

# WHEN THE WAR ENDS

*A Population-Based  
Survey on Attitudes about  
Peace, Justice, and  
Social Reconstruction in  
Northern Uganda*

DECEMBER 2007



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*written by*

PHUONG PHAM | PATRICK VINCK | ERIC STOVER  
ANDREW MOSS | MARIEKE WIERDA | RICHARD BAILEY





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF WAR**, destruction, and the displacement of over 1.5 million people have turned northern Ugandan into a humanitarian disaster. One of the war's principal perpetrators has been the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). To fill its ranks, the LRA has abducted tens of thousands of civilians, many of whom have been forced to maim and kill their victims. In October 2005, the International Criminal Court (ICC) unsealed arrest warrants against the LRA leader Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders for crimes against humanity and war crimes.<sup>1</sup> But the LRA has not been alone in committing abuses in the North. The Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) have also committed serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and the Government of Uganda's policies on the internally displaced, coupled with its failure to provide them adequate protection, has made life in the displacement camps a daily misery.<sup>2</sup>

A significant shift in the war occurred in late 2005 when the LRA withdrew its forces to the southern Sudan state of Eastern Equatoria and then crossed the Nile, assembling in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the summer of 2006, peace talks between the Government of Uganda and the LRA commenced in Juba, under the mediation of the President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, and a first Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed on 26 August 2006. The LRA's first and oft-repeated demand as a part of the peace process has been that the ICC arrest warrants should be dropped as a pre-condition to a conclusion of a final arrangement.

In late June 2007, the Ugandan government and the LRA signed an agreement setting out general principles on how to deal with accountability and reconciliation in northern Uganda.<sup>3</sup> The agreement

1. "Warrant of Arrest Unsealed against LRA Commanders," ICC press release, 14 October 14 2005, The Hague. The five leaders are Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Raska Lukwiya, and Dominic Ongwen. However, Lukwiya was killed in August 2006 in a gun battle with the Ugandan army. The four men are charged with crimes of the utmost gravity, including murder, enslavement, sexual enslavement, rape, pillaging, and forced conscription of children.

2. Human Rights Watch, *Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Watch 17/12A (September 2005).

3. *Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation between the Government of Uganda (The Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M)*, signed on 29 June 2007 by Dr. S. Kagoda, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Acting Head of the Government of Uganda Delegation, and Mr. Martin Ojul, Leader of the LRA/M Delegation, Juba, South Sudan.

provides that the Ugandan government will exercise jurisdiction over individuals who allegedly “bear particular responsibility” for the most serious crimes committed during the conflict. It also provides for “alternative penalties” for serious crimes committed by the LRA, without further specification. At the time of writing, both parties are holding further consultations on the accountability and reconciliation mechanisms that will form part of a final agreement.

With the withdrawal of the LRA to the Congo, security in northern Uganda has improved considerably. Some displacement-camp residents have moved to new settlement sites closer to their villages. Yet others fear leaving the relative safety of the camps until a final peace agreement has been signed and the LRA fighters have been demobilized. This is a delicate stage of the conflict, and a deeper understanding of the needs and desires of affected populations will be crucial to a long-term resolution.

## The Survey

Against this background, our three organizations conducted a population-based survey in eight districts of northern Uganda from April to June 2007. The districts chosen are those most affected by the conflict and include both Acholi and non-Acholi districts. The study, supplemented by in-depth qualitative interviews in the same districts, sought to capture attitudes about peace, justice, and social reconstruction while peace talks were taking place between the Ugandan government and the LRA in Juba, south Sudan. In 2005, we conducted a similar survey in northern Uganda<sup>4</sup> and we compare findings from the two studies throughout this report.

We dispatched teams of eight to 16 trained men and women, fluent in the local language and representing a range of ages, to interview a total of 2,875 people using a standardized questionnaire. The sampling universe included all adults (18 years of age or older) living in eight selected districts of northern Uganda. Camps and villages were randomly selected using sampling techniques proportionate to population size. Municipalities were also included in the sample. At the time of the survey, some residents in the selected camps had moved to new settlement sites closer to their original village. In order to capture this population, we randomly selected one new settlement site for each of the selected camps where population movement had taken place. The questionnaire format used open-ended questions (i.e., answers were not suggested) and was administered using personal digital assistants (PDA). Response options are reflected on the questionnaire itself to facilitate recording but were *not given orally*. Finally, the data was entered and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 15.0.

4. Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Marieke Wierda, Eric Stover, and Adrian di Giovanni, *Forgotten Voices: A Population-Based Survey of Attitudes about Peace and Justice in Northern Uganda*, International Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley (July 2005).

## Summary of Findings

### EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE

The people of northern Uganda have suffered terribly since the war began in 1986. The majority of respondents (86%) reported having been displaced from their homes and villages. Thirty-seven percent of respondents reported being abducted by the LRA. Twenty-one percent said they had been abducted by the LRA for over a week, and 2 percent for over a year. Six percent reported being beaten by UPDF soldiers, and 4 percent reported having a family member killed by government soldiers. Fourteen percent said they had been verbally abused by the UPDF, and 9 percent said government soldiers had destroyed their property. Seventy-six percent reported having lost a family member to the conflict, and over 85 percent of respondents said they had lost income, had their house destroyed, or had assets confiscated.

### OVERALL PRIORITIES

The main priorities for respondents (who were allowed to give more than one response to this question) were health care (45%), peace (44%), education for the children (31%), and livelihood concerns (including food, 43%; agricultural land, 37%; money and finances, 35%). These priorities had not changed substantially since 2005, although the emphasis on health care was new. Only 3 percent of respondents mentioned justice as their top priority.

### DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT

Eighty-six percent of the respondents said they had been displaced from their homes at some point, and 63 percent said they now lived in a place they did not call home. Respondents generally recognized that camps and municipalities provided better access to health services, education, and water. However, they overwhelmingly identified camps and municipalities as worse than their homes in terms of economic and farming opportunities and access to food.

If and when peace is realized in northern Uganda, a significant number of people will likely begin moving from the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, resettlement sites, and municipalities to villages and homesteads. A total of 1,790 respondents out of 2,875 respondents (62%) said they were planning to move away from their current place of residence. In the IDP camps, 79 percent said they were planning to move, while 66 percent of residents in the new settlements and 61 percent of those living in municipalities said they wished to relocate. Meanwhile, only 7 percent of village residents expressed a desire to move. When comparing settlement options, a village was preferred to a camp by four out of five respondents and preferred over a resettlement site by nearly as many (75%). Still, 66 percent would rather live in a resettlement site compared to a camp. If northern Ugandans begin returning to their villages and homesteads in large number, the Ugandan government will need to be prepared to meet several pressing needs, especially education and access to health care.



## ATTITUDES TOWARD PEACE

A majority of respondents (84%) believed peace could be achieved in northern Uganda. Seventy-two percent said peace was associated with an absence of violence. Forty percent said it was associated with freedom from abduction, while 31 percent said it was linked to human development. The vast majority of respondents believed peace could be achieved through dialogue with the LRA (90%) or through pardoning the LRA for their crimes (86%). Three-quarters of the respondents (72%) said they believed the government was committed to achieving peace, whereas 41 percent believed the LRA was committed to achieving peace.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Similar to our findings in 2005, more than two-thirds of respondents (70%) said it was important to hold accountable those responsible for committing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in northern Uganda. Half the respondents said the LRA leaders should be held accountable, and 48 percent said all of the LRA. As many as 70 percent of respondents said the UPDF committed war crimes and human rights abuses in northern Uganda, and 55 percent said they should be put on trial. At the same time, there was an important new emphasis on truth-seeking as necessary for victims and an increased willingness to compromise through amnesties or pardons in order to allow the peace process to succeed. Similar to our findings in 2005, most respondents (65%) said those who received amnesties should first apologize before returning to their communities.

## MECHANISMS FOR JUSTICE

**TRUTH-SEEKING AND REPARATIONS** When asked about approaches to justice for past crimes, establishing the truth was considered very important to respondents. The vast majority of respondents (95%) said a written historical record of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda should be prepared, and 89 percent were willing to talk openly about their experiences in a court or public hearing. Over 90 percent supported the establishment of a truth commission, although their familiarity with the concept may be very limited. As many as 71 percent expressed a strong desire to learn more about justice through the media.

Respondents were asked “what should be done for victims.” Direct compensation to individuals was the most common answer, including financial compensation (52%), food (9%), and livestock/cattle (8%). Equal numbers (7%) mentioned counseling and education for children. Apologies, justice, or reconciliation were mentioned by 10 percent of respondents. Ninety-five percent of respondents said they wanted memorials to be established to remember what happened in northern Uganda during the war.

**FORMAL JUSTICE MECHANISMS** When asked which *mechanisms* would be most appropriate to deal with LRA or UPDF, nearly equal numbers mentioned the ICC (29%) and the Ugandan national court system (28%). Twenty percent said the Amnesty Commission. When faced with the proposition that “it is important to have trials for the LRA leaders,” over half of the respondents

(59%) either strongly agreed or agreed. On the other hand, only 24 percent of respondents said they understood the national criminal justice system.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEACE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, AND AMNESTY** Compared to earlier data from 2005, the data suggest a willingness to compromise for the sake of peace. For instance, when asked if they favored peace with amnesty or peace with trials, 80 percent of respondents chose peace with amnesty. This figure may reflect respondents' fear that trials could hinder the peace process. Also, 54 percent preferred options such as forgiveness, reconciliation, and reintegration of LRA leaders or their confession and apologies. Conversely, 41 percent preferred options including trials and/or punishment including imprisonment. Over 81 percent of respondents in the 2007 survey said amnesty would help to achieve peace, and 86 percent said they would accept amnesty if it was the only means of achieving peace.

The views of respondents in favor of both accountability and amnesties appears contradictory. One explanation may be that while many people support accountability, they do not wish to jeopardize the current peace talks. In addition, other specific questions on accountability suggest that respondents differentiate between levels of responsibility for crimes. For example, respondents are more forgiving of the lower-ranking LRA than the LRA leaders. It is also possible that many people in northern Uganda are genuinely divided on whether they think the best way to sustainable peace is through amnesty or accountability.

**TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES** Forty-nine percent of respondents said local customs and rituals are useful to deal with the LRA, whereas 57 percent said those LRA who return to their communities should participate in traditional ceremonies. (This was true in both Acholi and non-Acholi districts). Of the different ceremonies available, Mato Oput received the highest level of support (48%).

**INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT** Around 60 percent of respondents knew of the ICC, a significant increase from 2005, when only 27 percent had heard of the ICC. Seventy-one percent of those who had heard of the ICC in the 2007 survey (i.e., 43% of the total) supported the proposition that the ICC had contributed to reducing the violence. In addition, 64 percent (38% of the total) supported the proposition that the ICC had assisted in pressuring the LRA into peace talks. On the other hand, 55 percent of respondents (32% of the total) held a mistaken belief that the ICC can enforce its own arrest warrants. Sixty-four percent of respondents (38% of the total) said they would recommend that the ICC stop its arrest warrants or wait until peace is achieved. A majority (76%) of those who had heard of the ICC said that pursuing trials now could endanger the peace process underway in Juba, Sudan. In other words, many respondents may see the ICC as a useful source of pressure on the LRA to participate in peace negotiations but do not want the court to hinder a settlement that will end the war and bring a sustainable peace.

## **REINTEGRATION OF FORMER LRA**

Most northern Ugandans are ready to live with the LRA, particularly the rank and file. Over two-thirds of respondents felt comfortable living in the same community with former LRA combatants (70%) and

their leaders (65%), but attitudes varied across regions (and were generally more negative in non-Acholi areas). Half the respondents said the LRA leaders had the same rights as everyone else and should be allowed to participate in politics and govern if elected.

## **MEDIA AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Radio remains the most important source of information in northern Uganda, with close to three-quarters of respondents listening to the radio regularly and half listening daily. Newspapers and television were not frequently used due to lack of funds and lack of electricity. About half of the respondents said they were informed about the Juba peace talks (64% in Acholi areas, 28% in Teso areas, and 29% in Lango areas). Forty-five percent of the respondents had low to moderate levels of trust in the radio. Trust in other forms of media was also relatively low.

## **Recommendations**

Based on our findings, we offer the following recommendations.

### **To the Government of Uganda and International Community:**

1. *Incorporate the priorities as expressed by survey respondents into a multi-pronged strategy that promotes justice, peace-building, socioeconomic development, and poverty-reduction in the North.* The main priorities highlighted by respondents apart from peace were health (45%), education for the children (31%), and livelihood concerns (including food, 43%; agricultural land, 37%; money and finances, 35%). Building a sustainable peace involves both defusing the LRA security threat and dealing with the structural inequalities that create a climate conducive to conflict. If and when peace is realized, many dynamic changes are likely to take place in the North. More programs need to be developed to provide children and youth with educational opportunities, vocational training, meaningful jobs, leadership training, and psychological support.<sup>5</sup> In developing these socioeconomic programs, a broad-based, inclusive forum within northern Uganda is needed to address long-term issues of resettlement, redevelopment, land rights, and reconciliation.

5. See Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, and Eric Stover, *Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscripted in Northern Uganda*, Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations (June 2007), 23–25. In 2006, the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative reviewed data on 22,759 former LRA members who had passed through eight reception centers for former combatants in northern Uganda. For an assessment of prevalence of psychological trauma in northern Uganda see also Patrick Vinck, Phuong N. Pham, Eric Stover, and Harvey M. Weinstein, “Exposure to War Crimes and Implications for Peace Building in Northern Uganda,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 298/5 (1 August 2007), 543–54. Also see Jeannie Amman, Christopher Blattman, and Roger Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Participation in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey for War-Affected Youth, A Report for UNICEF Uganda* (September 2006).

