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Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation Programs in Northern Uganda, Pader Peace Program



The Future Acholi Leaders

Final Report

December 14, 2007 to June 13, 2009

Submitted to:

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List of Acronyms Referenced

ARPF	Acholi Religious Peace Forum
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community-based Organization
CMM	Conflict Mitigation and Management
CoP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil society organization
GoU	Government of Uganda
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LCV	Local Council Chairperson
LQAS	Lot Quality Assurance Sampling
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Mercy Corps
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NUPF	Northern Uganda Peace Forum
NUPI	Northern Uganda Peace Initiative
OHCHR	Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (United Nations)
PC	Peace Committee
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPF	Pader Peace Forum
PPP	Pader Peace Program
PPP	Pader Peace Program
PPS	Probability Proportionate Sampling
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
SC	Sub-County
ToT	Training of Trainers
TRS	Transitional Resettlement Site
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. Executive Summary

Mercy Corps' proposed the *Pader Peace Program* to support and expand the capacity of the previously existing Pader Peace Forum (PPF), the former district-level body of the USAID-supported Northern Uganda Peace Forum (NUPF). Through district, sub-county, and parish-level interventions Mercy Corps has reached 211,119 direct beneficiaries and increased community and institutional capacity to mitigate conflict and advance peace and reconciliation in Pader District, northern Uganda. Working from the 20-year-long conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army, the program tackled numerous issues by addressing the needs of the Acholis, strengthening participatory and multi-stakeholder collaboration, and increasing overall access to information and resources.

The Pader Peace Program (PPP) was designed to increase community and institutional capacity to mitigate conflict and advance peace and reconciliation in Pader District through:

1. Establishing and/or strengthening 89 parish, 18 sub-county and 1 district-level mechanisms for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation.
2. Facilitating a 50% increase in return and reintegration rate of former combatants, abductees and IDPs through local initiatives.
3. Boosting community confidence in the peace and return process through increased, accurate and relevant information flow.

Although the program was unable to realize some of its targets it still did considerably well considering the ambitiousness of the project. The achievements that were realized upon completion (based on targets set) are very significant:

- **76% achieved** -- % increase in parish and sub-county survey respondents reporting "strong" local mechanisms for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation
- **155% achieved** -- % of survey respondents reporting improved coordination between agencies working in peace building in Pader District
- **78.2% achieved** -- % increase in survey respondents reporting "strong" local and district support for peace and reconciliation and the reintegration of former combatants, abductees and IDPs
- **125.8% achieved** -- % of survey respondents reporting stronger linkages between community and parish, sub-county, and district peace initiatives
- **142.2% achieved** -- % increase in survey respondents who report a "good" level of confidence in the peace and return process
- **59.7% achieved** -- % of sub-county and parish survey respondents reporting increased access to information through Peace Committees

The success of the program is even better demonstrated through rigorous monitoring and evaluation activities that took place throughout the implementation period. Surveys conducted at the start of the program (baseline), mid-point (midterm evaluation), and end (final evaluation) measure the program's impact at different stages in the program's life span. Additional information was collected on freedom of movement by individuals during both day and night, economic activities respondents are engaged in, information flow from peace

committees, listenership to peace radio programs, and their future hope in relation to the peace and return process.

The Pader Peace Program has made significant progress in increasing community and institutional capacity to mitigate conflict and advance peace and reconciliation in Pader. Sustainable, non-financial means of sustaining parish, sub-county and district conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation activities have been realized. All participants in the program are volunteers, including the trainers of trainers, committee chairs, community peace project leaders and radio listening group members. Therefore, the structures established will be sustainable beyond Mercy Corps' involvement in these communities but their effectiveness remains in question without the oversight and guidance of an entity like the PPF.

The Pader Peace Forum (PPF) is still lacking dedicated, long-term financial, logistical and human resource support to ensure a more lasting, sustainable future. A concerted effort to build the capacity of the PPF and obtain the resources required to sustain operations at the district, sub-county and parish levels over the foreseeable future is still required. What remains is establishing the Pader Peace Forum as the legitimate overseer of the sub-county and parish Peace Committees that can continue to build relationships and maintain the network of peace practitioners that will serve beyond the life of the program.

Mercy Corps strongly recommends that other development partners utilize the structures within the PPF that are now available so that further support to ensure peace building and reconciliation can continue long into the future.

II. Program Overview

Mercy Corps implemented an eighteen-month Pader Peace Program with the explicit goal of enhancing community and institutional capacity to mitigate conflict in Pader District. The Pader Peace Program sought to develop an enduring commitment to peace and reconciliation that would prepare communities for the reintegration of former combatants, equip them with mechanisms of resolving conflicts and build local support for the peace process.

