, to forget the sufferings and worries of the heart.

## For providing greater acknowledgment and redress

**Create community projects:** The Government and development partners should create and implement community projects in a way that will not only acknowledge the pain of the war but also bring people together to receive information on what is good and bad, and help the people to mitigate the suffering and worries of the heart.

**Form advocacy groups:** Form groups to carry out collective advocacy especially in seeking material support for recovery. Suggestions included *"giving something to help them raise money, giving them seeds to plant,"*[105] and *"forming a group of war claimants,"*[106] following up on empty pledges of cattle, iron sheets and ox-ploughs etc. The groups shall also serve as a platform through which the people's concerns would be shared and projected to the concerned NGOs and the government for help. A respondent stated that the group would *"forward men's views that*

they also need help, and seek help of NGOs to unite victims and take their problems collectively to government who must be informed as well of the plight of men so that they can implement redress for them."*[107] Grouping was also seen as an avenue through which reconciliation and truth telling would be facilitated. A respondent in Gulu stated that *"men and women should be brought together and reconciled and women should tell the truth because men are unhappy that some of them spread lies about them after returning from captivity"*[108] and the general community needs to look at the future and stop pointing fingers.

Groups were also said to aid other related processes like training forums as noted by a respondent in Pader who emphasised that *''the NGOs should consider the men as they have done for women... they put them in groups because for us women we have been taught to handle our families and we are being taught how to take good care of our homes. They should also start involving the men so that they can learn how to take care of their women because there are very many men who are disturbing their women so with training all of us we shall be in position to understand the other."*[10]

Several recommendations were given for group dynamics. A respondent in Lira advised thus *"put in groups according to age (youth separate from elderly),"*[110] *"separate men from boys and youth,"*[111] and *''men should have own groups, but also be in mixed groups with women to make sure that everyone knows their rights and how to live in families, share experiences together and not hide*

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[102]Spouses FGD Adjumani   [103]Sons FGD Lira
[104]Sons FGD Pader   [105]Family Heads FGD Lira
[106]Family Heads FDG Adjumani   [107]WAN FGD Adjumani   [108]Former Spouses FGD Gulu

*secrets from each other"*[112].

**Identify and engage male activists:** These are to *"engage men until they understand their rights and responsibilities and explain the purpose of their engagement in order to capture their interests."*[113] This will bring about *"greater understanding of men's problems with aim of getting solutions."*[114]

**Integrate men's empowerment into programmes:** There was also a call to the development partners and stakeholders to integrate men's empowerment in their programmes by involving men in community meetings and WAN groups.

**Put in place peer support forums:** Measures for peer support forums should be put in place en masse where *"men should go to villages and talk to men and encourage them to speak out and share their problems and concerns."*[115] This would be through radio programmes and exchange visits where ''*victims can be counselled by fellow victims because they share the same experiences and understand each other's struggles."*[116]

**Implement community and family projects:** Implementation of initiatives is highly recommended as a means of providing acknowledgement and redress. Respondents in Lira called for *"implementation of initiatives that empower men and make their lives convenient and called upon government to provide livestock, support, and other projects that would help them to meet*

their needs and send their children to school and to cater for their health needs."*[117] Initiation of family projects that target both men and women was called for to foster unity. In Gulu, a respondent suggested *"give projects to both men and women as a "family project" so that the whole family is supported."*[118] In Adjumani, the children called for economic empowerment to their parents *"so they could take care of them and pay for their school fees."*[119]

**Support towards education/training:** Increased support by partners was called for to cater for training, sensitisation workshops, vocational training (carpentry, brick laying, hair dressing, etc), and formal education. These would also target children and youth as noted by respondents in Gulu who said 'that *"out-of-school children should be trained on how to manage small enterprises,"*[120] and *"young mothers taken to school to realise changes in their lives."*[121] Help in paying school fees was requested by spouses in Lira and stated that, *"NGOs should work hand in hand to help us address our problems in terms of our children's education."*[122] There was also a call by elders to be trained on how to manage their families.