2. *Prepare for return to village life.* Most northern Ugandans want to return to their villages but have indicated they are waiting for an end to the conflict. Nonetheless, there is concern that some basic services that are available in the camps, such as water and health facilities, will not be so readily available in the villages. Both national and local authorities must be prepared to respond to these challenges. Health services and the educational system will need to be re-structured to reach a population that will be dispersed over large geographical areas.
3. *Promote further national dialogue on introducing a truth-seeking exercise in northern Uganda.* The vast majority of respondents (95%) said a written historical record should be prepared of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda. Eighty-nine percent were willing to talk openly in a court or public hearing about their experiences during the war. Over 90 percent supported the establishment of a truth commission. In this respect, we note the essential role that Ugandan civil society is already playing and should continue to play in assessing needs and calling for a truth-seeking process. These debates should not be restricted to Juba. Uganda should consider the need for a truth-seeking mechanism at the national and local levels.
4. *Establish a reparations program for past crimes.* Fifty-two percent of respondents expressed a desire to receive financial compensation for their suffering due to the war. Ninety-five percent of respondents said they wanted memorials to be established to remember what happened in northern Uganda during the war. Despite this clear interest in reparations, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation only briefly mentions reparations. Moreover, programs such as the National Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for the North (PRDP) should not be mistaken for reparations programs. The Trust Fund for Victims for the ICC, the Ugandan government, and traditional and religious leaders should all be involved in defining a strategy for reparations. The Government of Uganda should commit to funding reparations, as it is unlikely that perpetrators will be able to make any significant contributions.
5. *Take measures to ensure that the benefits provided to LRA returnees are balanced with reparations for victims who have suffered serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.* While our data suggests that many northern Ugandans are ready to reintegrate former LRA back into their communities, the sudden influx of former combatants could strain relations at a time when many of these communities will be in a state of flux. Complex social issues surrounding the reintegration of LRA returnees, such as the stigma attached to LRA returnees in some communities, the LRA practice of forced marriages, and the special needs of female LRA members who became child-mothers, will need to be addressed. At the same time, the authorities will need to be mindful of the needs of victims of human rights abuses, who may grow resentful if they see that LRA returnees are receiving “special treatment.”
6. *Develop a criminal justice and civilian police system in northern Uganda that is responsive to community needs.* The data from the 2007 survey suggest that people are feeling more secure in the North. But in order to consolidate the gains made in security, it will be essential that, after

a peace agreement is signed, the North is demilitarized and replaced by a civilian police system that is responsive to the needs of the community and has adequate oversight.

#### **To the Negotiators at the Juba Peace Talks:**

7. *Continue to pursue a comprehensive and integrated approach to accountability and reconciliation in northern Uganda.* In this regard, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, signed at Juba on 29 June 2007, sets out a framework that encompasses several justice mechanisms.
8. *Continue to pursue criminal trials for those responsible for the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed during the conflict in northern Uganda.* If national courts conduct trials, they should maintain credible, independent, and impartial prosecutions; adhere to international fair trial standards; and render penalties that reflect the gravity of the crimes, with imprisonment as the principal penalty. Our research suggests that while many northern Ugandans are prepared to compromise justice for the sake of peace, they still support the use of the formal justice system as a means of holding those most responsible for serious crimes accountable, particularly if it can be achieved as part of the peace process.
9. *Introduce measures to create a reparations program for past crimes and a truth-seeking process.* As noted earlier, our research suggests strong support for a truth-seeking process and for reparations in northern Uganda.
10. *Develop a well-defined accountability and reconciliation strategy for rank-and-file LRA returnees.* Apart from referring to a “central role” for traditional justice and to the role of the Amnesty Commission, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation is vague about what elements should comprise a strategy for accountability and reconciliation for rank-and-file LRA returnees. The majority of survey respondents said traditional ceremonies could play a useful role in the reintegration process. They also said those responsible for human rights abuses, including the rank-and-file LRA, should apologize for their behavior before returning to the community.

#### **To the International Criminal Court:**

11. *Continue outreach programming, concentrating on what the Court can and cannot do.* Great improvements in the understanding of the ICC are reflected in the 2007 data, but many still believe the Court has the power to arrest the LRA or that it can be asked to halt its proceedings. Such misconceptions need correcting.

# INTRODUCTION

**TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF WAR** have turned northern Uganda into a humanitarian catastrophe. At the height of the conflict, up to a million and half people languished in displacement camps, depending for their survival on handouts from the World Food Programme.

One of the war's principal offenders has been the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a spiritualist rebel group with no clear political agenda that is known for its brutality, having killed and mutilated countless civilians. To fill its ranks, the LRA has abducted tens of thousands of adults and children to serve as soldiers and porters. Rebel commanders have forced girls, some as young as 12 years old, into what amounts to sexual slavery and ordered their fighters to inflict horrific injuries by cutting off the ears, noses, lips, and limbs of civilians. The Ugandan Peoples' Defense Force (UPDF) has also committed human rights abuses, including rape, torture, and arbitrary killings, in northern Uganda.<sup>6</sup>

In December 2003, President Museveni referred the situation in northern Uganda to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Two years later, the ICC unsealed arrest warrants against the LRA leader Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders for crimes against humanity and war crimes.<sup>7</sup> By late 2005 the rebels had withdrawn to the southern Sudan state of Eastern Equatoria and then crossed the Nile, assembling at an LRA base near the Congo-Sudan border. Shortly thereafter, peace talks commenced in Juba, under the mediation of the President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, and a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed 26 August 2006. The LRA's first and oft-repeated demand is that the ICC prosecution be dropped.

As part of the peace negotiations, the Ugandan government and the LRA have signed an agreement setting out the general principles on how to deal with issues of accountability and reconciliation

6. Human Rights Watch, *Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Watch 17/12A (September 2005).

7. "Warrant of Arrest Unsealed against LRA Commanders," ICC press release, 14 October 2005, The Hague. The five leaders are Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Raska Lukwiya, and Dominic Ongwen. However, Lukwiya was killed in August 2006 in a gun battle with the Ugandan army. The four men are charged with crimes of the utmost gravity, including murder, enslavement, sexual enslavement, rape, pillaging, and forced conscription of children.

in northern Uganda.<sup>8</sup> The agreement provides that the Ugandan government will exercise jurisdiction over individuals who allegedly “bear particular responsibility” for the most serious crimes committed during the conflict in the North. It also provides for establishing “alternative justice mechanisms” and “alternative penalties” for serious crimes, without defining them. On 21 August 2007, the Ugandan government started a countrywide consultation with war victims to determine what mechanisms would be best suited for holding those responsible for human rights abuses accountable. Weeks later, the LRA began similar consultations.

In the meantime, the people of northern Uganda wait anxiously for a resolution to the peace talks in Juba. With the withdrawal of the LRA to the Congo, security in the North has improved considerably and some people have moved home or to new settlement sites closer to their villages. Yet many others fear leaving the relative safety of the displacement camps and returning to their homes until a final peace agreement has been signed and the LRA fighters have been demobilized.

In 2005, our three organizations conducted “Forgotten Voices,” the first population-based survey on attitudes about peace and justice in Northern Uganda.<sup>9</sup> The survey found high levels of exposure to traumatic events including killings, abductions, mutilations, and sexual violations during the two decades of conflict. Despite the terrible suffering and the immediate needs that respondents expressed for peace and food, the study found that more than half of respondents wanted to see perpetrators punished. In addition, a majority indicated that they wanted the opportunity to speak publicly about the abuses they had suffered. The report urged the national and local Ugandan authorities and the international community to work together to develop an integrated and comprehensive strategy for peace and justice in Northern Uganda.

The situation today is vastly different. A preliminary agreement has been reached between the parties and the situation on the ground has improved in terms of security and return of the internally displaced, yet there is still no permanent peace. Against this background, our three organizations sought to determine whether and how attitudes towards peace and justice might have shifted in the context of ongoing peace talks. We therefore conducted a second population-based survey on attitudes about peace, justice, and social reconstruction in eight districts of northern Uganda from April to June 2007. This survey encompassed the same districts as surveyed before but added a number of new districts.

In the new survey, our organizations sought to recapture the voices of those most affected by the conflict in northern Uganda in light of ongoing peace talks. We had the following objectives:

1. Measure the overall exposure to violence among the population of northern Uganda as a result of war and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law since 1987.

8. *Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation between the Government of Uganda (The Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M)*, signed on 29 June 2007 by Dr. S. Kagoda, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Acting Head of the Government of Uganda Delegation, and Mr. Martin Ojul, Leader of the LRA/M Delegation, Juba, South Sudan.

9. Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Marieke Wierda, Eric Stover, and Adrian di Giovanni, *Forgotten Voices: A Population-Based Survey of Attitudes about Peace and Justice in Northern Uganda*, International Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley (July 2005).

2. Understand the priorities and needs of residents of towns, villages, and camps and new settlement sites for the internally displaced.
3. Capture attitudes and plans for on social reconstruction, including intentions to return (re-settlement), considering access to services and views on reintegrating former combatants.
4. Capture attitudes and opinions about specific transitional justice mechanisms, especially in light of the ongoing peace negotiations between representatives of the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army in Juba, Sudan.
5. Elucidate views on the relationship between peace, justice, and social reconstruction.

It is our hope that this report will assist policy makers to develop coherent and integrated programs that promote justice and accountability and social and economic development for the people of northern Uganda at this crucial juncture.<sup>10</sup>

## Research Design and Instruments

The survey data presented in this report were collected in eight districts of northern Uganda. Three teams of eight to 16 local men and women in a range of ages, each representing the ethnic group in the area under study and fluent in the local language, collected data using a standardized questionnaire. The interviewers participated in a week-long training to familiarize themselves with the questionnaire, interview techniques, and selection of respondents. The sampling universe included all adults (18 years of age or older) living in the selected area. Respondents were selected using a multi-stage sampling strategy. Camps and villages were randomly selected using sampling technique proportionate to population size. (For the villages, sub-counties were first sampled, then parishes and then villages.) Municipalities were also included in the sample. At the time of the survey, some of the residents in the selected camps had moved to new settlement sites closer to their original village. In order to capture this population, we randomly selected one new settlement site for each of the selected camps where population movement had taken place, based on the database provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The list of sampled locations is provided in Annex 1.

In the camps and villages, interviewers were assigned to zones where they selected every other household in a randomly chosen direction. A household was defined as a group of people normally sleeping under the same roof and eating together. In each household, interviewers randomly selected

10. The situation in the North has resulted in several new studies that took place around the same time as our study. Among them are Office of the High Commissioner, *Making Peace Our Own: Victims' Perceptions of Accountability, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice in Northern Uganda* (August 2007); Oxfam, *Building Blocks for Peace* (September 2007); Hurifo, *Fostering the Transition in Acholiland: From War to Peace, from Camps to Home* (September 2007); and United Nations Development Program, *Transitional Justice in Northern, Eastern Uganda and Some Parts of West Nile Region* (July 2007).



one adult to be interviewed from a list of all eligible adults. Three attempts were made to contact a household or individual. The minimum sample size for each district was 320 individuals. The final sample size for the eight districts was 2,875 individuals in 38 camps, 21 new sites, 59 villages, and 9 municipalities or town councils. The sample was distributed as follow (by district): Amuru: 347; Gulu: 335; Kitgum: 370; Pader: 352; Lira: 365; Oyam: 357; Amuria: 394; Soroti: 355.

One-on-one interviews were conducted anonymously in a confidential setting. Due to the sensitivity of some of the questions, the interviewers were assigned to same-sex respondents. Oral rather than written consent was obtained due to the high illiteracy rate. The consent form stressed confidentiality and respondents' names were never recorded. Respondents did not receive compensation for participating in this study.

In addition to the survey, key-informant interviews and in-depth interviews with randomly selected individuals were conducted.

### **RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

The survey instrument covered 15 topics including (1) demographics, (2) place of living/displacement, (3) livelihood, (4) priorities and access to services, (5) access to information, (6) sense of security, (7) understanding of peace and justice, (8) peace and mechanisms for peace, (9) reintegration, (10) accountability and mechanisms for justice, (11) the ICC, (12) truth, (13) exposure to violence, (14) psychological impact,<sup>11</sup> and (15) the role of the media. (The data presentation below does not follow this order.) The instrument was developed by a team with expertise in human rights, law, transitional justice, epidemiology, psychiatry, anthropology, surveying, and the conflict in northern Uganda, in consultation with local actors. The media questions were developed in consultation with the BBC World Service Trust for the "Communicating Justice" Project. The instrument was translated into the three local languages and tested. Back-translation and consultation with local experts were used to ensure the quality of the translation. In-depth interviews for each selected sampled site<sup>12</sup> and key-informant interviews were also conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the concepts and judicial mechanisms under study.



FIGURE I: DATA COLLECTION USING PDA

### **DATA COLLECTION AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Data was collected using Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) with integrated Global Positioning Systems (GPS). Each evening the data were synchronized with a central MySQL database and records were manually checked for error. The collected data were subsequently imported and analyzed using Statis-

11. The data on psychological impact is not presented as part of this report.

12. Approximately one open-ended, in-depth interview was conducted for every 50 surveys.

tical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 15.0. For subregion aggregated data, observations were weighted to adjust for population size at the district level. Therefore, the weighted aggregated results are representative at the subregional and total levels.

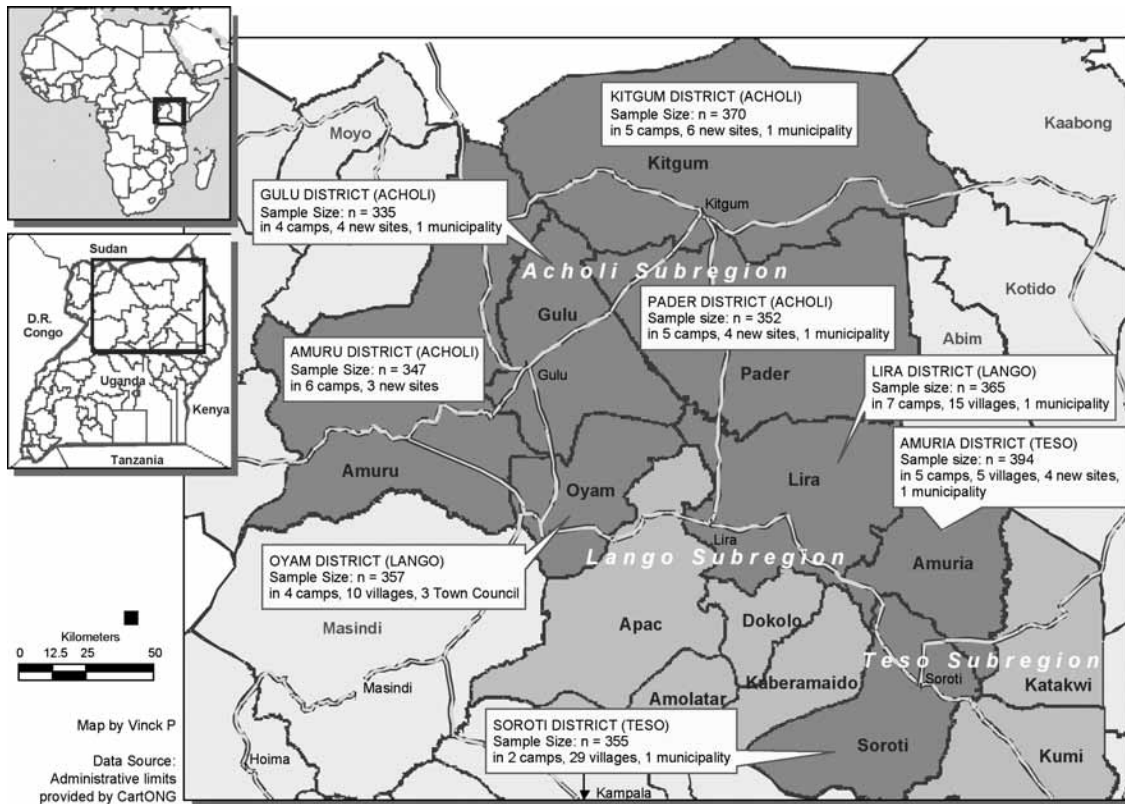


FIGURE 2: SAMPLING DISTRIBUTION

## Limitations of the Study

Inherently, quantitative techniques have certain limitations in being able to test the depth of understanding of concepts or their interrelations. Furthermore, although all possible steps were taken to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the data, potential limitations must be acknowledged, including (1) recall error and the sensitivity of some questions may have affected the accuracy of respondents' answers; (2) although three attempts were made to contact selected respondents, not all sampled individuals could be interviewed and it is unknown whether the opinions of those individuals significantly differ from those of the overall population; (3) the survey was stratified by eight districts in northern Uganda and results do not therefore represent the opinion of all Ugandans, although they are representative of the population in the selected districts; (4) at the time of the survey, the peace talks in Juba fluctuated between being in session and stalled, and it is uncertain if opinions and attitudes towards peace and justice were affected as the prospect of a lasting agreement becomes more or less elusive; and (5) respondents reported feeling uncomfortable speaking about some of the topics with strangers and this may have affected some of their answers.