The program successfully addressed gaps in the coverage, capacity and collaboration among current peace building and conflict mitigation mechanisms through trained peace committees at the sub-county and parish-levels, the coordination and implementation of district-wide Peace Summits, the direct support to locally identified peace and reconciliation initiatives as well as monthly radio broadcasts.

Throughout Pader district, peace committees are reporting on their active involvement in facilitating the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region. Committee members are often the first to be called upon when a dispute arises or threatens to escalate. They also proactively identify potential interventions and offer their skills in bringing parties together to find sustainable solutions.

Peace Committees have earned trust from their respective communities that other government institutions, such as courts, have not been able to do due to corruption, lengthy bureaucratic processes and high fees. The most frequent source of conflict cited by committee members is land. By providing a neutral forum for discussion and identification for alternative solutions to land disputes, peace committees are able to collaborate with local leaders, government officials and the conflicting parties when working towards peaceful resolution.

The Pader Peace Program has been able to successfully engage Pader residents in initiatives that increase awareness about ongoing challenges for the district and the country as a whole. The first Pader Peace Summit gave its participants the opportunity to hear directly from government officials about the Juba peace process and voice their own opinions on government policies. The program has encouraged residents to seek out their local officials as their medium for positive change.

Radio Listening Groups are passing on pertinent issues to its members and their respective communities more accurately and reliably. Through songs and dialogue, they engage Pader residents, ensure accurate information flow and raise political awareness about peace and conflict in the region among its population. Group members listen to programs, discuss their message and disseminate this information to people in camps and permanent communities.

The program, designed to cover 89 parishes in Pader District and reach approximately 211,119 direct and 280,000 indirect beneficiaries, was met. However, at the present time only 88 identified parishes exist in Pader District. Breakdown of beneficiary targeting is as follows:

Activity	Parish	Sub-county	District	Other	Sub-total
1.3 Training of Peace Committees	623	126	3	18	769
1.5 Pader Peace Summits (Peace Committee Representatives)	178	36	10	26	250
1.5 Pader Peace Summits (Public information/cultural forum)	1,500				1,500
2.1 Peace and Reconciliation Initiative Implementation (one per sub-county)	15,000				15,000
3.1 Community Dialogues for Consultation and Information Dissemination	17,800	N/A			17,800
3.2-3.3 Transmission of Radio Programs and Targeted Radio Listening Groups	800	175,000			175,800
				Direct Total	211,119
				Indirect Total	280,000¹

III. Program Activities & Impact

Intermediate Result 1

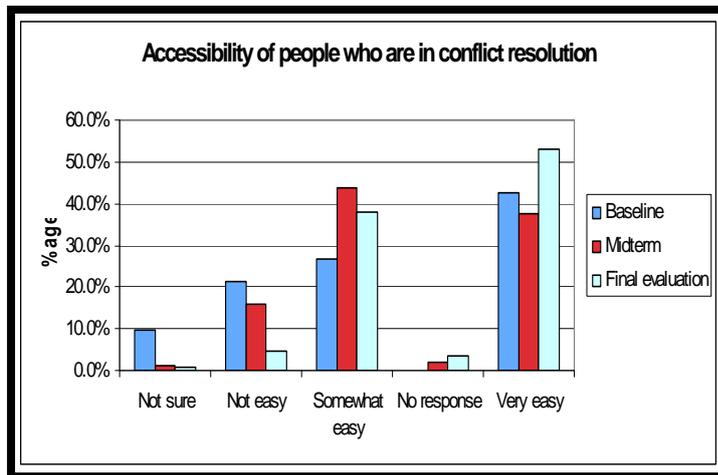
89 parish, 18 sub-county and 1 district-level mechanisms for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation established and/or strengthened

Peace committees were an integral component of the peace and reconciliation process in all the parishes and sub counties in this program. In order to expedite their duties, four core issues needed to be addressed. First, committees had to be easily accessible by everyone. Second, committees had to consist of a diverse group of people (including district leadership, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations,

¹ Some of these beneficiaries overlap from other activities.

and religious, cultural and traditional leaders, as well as youth, women, and ex-combatants) to ensure a high level of inclusivity. Third, it was important for peace committees to establish a level of trust within their communities. Fourth (and most critical), peace committees had to be successful in resolving conflicts.