**Provide affirmative action:** Respondents in Adjumani called for *"affirmative action or deliberate efforts to target men and boys in development and reintegration projects e.g. providing iron sheets to be able to reconstruct houses."*[123]

**Offer Reparations:** Government was

[109]WAN FGD Pader  [110]Family Heads FGD Lira      [111]Mothers-in-law/grandmothers FGD Lira
[112]Random Community FGD Lira      [113]WAN FGD Lira      [114]Sons FGD Lira      [115]WAN FGD Gulu
[116]Former Spouses FGD Gulu      [117]Spouses FGD Lira      [118]Spouses FGD Gulu      [119]Sons FGD Adjumani
[120]Spouses FGD Gulu      [121]Random Community FGD Pader

called upon to ''construct hospitals, water sources, and roads to schools and markets''[124] as well as *"offering compensation to war victims, offering medical support, continuous physical support, and infrastructure and recreation facilities for both men and women to interact and observe memorialisation (monuments)."*[125] And since government efforts were said not to be enough, NGOs were called upon to help with needs such as access to land, sensitisation, awareness rising, and legal redress especially for sexual violence.

**Collect information on numbers and current status of conflict survivors:** The Government and other partners should come up with statistics showing the actual numbers of both men and women affected by conflict, their current condition, and extent of help needed. Upon the availability of such a database of individuals affected and property lost, it is hoped that such will inform project design and funding support and with the identification of the victims, it is also hoped that such will enable them to receive appropriate support and redress.

**Rehabilitation centres:** Centres should be set up where children and adults with mental disturbances can be taken for rehabilitation and psychosocial support.

## For engaging men in redress for their experiences

**Formation of male groups:** There is a call to identify males and form them into groups where they would be offered counselling and where they would also gather and share opinions on issues concerning them. Influential or role model men would be engaged to lead advocacy for the groups, providing mentoring support to the male members and steering them to the correct path of recovery and reintegration into the communities. A respondent in Lira stated, "Men are the heads, we should advocate for men to become *"real men."*[126]

**Formation of mixed groups:** Men should also be included in women's groups so that they can share experiences together and not hide secrets from each other and *"to make sure that everyone knows their rights and know how to keep harmony among families."*[127]

**Involve men and boys in training and workshops:** There is a call to involve men and boys in JRP's, WAN's and other stakeholders activities like workshops, seminars, and experience-sharing to help them to overcome their conflict-related experiences.

**Engaging role models:** Influential and role model men should educate fellow men about the importance of groups, organising drama to tell stories about their lives to their children, and articulating their views and opinions on topical issues through radio talk shows. Role models should inspire and encourage men to air out their concerns and assert their right to receive recovery support.

[122]Spouses FGD Lira        [123]Random Community FGD Adjumani
[124]Spouses FGD Lira        [125]Individual Leader KII Lira
[126]Individual Leader KII Lira  [127]Random Community FGD Lira

## For engaging men in redress for women's gendered experiences

**Engage Males:** Women's spouses should be involved in their group activities so that men are also informed of the teachings that women receive during training and so that men are able to increase their understanding on how they *"should advocate for women's redress,"*[128] fight for women's rights, and curb domestic violence. *"Organise workshops for men to update them on programmes for women,"*[129] suggested a local leader from Lira. Men should also be consulted and their views sought on how to support women.

**Offer trainings to men:** Men should be engaged in training on peace building and similar topics. Their capacities should also be built for community sensitisation.

**Initiate group projects:** Men and women should be brought together in a group where men and women can share common understanding and achieve common goals. This would also allow men to benefit from the groups so they too can also be educated about women's rights.

**Advocate for behavioural change:** There was a call for men to stop gossiping and to instead be involved in meetings where women share their stories, experiences and issues so they could also understand them[130] and men should respect their women's freedom of speech

**Involve men and women in joint Village Savings & Loan Associations (VSLA):** Both men and women should jointly be involved in village savings scheme as a way to achieve economic independence and in order to allow them to prepare well for their future and that of their children.

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[128]Individual Leader KII Lira
[129]Local Leaders FGD Lira
[130]Local Leaders FGD Adjumani