# BACKGROUND

**UGANDA'S CONFLICT IN THE NORTH** began as a popular rebellion against President Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) and its efforts to consolidate control over northern parts of the country. The conflict was transformed by the emergence of Alice Lakwena's Holy Spirit Movement, or the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces, in early 1986. In October 1987, Lakwena left Acholiland with some 10,000 followers and led them south in a marauding crusade. They were finally defeated east of Jinja, some 80 miles from Kampala. Lakwena herself escaped on a bicycle and later moved to a refugee camp in Kenya, where she lived until her death in January 2007. Simultaneous to the decline of the Holy Spirit Movement, Joseph Kony commenced to build the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).<sup>13</sup>

Kony is shrouded in mystery and there is no clear consensus on his motivations. A former commander in the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) with little formal education, he initially claimed to have inherited the spirit of Lakwena. He is said to have apocalyptic visions, and to see himself as a messenger of God and a liberator of the Acholi people. He has invented his own belief system and set of rituals, drawing from a mix of Christianity, Islam, and animist beliefs. Kony has repeatedly called for Museveni's demise and the overthrow of the Ugandan government.

Early on, Kony experienced jarring rejections from Acholi leaders. The first LRA operations failed largely because popular support was considerably less than for the military uprising in the north that preceded it and for Alice's movement.<sup>14</sup> As a result, Kony turned increasingly against the local population, accusing them of aiding the government in seeking his defeat. A notable example came in 1991 when the LRA attacked the towns of Kitgum and Gulu, in retaliation for their forming a government-sponsored civil defense force, the "Bow and Arrow" militia.

Over the past 21 years, the LRA has engaged in large-scale killings, mutilations, abduction of children, and sexual violence. The violence and the Government's response to the rebellion have forced the majority of the population into temporary camps for internally displaced persons (IDP), where

13. The LRA was originally called the Holy Spirit Movement II, but was later renamed—first as the Lord's Salvation Army, then as the United Christian Democratic Army, and finally to its present name in 1992. Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's message: A new Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," *African Affairs* 98 (1999), 22.

14. Doom and Vlassenroot, 23.

they were subjected to extremely poor humanitarian conditions. There civilians were often exposed to abuses committed by the UPDF, the very force intended to protect them.<sup>15</sup>

The LRA's method of warfare had a profound psychological impact on the local population.<sup>16</sup> Not accepted as a liberation movement representing all Acholi, the LRA used extreme violence, especially against civilians, to instill terror in the local population. The violence has ranged from a low-intensity campaign of attacks to major massacres leading to the deaths of hundreds of people. Civilians have been the main targets. In the course of their campaigns, the LRA have mutilated their victims, including cutting off lips, ears, and noses, and abducted children and youth, forcing girls into sexual slavery. Killings through brutal means were widespread.<sup>17</sup> Many attacks were conducted at night, when the LRA raided villages or IDP camps for food and other supplies. Once abducted, children or youth were conscripted as soldiers, porters, and sexual slaves. New recruits were often forced to commit atrocities as soon as they were abducted to make it more difficult for them to contemplate return. The movement works through a combination of extreme punishment for unwanted behavior and incentives for good behavior. Discipline is high, and senior commanders are rewarded with power, resources, and wives.

Current estimates of the number of LRA members vary greatly and may be impossible to confirm, but numbers range between 3,000 and 5,000, with a core of 150 to 200 commanders, many of whom are very experienced in guerilla warfare. It is estimated that the LRA has abducted 24,000 to 38,000 children and 28,000 to 37,000 adults as of April 2006.<sup>18</sup> The whereabouts of many LRA abductees remains unknown.

The conflict has had untold consequences for the civilian population. More than 80 percent of the people in the northern districts of Kitgum and Pader—roughly 1.5 million people—live in IDP camps. The Ugandan government began moving people in the North into what it called “protected villages” in the mid-1990s. From 2002, larger numbers of people were forced into these camps both by an upsurge in rebel activity and by government decree. In a 2005 study, the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies interviewed 2,300 households in 67 IDP camps.<sup>19</sup> Among other findings, Fafo found that 85 percent of all households in the camps were dependent on food aid, one-third of all children over 10 years old had lost a parent, and 9 percent of children were orphans. That same year, a health and mortality survey conducted among IDPs in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts found that both “the crude mortality

15. See the Report of the Secretary General on internally displaced persons, Francis M. Deng, Addendum, Profiles in Displacement: Mission to Uganda, UN Doc E/CN.4/2004/77/Add.1 (3 March 2004).

16. See Patrick Vinck, Phuong N. Pham, Eric Stover, and Harvey M. Weinstein, “Exposure to War Crimes and Implications for Peace Building in Northern Uganda,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 298/5 (1 August 2007), 543–54.

17. “Behind the Violence: Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda,” Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 11, Kampala: Refugee Law Project, Faculty of Law, Makerere University (2004), 23.

18. Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Eric Stover, *Abducted: the Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley and Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University (June 2007), 3.

19. Morten Boas and Anne Hatloy, Fafo, *The Northern Uganda IDP Profiling Study*, Department of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees of the Office of the Prime Minister and United Nations Development Programme, Vol. 1 (September 2005).

rate (CMR) and under-five mortality rate (U5MR) were well above respective emergency thresholds (1 per 10,000 per day and 2 per 10,000 per day) and were four times higher than non-crisis levels in Kitgum and Pader districts.”<sup>20</sup> The economic consequences of the conflict and the general neglect of the North have been similarly dire. In Gulu district alone, 65 percent of the population live below the national poverty line (less than US\$1 a day) compared to 35 percent for the rest of the country.<sup>21</sup> These figures show a manifestly inadequate and negligent response to the conflict by the Government.

While often neglecting its duties to protect civilians, the Government has mainly pursued a bifurcated approach of a military solution to the conflict on the one hand while also occasionally pursuing peace talks. Since 1986, the government has launched six military offensives against the LRA. The first was Operation North, in 1991, which was the first coordinated attempt to eliminate the LRA. By 1992 and 1993, the intensity of the conflict was greatly reduced. In 1994, an attempt was made to negotiate a settlement under the auspices of Betty Bigombe, then Minister for the North. However, the peace process eventually collapsed as suspicion grew on both sides. With support from Sudan, LRA violence rose drastically. In the following years, periods of violence alternated with calm, during which the LRA reportedly regrouped its forces.

By 2001, the conflict had abated to the point that plans were under way to prepare for the eventual resettlement of the camps’ residents to their villages. Warming relations between the Sudanese and Ugandan governments also secured an agreement to allow the UPDF to pursue the LRA across the Sudanese border. The first large-scale military operation under this arrangement, Operation Iron Fist, was launched in 2002. Consistent with its past conduct, the LRA responded with a new campaign of violence against the civilian population, but this time the LRA spread the conflict east into the non-Acholi districts of Lira and Soroti, giving rise to large numbers of additional victims in these areas. (This is also why we considered it essential to survey in these areas.)

In March 2004, the Ugandan government launched its latest military offensive, Operation Iron Fist II, which included a renewal of the protocol with the Sudanese government. The military offense unleashed a number of massive attacks, most severely on the Barlonya camp in Lira (at least 200 deaths) and the Pagak and Lukodi camps in Gulu (39 and 41 deaths, respectively). In late 2004, Betty Bigombe again led an attempted peace process. A cease-fire with the LRA was secured at the end of November 2004, and it was subsequently extended until February 2005. However, no final settlement was reached and the process experienced a gradual breakdown.<sup>22</sup>

20. See the Ministry of Health of Uganda, UNICEF, and World Health Organization, *Health and Mortality Survey among Internally Displaced Persons in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader Districts, Northern Uganda* (July 2005), 29–32.

21. According to a three-year development plan, Gulu district, like most northern districts suffers from “low productivity; limited business expansion and investment in rural areas; environmental degradation and mismanagement in around the IDP camps; high levels of gender-based violence; and gender disparity in terms of access to education, productive resources and benefits...and participation in development activities.” See Gulu District Local Government, “Revised District Three-Year Development Plan 2005/06–2007/08” (June 2005).

22. In February 2005, Sam Kolo, who had been Bigombe’s chief contact in the negotiations, surrendered to the government.

After the conclusion of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South Sudan, the LRA moved its base in November 2005 from southern Sudan into Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Analysts consider this to be a result of the additional pressure on the LRA within South Sudanese territory. The LRA had been allied with Khartoum and in opposition to the Sudan People's Liberation Army and Southern tribes, who no longer wanted them on their territory. Shortly thereafter, peace talks commenced at Juba, under the mediation of the Vice President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, and a first Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed on 26 August 2006.

Since moving to Garamba, the LRA has adopted a far more public image than was previously the case. Its leaders, most notably Joseph Kony and Vincent Otti, have participated in interviews broadcast on television and radio. The LRA senior leadership in Garamba has held a number of meetings with traditional and religious leaders, the peace mediation team, and UN officials including the previous head of the Office of Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland, and UN Special Envoy Joaquim Chissano. In short, the LRA has sought to change its prior mystical image to that of an army of self-proclaimed freedom fighters who are looking for a political settlement to the conflict, promoted by its delegation at Juba.

LRA attacks have dropped significantly since the first Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in August 2006. Currently, the LRA is not operating in northern Uganda, and most LRA have left Southern Sudan. By June 2007, some 400,000 IDPs in the Acholi subregion had moved to new settlement sites and another 50,000 had moved back to their villages.<sup>23</sup>

While the LRA has made a strategic decision to enter into the peace process, it nonetheless remains a viable military force, and there are continued doubts about the degree of its commitment to the peace process.<sup>24</sup> First, the LRA has long received support from the Sudanese government, which has given the rebel group military equipment (particularly after 1994) and allowed it to set up camps inside Sudan until very recently. It is highly probable that support from Khartoum continues to this day. Second, while the LRA has been weakened militarily, it has reportedly been stockpiling weapons. Although some of its supply lines are disrupted, the LRA has regrouped in Garamba Park and could be revitalizing itself as a fighting force. Finally, the LRA is adept at waging guerrilla warfare and, in January 2006, attacked MONUC troops (UN peacekeepers based in the Congo), killing six of them. It would be very difficult to uproot the LRA from Garamba, although the Government appears to have that as its goal. Most recently, there are signs of internal troubles within Garamba with the defection of Patrick Makasi, and Vincent Otti is presumed (though not confirmed) dead.

23. Interview with UNHCR and CartONG staff, Gulu, Uganda, 15 June 2007.

24. For further analysis on this issue, see International Crisis Group, *Northern Uganda Peace Process: The Need to Maintain Momentum*, Africa Briefing No. 46 (14 September 2007).

## Local Responses to the Conflict

Traditional and religious leaders and their organizations in the North have played an active role in seeking to resolve the conflict. These organizations include the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative and the Acholi traditional leaders (Ker Kwaro Acholi), joined increasingly by their Lango and Teso counterparts. Partly as a result of their efforts, a comprehensive Amnesty Act was passed in 2000. By June 2007, the Amnesty Commission had granted over 8,000 amnesties to LRA members who had returned from the bush (as well as to numerous combatants from other rebel movements). Nonetheless, the passage into force of the Amnesty Act did not result in a resolution to the conflict.

Acholi traditional leaders have promoted traditional ceremonies as a means of pursuing justice as part of a negotiated settlement. Cultural approaches, including traditional ceremonies such as the Mato Oput or “bitter root” ceremony have been under active study and discussion in recent years, both locally and internationally.<sup>25</sup> A vision of a localized, non-punitive solution is supported by many international humanitarian organizations active in northern Uganda, as well as by local NGOs. Others, however, have argued that traditional leaders lack legitimacy or that traditional ceremonies may fall short of human rights standards, or may perpetuate the exclusion of women and youth.

## Role of the International Criminal Court

The involvement of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the conflict in northern Uganda has been a source of controversy.<sup>26</sup> In January 2004, President Museveni referred the situation in northern Uganda to the ICC at a joint press conference with Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo in London. The following month, the Prosecutor announced that he would include in his purview the crimes committed in Barlonya camp, and in July 2004 the ICC formally opened an investigation. In October 2005, the Pre-Trial Chamber unsealed arrest warrants against LRA commanders Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Dominic Ongwen, Raska Lukwiya, and Okot Odhiambo.

Acholi religious and traditional leaders and representatives of international humanitarian organizations have criticized the ICC Prosecutor for announcing the referral in the company of President Museveni. This led some of the Northern actors to question the impartiality of the ICC, particularly in the absence of arrest warrants for UPDF members who may be responsible for violations of international humanitarian law. The ICC, for its part, has stressed that the UPDF has committed fewer

25. See Sverker Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings: War and Existential Uncertainty in Acholiland, Northern Uganda* (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University Press, 2003). See also the work of the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP), *Roco Wat I Acoli/Restoring Relationships in Acholi-land: Traditional Approaches to Justice and Reconciliation*, Liu Institute for Global Issues, Gulu District NGO Forum and Ker Kwaro Acholi, September 2005. See also JRP’s field note, “Abomination”: *Local Belief Systems and International Justice* (5 September 2007).

26. For an in-depth study on the issue, see Tim Allen, *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord’s Resistance Army* (London: Zed Books, 2006).

crimes than the LRA and that such crimes do not meet the gravity threshold required to open an investigation.

ICC critics also feel that peace must come before justice, and they argue that the ICC arrest warrants threaten the peace process. The LRA has repeatedly stated that it will not sign a final agreement unless the warrants are withdrawn. Conversely, supporters of the ICC's intervention have argued that it has contributed to a renewed focus on the conflict; that the arrest warrants have put pressure on the LRA to seek a negotiated settlement; and that the involvement of the ICC has created incentives for an agreement that includes accountability measures.