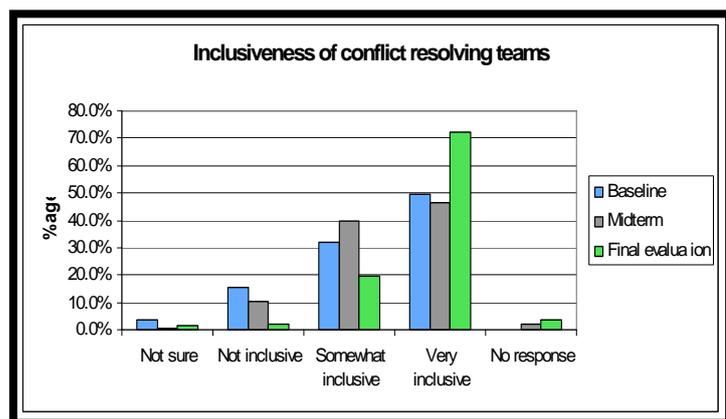
In order for people to access Peace Committees, it is very important for the committees themselves to be active members within their communities. The program trained and strengthened Peace Committees at the District, Sub-County, and Parish levels to ensure they



would be accessible at all levels. The final evaluation revealed that more than half of the respondents 52.9% (N=219) can easily access peace committees compared to 37.4% at the midterm evaluation. Also there was a drastic reduction in respondents who did not have access to peace committees. Only 4.7% (N=19) reported it was “not easy” to access peace committees from 21.4% and 16% at the baseline and midterm evaluations respectively.

Pader District is composed of a diverse community with different attitudes and views towards peace and reconciliation. One of the key messages from communities at the start of the program was that peace structures had failed in the past because they were not inclusive in nature to consider different categories of people. Whether this was the perception or reality, the Pader Peace Program worked hard to ensure that Peace Committees were not only inclusive but also that its membership consisted of a diverse set of people.

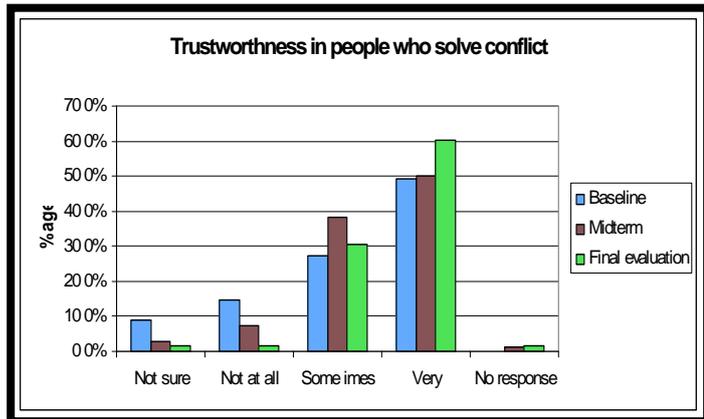
Final Evaluation findings indicated that the communities appreciated that emphasis was given inclusiveness as the majority of the respondents (72.5%; N=300) indicated that peace structures are “very inclusive”. As shown in the adjacent graph, there was a positive change from only 49.5% of respondents reporting “very inclusive” at baseline. As a direct result of program activities, the proportion of respondents who indicated that peace structures are “not inclusive” reduced from 15% at baseline to 2.3% at final evaluation.



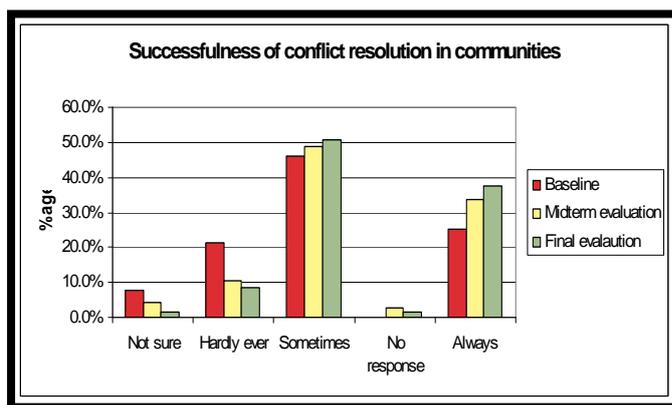
Peace structures exist to mitigate conflict, promote/support peace and assist with reconciliation. Like government courts of law, peace structures must be trusted to be truly effective. If peace structures are not trusted, they will not be in position to resolve conflicts and may become the source of conflict if conflicting parties feel unfairly treated. It was a very important component of this program to ensure that peace committees are trusted by the

community. This was most evident after the baseline evaluation which revealed almost half of the respondents (49%) not trusting Peace Committees. Upon completion of the Pader Peace Program, there was an increase in the level of trust.

Sixty percent (60%) of the people surveyed during the final evaluation indicated that they (N=248) “*very much*” trusted peace structures. In addition, the proportion of respondents who had a high level of mistrust in peace structures reduced from 14.5% at baseline to 1.8% at final evaluation.