## **Juba Peace Process**

Now is a crucial time for northern Uganda as, rather unexpectedly, a new peace process and cessation of hostilities seem to offer the best hope for peace since the beginning of the conflict. The Juba peace process arose out of the changing circumstances in South Sudan described above. In July 2006, the LRA declared a unilateral cessation of hostilities against the government, and within a month, representatives of the Government of Uganda and the LRA signed a formal Cessation of Hostilities Agreement as a first step in an attempt to reach a mediated settlement.<sup>27</sup>

The government delegation is led by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Dr. Ruhukana Rugunda; on its side, the LRA leadership in Garamba mandated a delegation of mostly diasporic Acholi, led by Martin Ojul. There is a small mediation team led by Dr. Riek Machar and a Secretariat based at Juba. In addition, the UN has appointed former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano as Special Envoy for LRA-affected areas and there are now several African countries acting as observers (including Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and DRC). The traditional and religious leaders have official observer status and often play a crucial role by conducting shuttle diplomacy and enhancing the trust of the LRA in the negotiation. Under the guidance of the Mediation team, the parties created a five-item agenda, including: (1) Cessation of Hostilities, (2) Comprehensive Solutions to the Conflict, (3) Accountability and Reconciliation, (4) Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, and (5) Formal Ceasefire. These agenda items are being negotiated consecutively rather than simultaneously, so that agreement on one item is necessary before going on to the next.

The peace talks went through several crises with walk-outs by the LRA, one resulting in a break from January to April 2007. Moreover, deadline after deadline for LRA assembly at the designated points in South Sudan has been broken, and at least four separate Cessation of Hostilities Agreements have had to be concluded. Furthermore, the LRA tabled a broad political agenda as a part of the Comprehensive Solutions that threatened to derail the talks. At first, the talks only received very hesitant international financial backing, particularly since governments that were parties to the Rome Statute took an early

27. For background on the Juba Peace Process, see International Crisis Group report No. 124, *Northern Uganda: Seizing the Opportunity for Peace* (26 April 2007).



view that they should not give direct assistance to the peace talks. This changed when Jan Egeland helped establish a fund for the process.

On 29 April 2007, just a few weeks after reconvening, the parties signed Agenda Item 2 (Comprehensive Solutions). The Parties then commenced discussion on one of the most sensitive issues on the agenda, Agenda Item 3 (Accountability and Reconciliation). The Lord's Resistance Army position going into the Agenda Item was that the ICC arrest warrants should be withdrawn as a precondition to the success of the talks, but that they were willing to submit to traditional justice mechanisms. The LRA also tabled the possibility of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Uganda. The Government, on the other hand, took the view that the successful conclusion of the peace talks was a pre-condition for it to approach the ICC to ask it to lift the arrest warrants, something that it indicated it was willing to do (without specifying under which article of the Rome Statute).

The parties decided to approach accountability and reconciliation in two separate phases, dealing first with the principles and then the mechanisms. Under this structure, on 29 June 2007 the parties signed the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation. Importantly, the agreement on principles sets a general framework for moving forward on the national level, specifically stating that "formal criminal and civil justice measures shall be applied to any individual who is alleged to have committed serious crimes or human rights violations in the course of the conflict." For non-state actors (i.e., the LRA), the agreement specifies that an alternative regime of penalties will be introduced, and that these shall take into account the gravity of the crimes but also the need for reconciliation. The agreement also refers to the need for effective legal representation, reparations for victims, victim participation in accountability processes, the special needs of women and children, and the need for an analysis of the root causes of the conflict. The agreement states that traditional justice will play a "central role" in achieving some of these goals. Finally, the Government under the Agreement undertakes to "deal conscientiously" with the issue of the ICC arrest warrants.

The parties also committed to conduct nationwide consultations on the mechanisms for accountability and reconciliation. The goal of this process is to identify the most appropriate combination of mechanisms under the Principles laid out in the Agreement. In August 2007, the government delegation launched the consultation process with a meeting of local, national, and international civil society actors, religious and traditional leaders, and the representatives of victims and the affected populations. The LRA consultations commenced in early November 2007.

# FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

**AT THE TIME OF THE SURVEY**, the peace talks in Juba were either ongoing or in recess. No serious LRA-related security incidents had been reported in northern Uganda for several months. This was an entirely different circumstance to 2005, when the violence was still ongoing. This general atmosphere has also made the prospect of peace more tangible.

Under a new government policy not directly related to the peace talks, some internally displaced people had moved to “new settlement sites,”<sup>28</sup> initially established prior to the peace talks as a way to provide access to land yet maintain the IDP camps’ appearance of security.<sup>29</sup> Some respondents who had been more recently displaced, especially in Teso and Lango subregions, had returned directly to their homesteads.

## Respondents

A total of 2,875 interviews were conducted in eight districts of northern Uganda, within the Acholi, Lango, and Teso subregions. In the Lango and Teso subregions, not all districts were selected, due to their limited exposure to LRA-related conflict. Therefore, results for the selected districts may not be representative of the attitudes of all northern Ugandans. The results presented here are adjusted for the population size in the selected districts. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The interview survey teams were composed of equal numbers of men and women and were assigned to same-sex respondents. Thus, the ratio of female-to-male respondents was almost equal (49 percent of respondents were female). The mean age of the respondents was 35 years (median 31 years). Ethnicity is closely associated with the district of residence. Over 98 percent of the respondents in the Acholi subregion were Acholi, 97 percent Langi in the Lango subregion, and 93 percent Teso in the

28. Although the security situation had improved by the time of survey, the outcome of the peace talks remained uncertain. Because of this, local government officials had only permitted people to move to settlement sites or villages where the UPDF had a presence. Many of these sites are within walking distance to the IDP’s original homestead.

29. UNOCHA (15 May 2006), 3–4, cited in Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, [http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/\(httpEnvelopes\)/ED2A74B9BoE57825C125719C0042A4F9?OpenDocument](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/(httpEnvelopes)/ED2A74B9BoE57825C125719C0042A4F9?OpenDocument); accessed on 20 September 2007.

Teso subregion. Sixty-four percent of the respondents identified themselves as Roman Catholic, 26 percent belonged to the Anglican Church, and 8 percent were Savedees (born-again Christians).

The majority of respondents described themselves as being in a marital or partner relationship (74%).<sup>30</sup> Among those married or in a partnership, 93 percent lived with their partners and 12 percent had more than one spouse or partner (10% had two spouses/partners). The average size of a household was seven individuals (S.D., 3.5). Eighty-seven percent of respondents said they had natural-born children, and 93 percent said their households had children (under 18 years old).

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Sample size (un-weighted n)	1,404	722	749	2,875
Gender: % women	47.7	53.4	49.3	49.1
Mean Age - years (S.D.)	34.9 (14.5)	36.7 (15.6)	35.6 (13.7)	35.4 (14.6)
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Acholi (%)	98.1	1.1	0.2	63.0
Langi (%)	1.3	97.4	0.0	19.2
Teso (%)	0.0	0.2	92.7	15.8
Other (%)	0.7	1.3	7.1	1.9
<b>Marital Status:</b>				
Single, never married (%)	14.6	7.7	14.9	13.3
Married / Partnered (%)	71.2	78.3	77.8	73.7
Divorced (%)	5.7	5.7	1.4	5.0
Widowed (%)	8.4	8.3	5.9	8.0

The level of education of northern Ugandans is below the Ugandan average. Over half (56%) of respondents said they could read and write simple messages in at least one language. However, when asked about their highest level of education, one of every four respondents said they had never attended school and more than one-third (37%) said they attended but did not complete primary school. Fewer than 10 percent of respondents had completed secondary school or higher.

Respondents reported their main livelihood activities were agriculture (55%), casual or daily labor (11%), and small trade (7%). The average monthly income was estimated at 34,700 Ugandan Shillings, or roughly US\$19.<sup>31</sup> However, poverty in the North is extreme, so that 19 percent of the respondents reported having no income: 22 percent in the Acholi subregion compared to 13 percent for the Langi

30. Due to poverty and displacement, marriages that are not consummated legally or through customary dowry payment are considered partnership.

31. The exchange rate at the time of writing was circa 1,800 Ugandan Shillings to the U.S. Dollar.

and 12 percent for the Teso. Another 28 percent had a monthly income of 10,000 Ugandan Shillings (roughly US\$6) or less.

## Overall Priorities

As a follow-up to the 2005 survey, we asked respondents to identify their top priorities and how they felt these priorities were being met. This section was designed to elucidate thinking on the current conditions and humanitarian crisis in the North and contribute to the development of potential policy responses by the government, international community, or aid agencies.

Respondents were *allowed to give more than one answer* and identified health (45%), peace (44%), education (31%), and livelihood concerns (including food, 43%; land, 37%; money, 35%) as their main priorities.<sup>32</sup> In the Acholi subregion, where many respondents still resided in IDP camps or new settlement sites, one-third of the population mentioned returning to their homestead as a top priority. Despite the change in the environment, respondents' top priorities have not changed since 2005.<sup>33</sup>

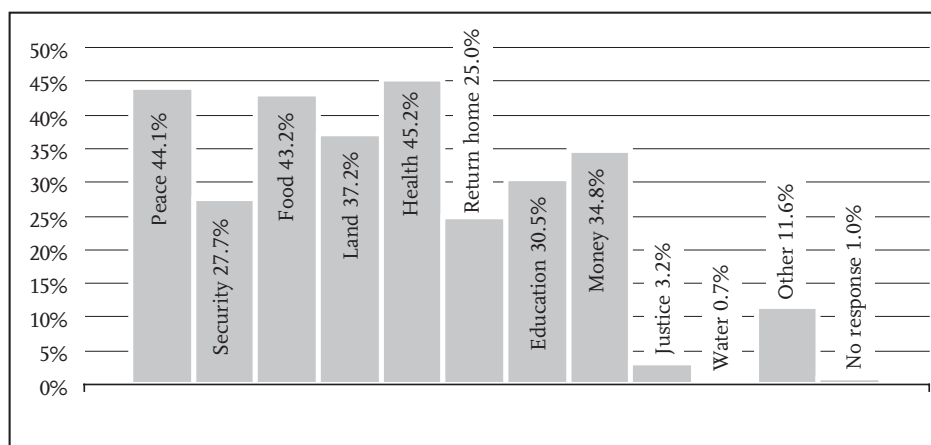


FIGURE 3: RESPONDENTS' CURRENT MAIN PRIORITIES

Only 3 percent of respondents identified justice as a top priority, putting the emphasis on resolving immediate needs for peace, food, and health. This was similar to our survey in 2005.

When asked what should be the priorities of the Ugandan government once peace is achieved, respondents most frequently stated the government should help people return home (33%) and maintain security (21%). When asked what the priorities of the international community should be, respondents more frequently demanded support to develop the area (26%) and help to return home (19%). In 2005,

32. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) about 90 percent of the IDPs depend on WFP food distribution for their livelihood, press release of 16 March 2007 (<http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2406>).

33. Pham et al., *Forgotten Voices*.

those surveyed were asked a slightly different question, i.e., what should be prioritized once peace was achieved without specifying by whom, and the responses varied only slightly from those reported here (63% said IDP return, 29% said rebuilding of infrastructure).<sup>34</sup> This suggests that any approach to peace and justice in northern Uganda must take into account the strong desire on the part of the people to have their most basic needs met.

## Displacement and Resettlement

Clearly, displacement has adversely affected the vast majority of the population in northern Uganda. Eighty-six percent of respondents said they had been displaced from their home at one time or another during the conflict. Displacement was most frequent in the Acholi subregion, where 94 percent of the population reported displacement. Fifty-three percent of respondents lived in the original IDP camps, 18 percent in new settlement sites, 17 percent in villages, and 12 percent in municipalities or urban centers. The distribution across subregions reflected the security situation and resettlement policies, with virtually no one living in villages in the Acholi subregion. Those displaced had been in their current place of residence for an average of 5.8 years.

Respondents were asked to evaluate social components, such as access to land for farming or health services (spectrum from “very bad” to “very good”). The worst rankings were access to food (91% said “bad” or “very bad”) and opportunities to find work (95% said “bad” or “very bad”). In both cases, these rankings were better in villages and municipalities.

Access to land for farming also ranked poorly, although nearly half found it “good” to “very good” in villages and new settlement sites, compared to less than 15 percent in camps. Access to education, health care, and family-planning services were more frequently seen as “good” to “very good” in camps and municipalities. Fifty-six percent of villagers said that the quality of life was “good” or “very good,” compared to only 38 percent of those living in IDP camps or settlement sites who shared this view.

In general, people tend to be most satisfied overall with life in the villages and municipalities. However, life in the more remote settings of villages and the resettlement camps is associated with reduced access to social services such as education, health care and family-planning services.

34. Pham et al., *Forgotten Voices*.

TABLE 2: PERCEPTION OF SERVICES BY TYPES OF SETTLEMENT

Percent ranked “good” or “very good” on the following services:	Camp	Village	Municipality Town Council	New Settlement Site
Housing (%)	19.3	18.4	23.7	18.4
Access to water (%)	44.4	44.6	43.1	34.3
Access to food (%)	4.5	25.3	16.4	2.3
Opportunities to find work (%)	4.2	9.1	9.2	2.2
Access to land for farming (%)	14.3	47.3	7.5	45.6
Access to education (%)	41.9	33.7	46.1	34.5
Access to health services (%)	47.7	25.6	47.4	19.2
Access to family-planning services (%)	59.3	47.8	55.1	41.6
Quality of life (%)	37.9	55.8	51.5	38.2

Similar trends were observed when respondents compared life in their current settlement with life in their villages of origin (this question was not posed to village residents). Respondents generally recognized that camps and municipalities provided better access to health services, education, and water. However, respondents overwhelmingly identified camps and municipalities as worse in terms of economic and farming opportunities and access to food. The new settlement sites performed better in providing opportunities for farming, but access to health care and education was frequently seen as worse compared to that in the home villages.

TABLE 3: COMPARATIVE PERCEPTION OF SERVICES

	Respondents in Camp vs. Village of Origin (n=1,480)			Respondents in Municipality vs. Village of Origin (n= 375)			Respondents in New Site vs. Village of Origin (n = 464)		
	Better (%)	Same (%)	Worse (%)	Better (%)	Same (%)	Worse (%)	Better (%)	Same (%)	Worse (%)
Access to education	54.4	12.9	32.8	64.3	12.7	23.1	35.5	18.7	45.8
Access to health care	57.1	12.7	30.2	58.8	16.1	25.1	19.7	16.2	64.1
Access to water	47.8	11.7	40.5	43.1	13.6	43.4	28.7	23.4	47.9
Access to food	4.6	3.8	91.6	12.4	12.1	75.5	3.9	12.7	83.4
Security	42.1	13.2	44.7	53.1	20.7	26.2	61.9	17.0	21.1
Opportunities for farming	9.6	4.4	86.0	6.9	8.1	85.0	45.5	16.0	38.5
Opportunities to earn money	4.4	4.2	91.3	12.8	10.8	76.5	3.1	11.5	85.4

Nonetheless, when comparing settlement options, four of five respondents would prefer to live in a village rather than a camp, and an almost equal number (74%) would rather live in a village compared to a resettlement site. Resettlement sites are still seen as better than the camps: 66 percent would rather live in a resettlement site than in a camp.

Population movement can be expected to continue. Sixty-three percent of the population reported living in a place they would not call home. A total of 1,790 out of 2,875 respondents (62%) said they were planning to move away from their current place of residence. In the IDP camps, 79 percent said they were planning to move, while 66 percent of residents in the new settlements and 61 percent of those living in municipalities said they wished to relocate. Meanwhile, only 7 percent of village residents express a desire to move. While these numbers reflect people's aspirations, what will happen in reality remains to be seen, and the experiences in the Lango and Teso subregions cannot easily serve as proxies for Acholi due to drastic differences in duration and extent of displacement throughout the society.<sup>35</sup>

Most are likely to wait until a final settlement of the conflict. In camps, new sites and urban areas, the move was frequently anticipated "as soon as the war ends" (49 percent in the camps, 72 percent in the resettlement sites). In the camps, 64 percent of the respondents said they did not feel secure enough to return to their homesteads. In the new settlement sites and municipalities, 61 percent and 58 percent respectively said they felt too insecure to go back to their homestead. This would seem to indicate that the timing of return depends heavily on the conclusion of the conflict.

Land issues were not seen as a major obstacle to moving back to villages. More than half of respondents (56%) said they had access to land, and 64 percent said they owned land, although access was generally poorer in the Acholi subregion. However, problems may yet arise in reclaiming land.<sup>36</sup> Among those who owned land, 27 percent claimed to have papers documenting ownership. Nearly one-fifth of the population (19%) said they had experienced problems claiming access to their land. They predominantly approached government officials and local council persons (54%) and elders (26%) to resolve land issues.

## Views on Security

Although a majority of respondents (79%) felt more secure at the time of the survey compared to before the peace talks began, security remains a major concern. Only one out of five respondents felt safe enough to return permanently to their homestead or village. Little more than one-third of the respondents (37%) believed their children were safe from abduction, while more than half (55%) feared for the safety of their children. A higher percentage of respondents felt that the UPDF (88%) were protecting them and their family than the police (67%). These figures may reflect the immediate improvements to the security situation in the North during the negotiations at Juba. Nonetheless, these gains are very fragile and will not be consolidated until a peace agreement is signed, the North is de-militarized, and adequate security measures are implemented.

35. For more information about IDP movements in northern Uganda, see the Refugee Law Project's Briefing Paper, "Rapid Assessment of Population Movement in Gulu and Pader" (June 2007).

36. For an exploration of some of these issues, see Oxfam, *The Building Blocks of Sustainable Peace: The Views of Internally Displaced People in Northern Uganda* (September 2007), 20–22.

Respondents were also asked how safe they felt in a range of situations. In general, around 80 percent of respondents felt safe in going to their fields, the nearest town and the nearest market. Fewer respondents felt safe walking around at night, although up to 67 percent said they did. Challenges remain regarding reintegration before a final agreement. Less than half of respondents felt safe or very safe meeting strangers, formerly abducted people, or former LRA commanders. Approximately half of respondents felt safe or very safe talking openly in public about the LRA (49%). Slightly more felt safe talking about the UPDF (57%). All of these indicators point to the social complexities that are likely to arise in the post-conflict phase, when it may not be possible to determine the background of individuals, whether IDP or combatant. It also points to the need to establish adequate policing to deal with conflicts and ordinary crimes.

TABLE 4: SENSE OF SAFETY

Sense of safety (% stating “safe” or “very safe”)	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Walking around in your camp / village at night (%)	70.1	62.5	62.6	67.4
Going to your field / work / get water / wood (%)	82.5	81.4	77.2	81.4
Sleeping at night (%)	87.1	74.8	73.7	82.5
Going to the nearest town or village (%)	82.9	81.9	81.7	82.5
Going to the nearest market (%)	91.8	89.6	84.8	90.2
Meeting strangers (%)	43.9	42.1	32.9	41.7
Meeting people who were abducted by the LRA (%)	57.6	46.4	25.9	50.1
Meeting former LRA commanders (%)	55.8	31.2	16.9	44.5
Talking to the authorities (%)	78.5	90.9	88.1	82.5
Talking to UPDF soldiers (%)	73.4	74.9	68.4	72.8
Talking openly in public about the LRA (%)	54.9	40.8	37.4	49.2
Talking openly in public about the UPDF (%)	61.2	38.6	61.8	57.1
Complaining to authorities when you are the victim of theft (%)	80.5	89.6	78.0	81.8
Complaining to authorities when you are the victim of violence (%)	81.3	90.1	87.7	84.0

Respondents were further asked to comment on how confident they were that the government was working toward the various social programs. The findings show that respondents held ambivalent views on whether the government was making sufficient effort to improve the situation. (Central and local governments were not differentiated in this range of questions.) About half or less had confidence that the government was working to help secure employment (38%), improve quality of life (50%), reduce poverty (49%), and protect their interest in general (49%). The lowest level of confidence in the government was found among the population in the Acholi subregion.



In other areas, respondents were more positive. Almost two-thirds thought the government was “working to improve” access to education (68%), quality of education (61%), access to health services (63%), quality of health services (54%), preventing crimes (68%), and providing protection (61%). However, the data on overall priorities show that respondents still consider the provision of these services lacking. On the other hand, it is important to note that the data reflect a degree of confidence in the good will of the government to improve education, provide access to health care, and reduce crime, and that the population in the North continues to look to the government to provide it with overall “human security.” Northern Ugandans care not just about physical safety but also a range of other priorities that have been neglected during the conflict.

TABLE 5: LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT SOCIAL SERVICES

Percent ranked that they are “confident” or “very confident” that the government is working to...	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Increase access to education (%)	64.5	84.9	60.9	67.7
Improve the quality of education (%)	56.8	81.1	51.8	60.6
Increase access to health services (%)	60.5	85.6	49.7	63.4
Improve quality of health services (%)	49.1	79.3	44.8	54.1
End the violence between the LRA and Government (%)	50.3	72.0	51.0	54.5
Bring to justice those who committed crimes (%)	44.4	69.8	58.7	51.6
Prevent crimes in my community (%)	63.5	82.9	67.7	67.9
Bring justice for crimes committed in my community (%)	57.5	76.1	68.8	63.0
Help secure employment (%)	32.0	60.3	37.7	38.3
Protect my family and my community (%)	55.0	77.5	64.6	60.9
Improve the quality of life (%)	42.6	78.9	44.4	49.8
Reduce poverty (%)	45.2	66.2	43.4	48.9
Protect my interests (%)	43.3	65.1	55.6	49.6

## Exposure to Violence

The war in northern Uganda has taken a terrible toll on civilians during the 21 years of the conflict. When respondents were asked to identify who, in their opinions, were the principal victims of the conflict, a wide array of views emerged. They generally defined victims broadly, providing such answers as “everybody in the north” (60%), “the Acholi in general” (52%), or “children” (32%). Additionally, 95 percent of respondents self-identified as victims. Much of the data gathered in the current survey strongly resembles that gathered in 2005,<sup>37</sup> and it serves to demonstrate the widespread nature of violations in the north, as well as the reach and depth of the conflict.

37. Pham et al., “Forgotten Voices”

General economic consequences of the violence were frequently reported in all eight districts: 86 percent reported losing income, 86 percent had their house destroyed, 85 percent had productive assets such as cattle taken away, and 87 percent had other assets taken away. Very few respondents remained untouched by the direct or indirect economic consequences of the conflict.

As many as 76 percent of all respondents reported having had a family member killed over the course of the conflict; 6 percent had a father killed, 11 percent had a mother killed, 33 percent had a brother killed, and 10 percent had a sister killed. These figures may be seen as relatively high in relation to many other conflicts.<sup>38</sup>

TABLE 6: GENERAL EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS

Self-reported exposure to selected violent events	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Was displaced (%)	93.9	94.3	48.7	86.3
Lost income (%)	88.6	91.9	68.8	85.9
Had house destroyed (%)	92.8	93.6	49.1	85.5
Had productive assets taken away (%)	91.2	90.9	53.5	84.7
Had other assets taken away (%)	94.7	92.8	51.5	87.0
Had at least one family member killed (%)	85.0	77.0	42.0	76.1
Father killed (%)	6.5	6.7	1.0	5.6
Mother killed (%)	14.3	6.1	3.7	11.0
Brother killed (%)	39.6	30.7	11.6	33.1
Sister killed (%)	12.3	9.0	2.4	10.0

LRA abductions have been a constant feature of the war.<sup>39</sup> Thirty-seven percent of the respondents said they had been abducted by the LRA, compared with 40 percent in 2005. One-fifth (21%) of the population in the eight districts was forcibly taken away or abducted by the LRA for a week or more, 13 percent for at least a month, and 2 percent for at least a year. Half the respondents who had been abducted reported having experienced multiple abductions.

Furthermore, 14 percent reported being forced by the LRA to loot, 7 percent to beat or injure a civilian, and 3 percent to kill someone. More generally, one-quarter of the population in the eight districts reportedly was beaten by the LRA, and 5 percent were maimed. In all cases the reported exposures were more frequent among the Acholi respondents.

38. See “Counting the Cost: Twenty Years of War in Northern Uganda,” Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda (March 2006).

39. Pham et al., *Abducted*.

TABLE 7: EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS CAUSED BY THE LRA

Self-reported exposure to selected violent events committed by the LRA	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Beaten (%)	33.4	13.5	2.9	24.4
Maimed (%)	4.9	7.7	4.9	5.4
Abducted (%)	48.8	25.4	4.5	36.8
Abducted for at least 1 week (%)	28.1	13.1	2.2	20.8
Abducted for at least 1 month (%)	18.5	6.3	1.4	13.3
Abducted for at least 1 year (%)	3.0	1.8	0.0	2.3
Abducted multiple times (among those abducted once) (%)	52.2	37.9	40.9	50.1
Forced to carry loads (%)	39.6	17.7	3.5	29.3
Forced to walk long distances (%)	41.8	18.0	10.7	32.0
Forced to loot (%)	19.4	8.0	1.8	14.2
Forced to beat or injure people (%)	10.0	2.6	1.4	7.1
Forced to kill someone (%)	4.2	1.1	1.0	3.1

Respondents also gave insight into some of the patterns of behavior associated with abductions and methods of return. For instance, 49 percent escaped and 42 percent were released by the LRA. Few of the returnees (13%) went through a reception center (there was significant variance between regions), but those who did found it helpful for their return in the community (91%). Overall, 42 percent reported experiencing problems upon their return. Among the most frequently reported problems were relations with family members and friends (18%) and health problems or injuries (19%). Interestingly, in Teso, no respondents reported stigmatization as a problem experienced upon return, yet 50 percent said they had a problem adjusting to life outside of the bush. This latter figure could relate to the generally lower numbers of self-reported exposure to selected violent events committed by the LRA, and/or to the fact that one-third of those abducted passed through reception centers (all of whom cited being helped by the services provided there).

TABLE 8: EXPERIENCES AFTER LEAVING THE LRA

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
<b>How did the former LRA abductees return?</b>				
Released by LRA (%)	41.6	46.0	42.1	42.2
Escaped (%)	49.9	42.3	42.1	48.8
Rescued by UPDF (%)	7.9	10.9	15.8	8.5
Other (%)	0.6	0.7	0.0	0.6
<b>Went through a reception center after return? (%)</b>				
<b>If yes, reception center helped return to community? (% yes)</b>	92.7	80.0	100.0	90.8
<b>Had problems upon returning home? (%)</b>				
	42.5	38.0	35.0	41.8
<b>If yes, type of problems experienced?</b>				
Stigmatization (%)	10.1	13.5	0.0	10.4
Mentally do not feel well (%)	8.7	15.4	16.7	9.7
Problem with adjusting to life outside the bush (%)	12.0	7.7	50.0	12.0
Difficulty with school, work (%)	12.0	9.6	0.0	11.6
Relation problems, family and friends (%)	19.9	5.7	16.7	18.2
Health, injury (%)	18.6	19.2	16.7	18.6
Loss of property/goods (%)	8.5	15.4	0.0	9.2
Other (%)	10.1	13.5	0.0	10.4

While not necessarily as frequent as those of the LRA, respondents also highlighted serious abuses on behalf of the UPDF. Six percent reported being beaten by the UPDF, 4 percent were maimed, and 3 percent reported that a family member was killed by the UPDF. Nine percent of respondents said they had property stolen or destroyed by the UPDF.

TABLE 9: EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS CAUSED BY THE UPDF

<b>Self-reported exposure to selected violent events, committed by UPDF</b>	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Verbally abused or threatened (%)	19.0	4.2	3.9	13.6
Property destroyed/stolen (%)	11.1	2.6	5.6	8.6
Productive assets taken away (%)	8.8	1.0	3.7	6.5
Family member maimed/injured (%)	3.2	0.6	7.8	3.5
Family member killed (%)	4.4	0.3	0.5	3.0
Restricted from moving (%)	5.0	1.0	0.0	3.4
Beaten (%)	8.1	2.7	2.7	6.1

Women and children have been particularly affected by the violence. Three percent of respondents reported they had been sexually violated (5% among women). Eight percent of the respondents saw someone sexually violated by the LRA, 9 percent saw someone sexually violated by someone other than LRA (this may include domestic abuse), and 1 percent saw someone sexually violated by the UPDF. It is however highly possible that incidents of sexual violence were under-reported due the sensitivity of the subject.

## Respondents' Attitudes to Peace

Respondents were asked about their attitudes toward peace and how it could be achieved. In order to gain further insight into their responses, it was important to understand how respondents understood the concept of peace. Close to three-quarters of the respondents (72%) defined peace as an “absence of violence” and close to 40 percent defined it as “freedom from worrying about abduction”<sup>40</sup> Respondents also associated peace with human development (31%) and return to their home village (27%).<sup>41</sup> Seventeen percent also referred to “reconciliation,” and education and return of the LRA were each mentioned by 12 percent. These answers give insight into expectations respondents may have for when the war ends. As few as 8 percent of respondents associated the concept of peace with justice (see also below on conceptions of “peace” and “justice”).

A majority of respondents (84%) believed peace could be achieved in northern Uganda. Even more believed peace could be achieved through dialogue with the LRA (90%) or pardoning the LRA for their crimes (86%).

When asked who should take action to bring about peace, respondents identified the government (80%), the LRA leaders (35%), and President Museveni (28%). Respondents generally believed that the government was more committed to the peace process than the LRA: three-quarters of respondents (72%) stated they believed the government was committed to achieving peace, whereas fewer than half (41%) believed the LRA was similarly committed.