As IDPs continue to return to their original homes, conflict in one form or another is inevitable. Many of the conflicts that arise will not require courts of law as they can be settled customarily at the village level. Peace structures will continue to have a major role to play as long as such structures are trusted by the community.

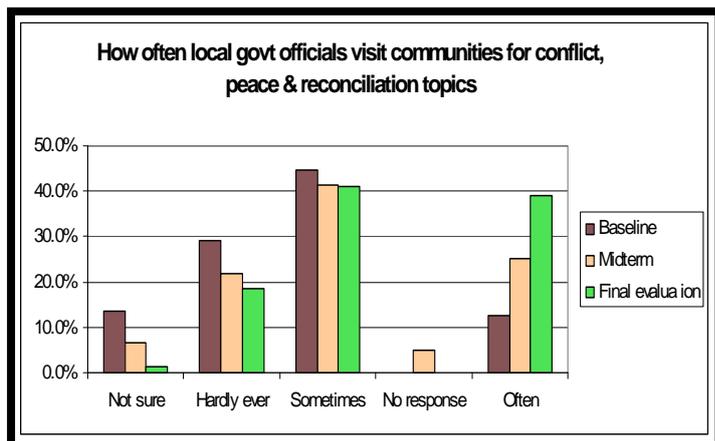


Success of a Peace Committee was measured based on the rate and level at which such a committee would be able to resolve conflict peacefully and successfully. The final evaluation of the program revealed significant improvement among peace committees in resolving conflicts successfully. Although only 37.7% (N=156) reported that peace committees are “*always successful*” at resolving conflict, this value was far higher than

what was reported during the baseline evaluation (25.1%) and reflects a fifty percent improvement in the rate at which peace committees are “*always successful*” in resolving conflict. There was also a reduction in the proportion of respondents reporting that the peace committees “*hardly ever*” resolve conflicts. Only 8.4% (N=35) reported peace committees to “*hardly ever*” resolve conflicts as shown in the graph.

As local government is the custodian of all peace activities within the District, they are an integral part of conflict mitigation, peace, and reconciliation. The Pader Peace Program did not work independently of local government but actively engaged the District Administration to create awareness and bring forward advocacy issues.

With IDPs returning to their homes of origin and ex-combatants reintegrating into communities it is the role of all stakeholders to ensure harmony in the communities. Although development partners and donors have a hand to lend, much of the responsibility lies squarely in the hands of local government. This Pader Peace Program therefore had to ensure that local government connects with communities to help in peace and reconciliation.

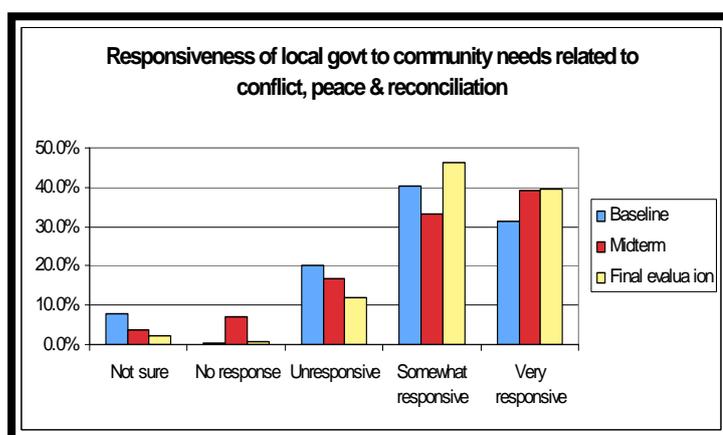


Mercy Corps’ final evaluation determined that local government did indeed have an increasing role in peace and reconciliation. Although just more than a third of the respondents (39.1%; N=161) reported that local government officials “often” visit their communities to discuss issues relating to peace and reconciliation, the proportion was only 12% at the time of the baseline. At least 41% of

the respondents also reported that “sometimes” local government officials visit them. The proportion of respondents who at baseline reported they “hardly” ever got local government officials reduced. This was only 18.6% of the respondents compared to 29.1% at baseline.

At the conclusion of the program, Mercy Corps also wanted to determine the responsiveness of local government to community needs as they pertain to conflict, peace and reconciliation. It is not enough for government to visit communities as they must act on issues that are beyond the scope of Peace Committees. Although Peace structures were formed, they can not handle every conflict issue that arises. More violent conflicts require the intervention of local government.

During the baseline study 20% of respondents indicated local government is “not responsive” to community needs relating to peace and conflict and only 31.4% indicated local government is “very responsive”. Final evaluation findings demonstrated an increase in the proportion of respondents reporting “somewhat” and “very” responsive and reduction in “unresponsive” (11.8%) as depicted in the graph.