When asked what should be done to prevent future conflicts, respondents most frequently talked of pardoning LRA leaders (33%), uniting all regions of Uganda (26%), and forgiving the LRA (20%). The following table indicates additional measures respondents said would be necessary to prevent conflict over the long term.

40. In the Acholi region, as many as 57 percent referred to freedom from fear of abduction, as opposed to 8 percent in Lango and 12 percent in Teso.

41. In the Acholi region, the figures for development and return to village life were 37 percent and 36 percent respectively, whereas these figures were much lower in non-Acholi areas (12% and 12% for Lango, and 11% and 19% for Teso).

TABLE IO: CONFLICT PREVENTION

How to prevent future conflict	Acholi	Lango	Teso	Total
	Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lira, Oyam	Amuria, Soroti	
Pardon the LRA leaders (%)	33.5	33.8	29.0	32.8
Unite all regions in Uganda (%)	25.2	26.8	27.8	26.0
Forgive the LRA leaders (%)	24.7	7.4	15.7	19.9
Establish the truth (%)	21.9	1.4	18.0	17.4
Find the root cause of the conflict (%)	16.7	5.9	19.1	15.0
Provide compensation to victims (%)	10.7	2.9	5.8	8.4
Hold those responsible accountable (%)	10.5	3.0	10.2	9.0
Put the LRA leaders on trial (%)	10.3	1.7	9.5	8.6
Negotiate peace (%)	9.4	12.3	3.0	8.9
Chase away the bad spirits (%)	3.5	0.6	6.3	3.4
Other (%)	26.8	44.2	32.7	31.1

## An Integrated Justice Response: Victim-Oriented Measures

### TRUTH-SEEKING AND MEMORIALIZATION

Respondents highly prioritized truth-seeking post-conflict.<sup>42</sup> A very high percentage of people in the North, up to 93 percent of all respondents, said it is important to know the root causes of the conflict, and 84 percent said it is necessary to establish truth to achieve peace. When probed about the root causes of the conflict, 54 percent identified the struggle for power, and 33 percent identified the actions of the LRA. Others identified fighting for equality (16%) and disparities between the north and south of Uganda (13%). Twelve percent said actions of the government were a root cause of the conflict.

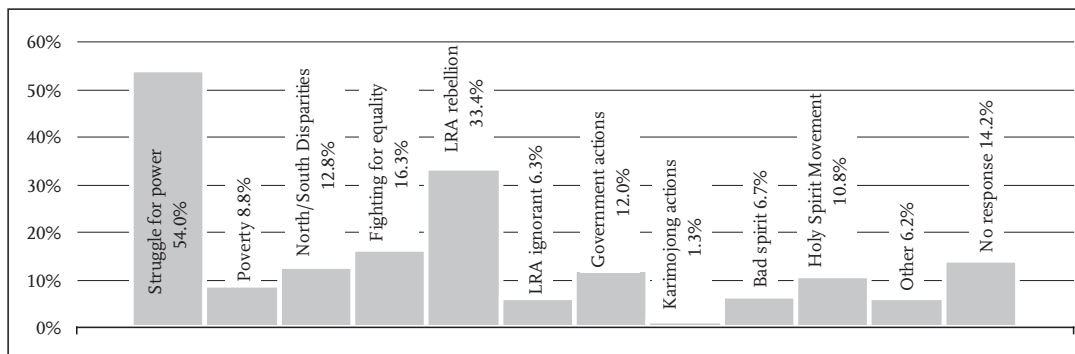


FIGURE 4: WHAT ARE THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT?<sup>43</sup>

42. A study by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights reports similar findings: “Respondents repeatedly expressed their need to discover the truth about the past, especially to shed light on the identity of the perpetrators and the nature of the acts that have been committed.” OHCHR Report, “Making Peace Our Own” (2007), 68.

43. Respondents were allowed more than one response. Therefore, percentages may not add up to 100%.

The vast majority of respondents (95%) said a written historical record should be prepared of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda, and 89 percent were willing to talk openly about their experiences in a court or public hearing. Over 90 percent of respondents answered positively when asked if there should be a truth commission, although it is not clear if respondents understood the concept. It was also striking that these results tended to be similarly high across the three regions. When asked how the truth should be established, respondents suggested investigating the LRA (42%), investigating the UPDF (27%), and establishing a truth commission (29%). Almost half of respondents (49%) stated that they had already participated in a truth-telling process.<sup>44</sup>

When exploring the subject during in-depth interviews, we found that two camps in the North organized a community truth-telling event but there was no widespread, general conception of truth-telling processes, and they were strongly associated with confession of wrongdoing. Almost all (95%) of the respondents said they wanted memorials to be established to remember what happened in northern Uganda. The most frequent proposition was to establish a written historical record (41%); 24 percent proposed a day dedicated to the remembrance of the war and its victims; and 16 percent said a memorial, such as a statue or other object, should be erected.

## REPARATIONS

The survey further explored what ought to be done for the victims of the conflict. Respondents were asked to give a single response to “what should be done for victims.” Direct compensation to individuals was frequently proposed, including financial compensation (52%), food (9%), and livestock/cattle (8%).<sup>45</sup> Equal numbers (7%) mentioned counseling and education for children. Ten percent mentioned apologies, justice, or reconciliation. In the 2005 survey, the majority of respondents stated that they preferred reparations at the community as opposed to the individual level.<sup>46</sup>

44. For more information about the kind of truth activity occurring at the community level see the Justice and Reconciliation Project (Liu Institute for Global Studies, Gulu District NGO Forum), *“The Cooling of the Hearts”: Community Truth Telling and Reconciliation in Acholiland*, May 2007.

45. Similar findings were reported in the study by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Making Peace Our Own: Victims’ Perceptions of Accountability, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice in Northern Uganda,” United Nations (2007). The conclusions of that report state that “Focus groups identified compensation as the primary response to harm, both as a form of accountability for the perpetrators and as a means to improving the material conditions of affected communities,” 68.

46. Pham et al., *Forgotten Voices*.

TABLE II: WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE VICTIMS?

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Justice (%)	0.4	2.0	6.5	1.7
Apologies (%)	3.0	5.7	8.6	4.4
Reconciliation (%)	1.7	3.7	9.1	3.2
Provide them with financial compensation (%)	56.2	52.5	32.2	51.8
Provide them with food (%)	6.8	7.8	17.2	8.6
Provide education for their children (%)	7.8	1.2	7.9	6.6
Provide counseling (%)	5.8	12.7	2.8	6.6
Compensate them with cattle and goats (%)	8.6	7.6	7.2	8.2
Nothing (%)	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.6
Other (%)	8.0	5.5	6.8	7.4

## Integrated Justice Response: Other Justice Mechanisms

When asked about accountability without specifying the relationship to the peace process, more than two-thirds (70%) said it was important. Half the respondents said the LRA leaders should be held accountable, and 48 percent said all of the LRA. Forty percent said the government should be held accountable.

TABLE I2: ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VIOLENCE AND ABUSES

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Is it important to hold accountable those responsible? (% yes)	67.2	66.4	84.5	70.0
Who should be held accountable?	The LRA leaders (%)	54.3	61.4	50.1
	All the LRA (%)	49.7	62.3	48.0
	The government (%)	39.8	11.3	64.9
	The UPDF (%)	23.6	4.3	11.5

It is important to note that respondents did not show a uniform understanding of justice. Regarding the term “justice,” 41 percent defined it as “being fair,” 29 percent associated it with “trials,” and 26 percent defined it as “holding the wrongdoer accountable,” whereas 17 percent associated it with reconciliation and 8 percent with compensation. This may mean that many respondents do not strongly associate justice with current institutions such as the courts, but more with a general notion of fairness. About one-third associate it with formal justice mechanisms.



This understanding of justice is, to some extent, reflected in the responses to the question of which *mechanisms* would be the most appropriate to deal with those LRA and UPDF responsible for violations of human rights. Nearly equal percentages mentioned the ICC (29%) and the Ugandan national court system (28%). Twenty percent referred to the Amnesty Commission. Only 3 percent referred to traditional justice, although it should be noted that traditional justice may not have been generally understood as a *mechanism* per se, but rather as a process.

TABLE 13: MOST APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS TO DEAL WITH ABUSES IN NORTHERN UGANDA

Mechanisms	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Traditional system (%)	4.4	0.4	0.6	3.0
Ugandan national court (%)	29.8	21.4	27.8	27.9
Amnesty commission (%)	24.6	9.4	16.9	20.4
ICC (%)	24.7	47.1	23.4	28.7
None (%)	7.1	8.9	7.5	7.5
Other (%)	1.3	1.8	10.0	2.9
No response (%)	8.2	10.9	13.8	9.6

When faced with the proposition that “it is important to have trials for the LRA leaders,” a majority (59%) stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed. Fewer (34%) agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that “it is important to have trials for the lower ranking LRA.” When probed during in-depth interviews, respondents explained that they made this distinction because most of the lower ranking LRA were seen as conscripted into the rebel group against their will.

In general, 58 percent thought it is possible to have a fair trial in Uganda, with up to 74 percent of respondents in Lango agreeing with that proposition. On the other hand, only 24 percent of respondents said they understood how the court system works. Up to 64 percent therefore said that the international community should conduct trials for human rights abuses in northern Uganda. In all, when asked to choose, 25 percent of the respondents favored national trials and 44 percent selected international trials. Thirty-one percent said they would favor no trials at all.

In comparison to views expressed in 2005, the 2007 data also show that while most respondents favor accountability, there is some willingness to compromise for the sake of peace, particularly vis-à-vis the LRA. While it is not possible to state with certainty the reason for this shift, our in-depth interviews suggest it likely relates to the current peace process and media programs broadcasted by local stakeholders.

For instance, when asked directly what should happen to the LRA leaders who committed human rights abuses, the majority of respondents (up to 52 percent) preferred options such as forgiveness, reconciliation, or reintegration for LRA leaders. Twenty-two percent of respondents wanted the LRA leaders to be tried and, if convicted, sent to prison. The majority of respondents (78%) said that the

rank-and-file LRA should be forgiven, reintegrated, or reconciled with, while 17 percent mentioned that they should be tried and, if found guilty, punished. Forty-one percent of respondents favored “harder” options including trials and/or punishment, including imprisonment or death.

This is a shift from what the survey in 2005 found, when 66 percent of respondents favored trials, imprisonment, or death for LRA leaders, while 22 percent favored forgiveness, reconciliation, or reintegration. This difference may be explained by the fact that the last survey was taken when there was no viable peace process in sight and the population was less knowledgeable of the various accountability options.

TABLE 14: MEASURES TOWARD LRA AND UPDF

What would you like to see happen to:	LRA leaders	Low-rank LRA	UPDF soldiers
Forgive them (%)	42.5	64.0	29.6
Put them on trial and then in prison (%)	22.3	8.8	34.6
Punish them (%)	8.6	4.2	16.7
Reconcile with them (%)	7.2	10.1	3.4
Put them on trial and then kill them (%)	5.0	1.8	3.7
Have them confess and apologize (%)	2.4	1.6	2.1
Capture and kill them (%)	5.0	1.9	0.9
Reintegrate them (%)	2.3	3.8	0.7
Other (%)	3.7	2.2	7.4
No response (%)	1.1	1.5	1.0

When asked about the UPDF, almost 70 percent of respondents said the Ugandan military committed war crimes and human rights abuses in northern Uganda. Fifty-five percent said the Ugandan military should face trial and, if found guilty, punished, whereas only 34 percent said they should be forgiven, reintegrated, or reconciled.

A similar trend toward compromise could be detected when respondents were asked if they favored peace with amnesty or peace with trials: 80 percent of respondents chose peace with amnesty. There were important differences across regions: in the Teso districts, only 59 percent chose peace with amnesty and 41 percent chose peace with trials. When presented with four options, 51 percent of respondents preferred peace with amnesty, 26 percent preferred peace with a truth commission, 15 percent preferred peace with trials, and 8 percent preferred peace with traditional ceremonies.

In similar vein, fewer than half the respondents said trials would contribute to peace (46%), security (48%), and justice (49%). Only a few respondents (15%) favored peace with trials over peace with other mechanisms such as amnesties (51%), truth-telling mechanisms (25%), or traditional ceremonies (8%), although 31 percent of respondents in the Teso districts favored trials. A majority (76%) said that pursuing trials *at the present time* would endanger the peace process. Respondents in the Teso districts generally gave more importance to trials and felt more positively about the impact of trials on their communities.

TABLE 15: MECHANISM OPTIONS FOR PEACE

Mechanisms		Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Two choices	Peace with amnesty (%)	83.3	86.1	59.3	79.7
	or Peace with trials (%)	16.7	13.9	40.7	20.3
Four choices	Peace with amnesty (%)	53.1	50.4	46.3	51.4
	or Peace with trials (%)	11.3	10.9	30.8	14.6
	or Peace with truth commission (%)	25.8	31.7	18.2	25.6
	or Peace with traditional ceremonies (%)	9.9	7.0	4.7	8.4
Three choices	National trials (%)	23.7	24.5	28.7	24.7
	or International trials (%)	44.3	38.6	50.4	44.3
	or No trials (%)	32.1	36.9	20.9	31.1

These results underline some respondents' support for trials for LRA leaders on the one hand, and a preference among others for peace with amnesty on the other, as well as their general willingness to forgive the LRA. This may seem to contradict the support for accountability outlined above.

One interpretation is that people fear that pursuing trials *now* would endanger the current peace process, but may take the view that trials should be pursued at a later date, when the general climate is more conducive. Another possibility is that people support trials if feasible, but continue to doubt whether they could be achieved or whether a compromise is necessary. It is worth noting that respondents' views could be strongly influenced by the media. When asked during in-depth interviews how they became informed about these issues, respondents frequently said they "heard it on the radio." In addition, these results should be interpreted carefully as the responses may be influenced by many factors, including exposure to conflict, cultural differences, and differences in knowledge about specific mechanisms for justice and accountability.

## INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Respondents were asked a series of questions on their views about the International Criminal Court (ICC). In contrast to 2005, when only 27 percent had heard of the ICC, now most respondents had heard about it (60%), primarily through the radio (87%). About half the respondents who had heard of the ICC said the international court could arrest the LRA (54%)<sup>47</sup> and 14 percent believed it was established only to address the situation in northern Uganda. On average, respondents in the Acholi subregion were more familiar with the ICC and least frequently believed the ICC could arrest the LRA

47. The ICC does not have the means to carry out arrests by itself and relies on state cooperation to accomplish this.

or was established to investigate only the situation in northern Uganda, compared to respondents in the Lango and Teso subregions.

Although the figures suggest an increasing level of awareness about the Court compared to the 2005 survey, only 2 percent of respondents knew how to access the ICC. However, 34 percent would be willing to participate in ICC-related activities, predominantly to help with the investigation (38%), as a witness (35%), or as a victim (15%). Even more respondents were interested in learning more about the Court (70%). The population in the Acholi subregion was less positive about seeking to participate in ICC-related activities or in learning more about the ICC.

TABLE 16: OVERALL KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Have you heard of the International Criminal Court? (% yes)	69.6	46.4	38.9	60.0
Do you believe the ICC can arrest the LRA? (% yes)	46.5	71.4	84.3	54.3
Do you believe the ICC was established only to investigate the situation in northern Uganda? (% yes)	11.7	22.1	16.8	13.8
Do you know how to access the ICC (% yes)	1.6	1.2	4.7	1.9
Have you ever attempted to contact the ICC (% yes)	0.6	1.6	0.5	0.8
Would you personally want to participate in ICC-related activities (% yes)	26.8	49.4	59.2	33.7
Would you be interested in learning more about the ICC? (% yes)	64.4	83.3	86.9	69.7

Among those who had heard of the ICC, views appeared to be rather positive. More than half the respondents who had heard of the ICC said it would contribute to achieving justice (65%) and peace (61%). Nearly three-quarters (72%) said the ICC should be involved in responding to war crimes and human rights abuses in northern Uganda, and 55 percent said the ICC was helping rather than hindering the peace process. A majority of the respondents who knew of the ICC said they considered it neutral (68%) and independent from the Ugandan government (69%). Some of these results may be premised on a mistaken belief, voiced by over half of the respondents that the ICC itself can arrest the LRA (54%). Also, levels of support were highest in Teso and Lango, and lower in Acholi.

Among those who had heard of the ICC, as many as 74 percent agreed that the ICC had contributed to reducing the violence, and 68 percent believed it had contributed to pressuring the LRA into peace talks. However, more than half (51%) said the ICC could jeopardize the peace talks taking place in Juba, Sudan. Thirty-three percent said the international court would complicate the reintegration of former LRA.

TABLE 17: ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ICC (AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF IT)

	<b>Acholi</b> Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	<b>Lango</b> Lira, Oyam	<b>Teso</b> Amuria, Soroti	<b>Total</b>
Do you believe the ICC will contribute to achieving justice in northern Uganda? (% yes)	58.9	78.5	85.8	64.7
Do you believe the ICC will contribute to achieving peace in northern Uganda? (% yes)	55.5	72.6	85.9	61.3
Should the ICC be involved in responding to the atrocities that have been committed? (% yes)	68.3	82.5	81.5	71.8
Do you believe that the ICC involvement has helped or hindered the peace process? (% helped)	52.4	54.8	70.7	54.8
Do you think the ICC contributed to reducing the violence in northern Uganda? (% yes)	73.2	73.5	78.4	73.8
Do you think the ICC contributed to pressuring the LRA to negotiate peace in Juba? (% yes)	64.4	73.4	80.1	67.5
Do you think the ICC will stop a final agreement from being reached at Juba? (% yes)	48.7	44.7	74.9	51.0
Do you think the ICC will complicate the reintegration of the former LRA? (% yes)	25.2	54.0	52.9	32.5
Do you believe the ICC is neutral? (% yes)	66.5	75.8	72.8	68.5
Do you believe the ICC is an independent unit from the Ugandan government? (% yes)	66.5	80.6	72.6	69.2

Accordingly, respondents who knew about the ICC were asked what recommendation they would make to the ICC if they had the opportunity. Among the range of responses provided, the most frequent was to stop its arrest warrants or wait until peace is achieved (64%). Respondents seemed unsure whether this is a realistic option. However, some respondents (10%) said the ICC should move to arrest Kony and its top commanders, and another 10 percent said it should hold the LRA accountable, regardless of the impact on the peace process.

TABLE 18: RESPONDENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ICC

If you could make one recommendation to the ICC, what would it be?	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Stop its arrest warrants (%)	49.1	45.6	7.9	44.0
Wait until peace is achieved (%)	22.0	10.4	18.5	19.9
Arrest Kony and top commanders (%)	9.0	13.2	13.8	10.2
Open office in the North (%)	0.5	0.4	5.3	1.1
Hold the LRA accountable (%)	8.6	13.6	10.6	9.6
Move court to Uganda (%)	2.0	2.4	16.4	3.6
Forgive Kony/ the LRA (%)	1.1	2.0	10.6	2.3
Continue with trials/ punishment (%)	1.4	3.6	3.7	2.0
Be fair, try both sides (%)	0.8	2.4	0.0	0.9
Don't know (%)	2.8	2.8	3.7	2.9
Other (%)	2.7	3.6	9.5	3.6

## AMNESTY

Our research indicates that the concept of amnesty is relatively well understood in northern Uganda. In general, respondents understood amnesty as pardoning for wrongdoing (37%), forgiveness (34%), no punishment for wrongdoing (17%), or apology (15%). About half of respondents from the Acholi region defined amnesty as “pardoning for wrongdoing,” and 41 percent defined amnesty as “forgiveness.” Only 7 percent in Lango and 2 percent in Teso understood amnesty as entailing no punishment for wrongdoing. In the Teso region, 82 percent of respondents stated they do not know how to define amnesty, compared to 48 percent in the Lango. This may be because the Amnesty Commission is less known in those areas than in Acholi. In the Acholi region, only one-fifth of the respondents said they did not understand the term amnesty.

In Lwo, which forms the origin of both the Acholi and Langi languages, the words “amnesty” and “forgiveness” are often used interchangeably. However, as explained by our translators, the distinction between the concepts is that forgiveness is understood as taking place between individuals, while amnesty is applied to entire groups. In general, almost 60 percent of respondents defined forgiveness as “pardoning for wrongdoing” and almost 40 percent defined it as “forgetting what happened,” whereas 30 percent defined it as “not holding the accused responsible” and 25 percent associated it with reconciliation. Respondents from the Lango and Teso subregions showed more understanding of the concept of forgiveness than amnesty. The majority of the Lango (74%) and a plurality of the Teso (47%) defined forgiveness as “pardoning for wrongdoing.” There is no indication from their answers that respondents understand amnesty to have legal consequences.

In light of these definitions of amnesty, 20 percent of respondents identified the Amnesty Commission when asked to name the most appropriate mechanism to deal with those responsible for

human rights abuses.<sup>48</sup> Over 81 percent said amnesty would help achieve peace, and 86 percent said they would accept amnesty if it was the only means of achieving peace. Support for amnesty may seem to contradict support for accountability, however, the questions asked about general attitudes towards these mechanisms. As discussed in the section on formal justice mechanisms, respondents made a distinction between the levels of decision-making among perpetrators. The data presented here, along with our 2005 research and another recent study,<sup>49</sup> suggest that most believe that amnesty is necessary for the rank and file, since they were forcibly conscripted, and that prosecution is more appropriate for some of the LRA leaders.

Nonetheless, respondents still expressed support for changes to the amnesty regime to require more from those who apply for it (known as “reporters” under the Amnesty Act 2000). In terms of what the respondents would require of those who received amnesty before they could return to their communities, 48 percent said they should confess their wrongdoing, and 65 percent said they should apologize. In the Acholi districts, 20 percent of respondents said they should submit to traditional ceremonies, compared to 3 percent in the Teso and Lango districts. In the Teso district, 14 percent said they should submit themselves to trials, compared to 4 to 5 percent in the Acholi and Lango districts.

TABLE 19: REQUIREMENT FOR AMNESTY

What would you require of those who received amnesty before they can return to the community? <sup>1</sup>	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Confess their wrongdoing (%)	55.7	24.0	46.0	48.1
Apologize (%)	63.7	62.4	73.7	65.2
Undergo traditional ceremonies (%)	20.0	3.1	3.1	13.9
Give compensation to the victims (%)	4.3	4.8	7.9	5.0
Subject themselves to trial (%)	5.3	3.5	13.8	6.4
Nothing needs to be done (%)	7.5	6.7	2.3	6.5
Change attitude, stop behaving badly (%)	7.0	23.5	8.0	10.3
Go through reception center (%)	2.1	1.1	1.2	1.8
They cannot come home (%)	0.1	0.7	0.7	0.3
Other (%)	3.3	9.3	5.3	4.7
No response (%)	1.4	2.9	2.2	1.8

48. The Amnesty Act of 2000 established the Amnesty Commission which has the duty to monitor programs of demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants who apply for amnesty, as well to promote appropriate reconciliation mechanisms in affected areas.

49. “Both measures [amnesty and prosecutions] were seen as a way to stop the violence by forcing combatants to put down their arms, either voluntarily by submitting to amnesty or by the force of law through prosecution.” OHCHR, *Making Peace our Own: Victims’ Perceptions of Accountability, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice in Northern Uganda*, United Nations (2007), 49.

## TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES

In 2005, 36 percent of all respondents had answered that they were familiar with traditional justice systems and, of these, 48 percent said these measures would be useful in dealing with the LRA. In this survey, almost half of all respondents, up to 49 percent, said local customs and rituals are useful to deal with the LRA. Over half of the respondents (57%) agreed with the proposition that those responsible for abuses should participate in traditional ceremonies and that they are needed to deal with the situation in northern Uganda (48%). Similarly, 47 percent said traditional ceremonies are needed before the LRA can come back to the community, and that they are necessary to bring peace (48%) and justice (47%). Fewer (35%) said they consider traditional ceremonies to be forms of punishment. Overall, 67 percent of respondents believed it was necessary to chase away bad spirits to achieve peace in northern Uganda. The belief was least frequent among Acholi (53%).

TABLE 20: ATTITUDES TOWARD TRADITIONAL CUSTOMS AND RITUALS

	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
It is necessary to chase away bad spirits to achieve peace in northern Uganda (% yes)	53.3	93.3	87.0	66.6
Local customs and rituals are useful to deal with the LRA (% yes)	48.5	43.1	58.7	49.2
Those responsible for abuses should participate in traditional ceremonies (% agree)	59.0	55.5	50.3	56.8
Traditional ceremonies and rituals are needed to deal with the situation in northern Uganda (% agree)	47.8	44.9	50.2	47.7
Traditional ceremonies and rituals are necessary before the LRA can come back into the community (% agree)	49.5	36.5	48.7	46.9
Traditional ceremonies and rituals are necessary to bring peace to northern Uganda (% agree)	45.9	48.1	52.7	47.5
Traditional ceremonies and rituals are necessary to bring justice to northern Uganda (% agree)	44.7	49.7	52.3	47.0
Traditional ceremonies and rituals are forms of punishment (% agree)	30.9	41.9	40.4	34.6

When asked which, if any, customs and rituals are important for dealing with the LRA, the most frequently mentioned ceremony was Mato Oput (48%) although it was not frequently mentioned in the Lango (9%) and Teso (16%) regions.<sup>50</sup> Twenty-nine percent also mentioned stepping on the egg (*Nyono tong gweno*). Nine percent said that none of the ceremonies were useful. It should be noted that the processes listed here are predominately Acholi and over one-third and nearly half the respondents in the

50. Mato Oput (drinking of the “bitter root”) is an Acholi ceremony that takes place within a clan or, in cases of wrongful killings or murder, between clans with a strong relationship, after the two parties have agreed to compensation and payment has been made.



Lango and Teso regions respectively “did not know” or “had no answer” when asked what ceremonies would be useful.

TABLE 21: CUSTOMS AND RITUALS TO DEAL WITH THE LRA

Which customs and rituals are important to you to deal with the LRA, if any?	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
None (%)	6.0	16.9	10.3	8.8
Mato Oput (%)	68.0	8.7	16.4	48.1
Bending of the spear (Gomo tong) (%)	11.5	8.2	0.5	9.0
Slaughtering of the goat (Neko dyel) (%)	14.1	11.4	11.9	13.2
Stepping on the egg Nyono tong gweno) (%)	43.8	5.0	1.6	29.3
Getting justice (Culu kwo) (%)	2.9	1.5	5.8	3.1
Calling the spirit back home (Lwongo tipu) (%)	2.8	1.1	0.9	2.2
Cleansing the body (Moyo kum) (%)	12.6	0.0	3.2	8.6
Cleansing of the area (Moyo piny) (%)	6.4	0.5	0.5	4.3
Cursing spirits away (%)	0.3	3.6	0.0	0.9
Praying to god (%)	0.4	11.7	2.3	2.9
Don't know / no answer (%)	10.5	31.6	47.8	20.8
Other (%)	2.2	9.4	14.5	5.6

## Media and Access to Information

Radios are the primary source of information in northern Uganda. Nearly three-quarters of respondents listen to the radio and about half listen to it every day. Most listened to it in the late afternoon and evening (6–10 pm: 46%) and during midday (10 am–2 pm: 19%). Mega FM is the most popular radio in the Acholi subregion (92%). In the Lango subregion most respondents listened to Veritas (36%) and Delta FM (42%). In the Teso subregion, Veritas was also popular (34%), as well as Voice of Teso (46%). Respondents rarely said they received their news from newspapers and television. There is a lack of electricity and a poor distribution network for newspapers throughout most of northern Uganda. In addition, our in-depth interviews showed that newspaper were not sold in most camps, many of the respondents are not literate, and/or they lacked the money to purchase a newspaper.

Regarding access to information, about half of respondents felt informed about the peace talks in Juba and about the same percentage said the news coverage on justice and conflict was adequate. However, the level of access and media coverage about these topics varied between subregions. More respondents from the Acholi subregion (64%) said they were informed about the peace talks than in Lango (38%) or in Teso (29%). Among those who felt informed, a vast majority (85%) received information from the radio and fewer (11%) obtained information from neighbors and friends.

Seventy-one percent of respondents expressed a desire or strong desire to learn more about justice through the media. On the other hand, 60 percent said there was adequate media coverage of atroci-

ties in Uganda, and 72 percent said coverage on the peace process is adequate. In general, almost 50 percent said there was adequate reporting on traditional ceremonies and on the ICC. Sixty percent said there was adequate coverage on missing persons.

In the 2005 survey,<sup>51</sup> more than one-third of respondents said freedom of speech was lacking in northern Uganda. In this survey, over half of the respondents said journalists and broadcasters had little to moderate levels of freedom to report openly and honestly on social and political issues in northern Uganda. This may explain why less than half the population trusted the media outlets: 45 percent had little to moderate levels of trust in the radio, 43 percent for newspapers, and 32 percent for television (for television, a majority of respondents expressed no opinion since they have little or no access to the medium).

## Reconciliation and Reintegration of the LRA

Respondents in the eight sampled districts supported the need for the people of northern Uganda—and the country as a whole—to live together peacefully; 93 percent agreed the people of northern and southern Uganda need to find a better way to live together, and 94 percent said people in northern Uganda need to find a better way to live together. The need for reconciliation with the people of southern Sudan was not explored during the survey; however, key informants indicated that open dialogue among all those affected by the LRA would provide a means of reducing stigmatization of former LRA combatants and, more generally, the Acholi people. As discussed in the section above on exposure to violence, 42 percent of those who were abducted reported experiencing problems when returning home. The most frequently reported problems were “relations with family, friends” (19%) and health/injuries (18%).

The data on attitudes toward reintegration of former LRA is particularly encouraging. In fact, most respondents felt comfortable living in the same community with former lower ranking LRA combatants (70%) and leaders (65%). About two-thirds felt comfortable living as close neighbors or family members or working with former LRA. Roughly a third of the respondents felt uncomfortable in such situations. Attitudes about the reintegration of LRA members varied across regions: 72 percent of respondents in the Acholi districts felt comfortable living in the same community with former LRA leaders, compared to 54 percent in the Langi districts and 47 percent in the Teso districts. Non-Acholi respondents reported greater discomfort in the presence of former LRA leaders and lower ranking LRA than Acholi respondents.

51. Pham et al., *Forgotten Voices*.

TABLE 22: ATTITUDES TOWARD FORMER LRA

	Percent comfortable with former LRA leaders				Percent comfortable with lower ranking LRA			
	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Living in the same community	72.3	54.4	47.0	64.6	75.7	68.6	50.7	70.1
Living as close neighbors	75.5	55.7	48.3	67.1	78.1	70.5	55.2	72.7
Living as household members	68.2	56.6	43.8	61.8	71.7	73.5	47.3	67.9
Sharing meals in your home	83.5	65.1	48.1	73.9	86.9	83.1	54.6	80.6
Working with them	77.8	57.9	46.1	68.6	80.2	73.1	52.3	74.1
Going to the same market	89.5	60.5	51.1	77.5	90.5	76.5	58.9	82.4
Sharing a drink	61.9	49.1	46.1	56.8	63.5	65.7	50.5	61.7
Going to the same church	92.8	73.4	58.9	83.3	94.6	87.0	68.0	88.6
Marrying a family member	63.3	51.1	42.7	57.4	66.8	66.4	46.6	63.3
Attending school with children	82.2	60.3	49.5	72.5	84.3	75.6	56.0	77.8

Looking at the future integration of former LRA to society, some of the data may seem surprising but it reflects the local cultures. For instance, 54 percent of respondents said that LRA leaders had the same rights as anyone else. Forty-six percent agreed with the proposition that LRA leaders could participate in politics and, if elected, be allowed to govern. The percentage was similar when asked about lower ranking LRA. Seventy percent of the respondents said that former LRA leaders and the rank and file can form part of the national army. Again, respondents in the Lango and Teso subregions were less positive about that proposition than the Acholi.

TABLE 23: PERCEPTION OF RIGHTS AND ROLES OF FORMER LRA

Percent “agree” or “strongly agree”	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
LRA leaders have the same rights as anyone else (%)	57.2	46.1	52.0	54.2
Former LRA leaders can participate in politics, and, if elected, be allowed to govern (%)	48.6	39.0	42.6	45.8
Lower ranking LRA can participate in politics, and, if elected, be allowed to govern (%)	46.4	46.0	41.5	45.5
Former LRA leaders can form part of the national army (%)	76.1	62.9	57.6	70.5
Lower ranking LRA can form part of the national army (%)	71.0	69.0	61.9	69.1

## Changes over Time, 2005–2007

The present report follows up a study conducted from April to June 2005.<sup>52</sup> Although the questionnaire was revised to reflect the changes in context during the second survey, several items and questions were kept for the purpose of comparison. However, the 2007 survey was conducted over a larger area than the 2005 research, and includes the districts of Amuria, Oyam, and Pader. Directly comparing results of the 2005 and 2007 surveys should therefore be undertaken with caution. A reliable statistical analysis of changes over time will be examined at a later point. Nevertheless, a direct comparison illustrates trends and evolving opinions and attitudes.

The following general comments can be offered:

The data on exposure to violence are relatively constant over time, suggesting the terrible price civilians have paid to the conflict. In particular, we found similar rates of abduction in 2005 (40%) and 2007 (37%) for the Acholi districts. However, the 2007 data provide more detail, showing that in the Acholi subregion, 28 percent had been abducted for at least a week and 2 percent for at least a year.

Although the priorities were explored in a slightly different way (in 2005, respondents could provide only one response, while they could provide several in 2007), the results are consistent: basic needs are the highest priorities, and justice is a less immediate priority. In both cases, over two-thirds of the respondents said it was important to hold those responsible for the violence accountable.

Attitudes toward trials have changed markedly over time. In 2007, fewer respondents wanted to see LRA leaders be punished, face trial, and then imprisoned or killed compared to 2005. Similarly, when given two choices, peace with trials or peace with amnesty, a larger number of respondents favored peace with amnesty in 2007 (80%) compared to 2005 (47%). This is likely explained by the prospect of ongoing peace talks in Juba, the belief that trials would endanger the peace process, and active outreach programs by various actors and institutions.

Awareness of the ICC has increased significantly. In 2005, 27 percent of respondents had heard about the ICC, compared to 60 percent in 2007. However, even in 2007, few respondents knew how to access the ICC (2%).

52. Pham et al., *Forgotten Voices*.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, we offer the following recommendations.

## **To the Government of Uganda and International Community:**

1. *Incorporate the priorities as expressed by survey respondents into a multi-pronged strategy that promotes justice, peace-building, socioeconomic development, and poverty-reduction in the North.* The main priorities highlighted by respondents apart from peace were health (45%), education for the children (31%), and livelihood concerns (including food, 43%; agricultural land, 37%; money and finances, 35%). Building a sustainable peace involves both defusing the LRA security threat and dealing with the structural inequalities that create a climate conducive to conflict. If and when peace is realized, many dynamic changes are likely to take place in the North. More programs need to be developed to provide children and youth with educational opportunities, vocational training, meaningful jobs, leadership training, and psychological support.<sup>53</sup> In developing these socioeconomic programs, a broad-based, inclusive forum within northern Uganda is needed to address long-term issues of resettlement, redevelopment, land rights, and reconciliation.
2. *Prepare for return to village life.* Most northern Ugandans want to return to their villages but have indicated they are waiting for an end to the conflict. Nonetheless, there is concern that some basic services that are available in the camps, such as water and health facilities, will not be so readily available in the villages. Both national and local authorities must be prepared to

53. See Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, and Eric Stover, *Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscriptation in Northern Uganda*, Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations (June 2007), 23–25. In 2006, the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative reviewed data on 22,759 former LRA members who had passed through eight reception centers for former combatants in northern Uganda. For an assessment of prevalence of psychological trauma in northern Uganda see also Patrick Vinck, Phuong N. Pham, Eric Stover, and Harvey M. Weinstein, “Exposure to War Crimes and Implications for Peace Building in Northern Uganda,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 298/5 (1 August 2007), 543–54. Also see Jeannie Amman, Christopher Blattman, and Roger Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Participation in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey for War-Affected Youth, A Report for UNICEF Uganda* (September 2006).

respond to these challenges. Health services and the educational system will need to be restructured to reach a population that will be dispersed over large geographical areas.

3. *Promote further national dialogue on introducing a truth-seeking exercise in northern Uganda.* The vast majority of respondents (95%) said a written historical record should be prepared of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda. Eighty-nine percent were willing to talk openly in a court or public hearing about their experiences during the war. Over 90 percent supported the establishment of a truth commission. In this respect, we note the essential role that Ugandan civil society is already playing and should continue to play in assessing needs and calling for a truth-seeking process. These debates should not be restricted to Juba. Uganda should consider the need for a truth-seeking mechanism at the national and local levels.
4. *Establish a reparations program for past crimes.* Fifty-two percent of respondents expressed a desire to receive financial compensation for their suffering due to the war. Ninety-five percent of respondents said they wanted memorials to be established to remember what happened in northern Uganda during the war. Despite this clear interest in reparations, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation only briefly mentions reparations. Moreover, programs such as the National Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for the North (PRDP) should not be mistaken for reparations programs. The Trust Fund for Victims for the ICC, the Ugandan government, and traditional and religious leaders should all be involved in defining a strategy for reparations. The Government of Uganda should commit to funding reparations, as it is unlikely that perpetrators will be able to make any significant contributions.
5. *Take measures to ensure that the benefits provided to LRA returnees are balanced with reparations for victims who have suffered serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.* While our data suggests that many northern Ugandans are ready to reintegrate former LRA back into their communities, the sudden influx of former combatants could strain relations at a time when many of these communities will be in a state of flux. Complex social issues surrounding the reintegration of LRA returnees, such as the stigma attached to LRA returnees in some communities, the LRA practice of forced marriages, and the special needs of female LRA members who became child-mothers, will need to be addressed. At the same time, the authorities will need to be mindful of the needs of victims of human rights abuses, who may grow resentful if they see that LRA returnees are receiving “special treatment.”
6. *Develop a criminal justice and civilian police system in northern Uganda that is responsive to community needs.* The data from the 2007 survey suggest that people are feeling more secure in the North. But in order to consolidate the gains made in security, it will be essential that, after a peace agreement is signed, the North is demilitarized and replaced by a civilian police system that is responsive to the needs of the community and has adequate oversight.

### **To the Negotiators at the Juba Peace Talks:**

7. *Continue to pursue a comprehensive and integrated approach to accountability and reconciliation in northern Uganda.* In this regard, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, signed at Juba on 29 June 2007, sets out a framework that encompasses several justice mechanisms.
8. *Continue to pursue criminal trials for those responsible for the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed during the conflict in northern Uganda.* If national courts conduct trials, they should maintain credible, independent, and impartial prosecutions; adhere to international fair trial standards; and render penalties that reflect the gravity of the crimes, with imprisonment as the principal penalty. Our research suggests that while many northern Ugandans are prepared to compromise justice for the sake of peace, they still support the use of the formal justice system as a means of holding those most responsible for serious crimes accountable, particularly if it can be achieved as part of the peace process.
9. *Introduce measures to create a reparations program for past crimes and a truth-seeking process.* As noted earlier, our research suggests strong support for a truth-seeking process and for reparations in northern Uganda.
10. *Develop a well-defined accountability and reconciliation strategy for rank-and-file LRA returnees.* Apart from referring to a “central role” for traditional justice and to the role of the Amnesty Commission, the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation is vague about what elements should comprise a strategy for accountability and reconciliation for rank-and-file LRA returnees. The majority of survey respondents said traditional ceremonies could play a useful role in the reintegration process. They also said those responsible for human rights abuses, including the rank-and-file LRA, should apologize for their behavior before returning to the community.

### **To the International Criminal Court:**

11. *Continue outreach programming, concentrating on what the Court can and cannot do.* Great improvements in the understanding of the ICC are reflected in the 2007 data, but many still believe the Court has the power to arrest the LRA or that it can be asked to halt its proceedings. Such misconceptions need correcting.

## LIST OF SAMPLED LOCATIONS

ACHOLI SUBREGION*			
AMURU	GULU	KITGUM	PADER
Pabbo Camp	Gulu Municipality	Palabek Kal Camp	Lirakato Camp
Awer Camp	Paicho Camp	Amida Camp	Pajule Camp
Pagak Camp	Alokolum Camp	Kitgum Municipality	Lukole Camp
Koch Goma Camp	Lalogi Camp	Nam-Okora Camp	Pader TC
Keyo Camp	Palenga Camp	Mucwini Camp	Kalongo Camp
Parabongo Camp	Atoo Hills NS	Lokung Camp	Puranga Camp
Lamin Latoo NS	Loyo Ajonga NS	Pella NS	Paiula NS
Olinga NS	Onang NS	Opatte NS	Kokil NS
Guru Guru NS	Lelabaro NS	Okol Wanglengo NS	Olung NS
		Akara NS	Lakoga NS
		Kapeta NS	
		Abakadyak NS	
LANGO SUBREGION			
LIRA	LIRA (continued)	OYAM	OYAM (continued)
Lira Municipality	Okonyo Village	Acokara Camp	Akaidebe A Village
Agweng Camp	Otalo Village	Acimi Camp	Odongo Oyere Village
Aromo Camp	Anang Village	Ader Camp	Acot Owinya Il Village
Abia Camp	Apado Village	Otwal Camp	Acot Owinya Village
Aleptong Camp	Deriditi Village	Ngai TC	Akaidebe B Village
Orum Vamp	Odite Deep Village	Oyam TC	Akatakata Village
Aloi Rhino Camp	Te-Obia Village	Bar Owo Village	Alutkot Village
Barr Camp	Aloi Rhino Market	Momot Atwero Village	Loro TC
Dog Ayira Village	Apade Village	Alica Village	
Iguli Village	Barr T.C.		
Adur Village	Apii Ngic Village		
Alebtong Atidi Village			
TESO SUBREGION			
SOROTI	SOROTI (continued)	SOROTI (continued)	AMURIA
Soroti Municipality	Agora Village	Akoroi Village	Obalanga Main Camp
Kachomia A Village	Kalela Village	Alungar Village	Oditel Camp
Moru Apesur Camp	Nananga B Village	Ogerai Village	Amuria TC
Toror Village	Obongoi Village	Okodo Village	Otungul Camp
Kikota Village	Ojemorum Village	Owelai Village	Odukurun Village
Swaria Camp	Akoroi A Village	Oyama Village	Ayola NS
Agurur Village	Amorikot Village	Akoroi B Village	Katine Village
Nananga A Village	Olwelai Village	Obochai Village	Abule Village
Kabos Village	Kakota Village	Asamuk Village	Aroo NS
Ogera Village	Abos Village	Odochai Village	Itewai NS
Samuk Village	Aguru Village		Arute Village
			Odiding NS
			Arute Village
			Kapelebyong camp

\* Abbreviations: TC, Town Council (Trading Center); NS, New Settlement Site



## AUTHORS and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**PHUONG PHAM AND PATRICK VINCK** led the design and development of the survey in northern Uganda. Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Eric Stover, Andrew Moss, Marieke Wierda, and Richard Bailey wrote the report. Beth Gaddis and Neil Hendrick contributed to the data collection. Camille Crittenden was the principal editor.

**PHUONG PHAM** is a Research Associate Professor at the Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University and a Senior Research Fellow at the Human Right Center of the University of California, Berkeley.

**PATRICK VINCK** is the Director of the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations at University of California, Berkeley and Adjunct Professor at the Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University.

**ERIC STOVER** is Faculty Director of the Human Rights Center and Adjunct Professor of Law and Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley.

**ANDREW MOSS** is Emeritus Professor of Epidemiology at the University of California, San Francisco and Senior Research Fellow at the Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley.

**MARIEKE WIERDA** is Head of Prosecutions Program at the International Center for Transitional Justice.

**RICHARD BAILEY** is Program Assistant at the International Center for Transitional Justice.

**BETH GADDIS** and **NEIL HENDRICK** are graduate students at Tulane University.

**CAMILLE CRITTENDEN** is the Executive Director of the Human Rights Center at the University of California, Berkeley.

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