Program activities including meetings with local government and linking peace committees to local government with the formation and facilitation of Pader Peace Forum at the District has been a great contribution to the success of the program.

1.1: Outreach and Formation of Parish Peace Committees

Mercy Corps in collaboration with Pader District local government officials (inclusive of Local Council II Chairpersons, Pader Peace Forum, and sub-county Peace Committees) supported outreach to the 88 Parishes in the District to form parish-level Peace Committees. This activity was to build from the efforts of NUPI who initially formed peace committees at sub-county levels. The exercise established peace structures in the entire district. The formation of these structures took on the component of inclusive selection processes allowing for joint participation of stakeholders. District-wide sub-county meetings were held drawing participants from each of the categories as follows: ex-combatant (LRA), formerly abducted, war veterans, disabled, women’s groups’ representatives, religious and cultural leaders, youth

and school children among others. After hours of deliberations 25 people were selected from each Parish to become part of the Peace Committee. Prior to these meetings Mercy Corps Conflict Management & Mitigation staff had a series of consultative meetings with the Pader Peace Forum Steering Committee in order to plan the content and logistics for community meetings as well as draft letters of introduction.

In total the program reached and trained over 2,705 participants directly. At the Parish level, 2,200 members formed Peace Committees. At Sub-County level, there was a critical need for reformation of the Peace Committees since their inception with NUPI as Peace Committees had been formed but not provided with any training. A total number of 475 members formed Peace Committees at the 19 sub-county/town council levels. Again the need for training was apparent which led to the formation of 30 Peace Forum Trainers (TOTs). The TOTs were initially trained by a Mercy Corps Conflict Specialist who in turn trained 963 executive Peace Committee members in their respective sub-counties. The 963 trained members were then responsible to provide (or offer) voluntary training at the Parish levels. However, through the radio programs, the entire Pader District population (336,000 people) was reached.

1.2: Participatory Review and Update of Peace Committee Training Materials

Prior to conducting any trainings Mercy Corps lead the review and updating of peace materials previously used to train Peace Forum and Committee members. Mercy Corps initiated this process with a series of consultative meetings with other peace actors and later facilitated a two day consultation meeting with the PPF Steering Committee members and the District officials in an attempt to identify any other existing peace related training materials. The review of training material was vital to gain understanding and provide guidance on how to best to develop the training content in a way that fits within the socio-economic and political context of the district. Following this Mercy Corps with PPF held a series of smaller group meetings with past trainee participants and other key stakeholders to further refine training content and incorporate new information deemed important to support local conflict mitigation.

A final draft was completed in March of 2008 which included a Trainer's Manual and Participant Workbook for review by the PPF Steering Committee. An overview of the final materials was presented at a meeting open to all stakeholders and subsequently followed by a 10-day Training of Trainers session for Pader Peace Forum members and selected sub-county Peace Committee members in mid April of 2008. The training manual comprised of seven sections or modules under the following headings:

- Understanding Conflict
- Understanding Transformational Justice
- Mediation and Facilitation Techniques
- Concepts of Leadership Types/Styles
- Communication and Trust Building
- Community Mobilization for Self Reliance
- Understanding Issues of Advocacy

Activity 1.3: Basic / Refresher Trainings

In April- June 2008, 963 parish and sub-county Peace Committee members and key stakeholders assembled in their respective sub-county town centers to participate in 3-4 day trainings conducted by Pader Peace Forum Trainers. Mercy Corps further mentored and

coached the trainers in the first 8-10 of these sub-counties to ensure that the trainings would be effective and the right messages were being delivered. Similarly, the Sub-county participants received additional capacity building on small grants identification and management in anticipation of their role in supporting peace and reconciliation initiatives in their areas. All training participants initially completed pre- and post-tests, as well as short evaluations to facilitate further refinement of training content and delivery.

Activity 1.4: Quarterly Monitoring and Technical Support Visits

Mercy Corps Pader Peace Program Team and the Pader Peace Forum Steering Committee members conducted quarterly monitoring and technical support visits to each sub-county as part of their work plan. These meetings were very participatory as Peace Committee members discussed activities they had undertaken, success/constraints they were having, and various conflicts resolved in targeted parishes and sub-counties. These periodic meetings were critical in identifying issues that were coming up and troubleshooting solutions.

As part of the overall strategy of handing over to the Pader Peace Forum at the completion of the program, Mercy Corps was careful to always include Forum members in planned visits. With this in mind, smaller Parish Peace Committee meetings were conducted to garner input from local residents about program progress and the quality of interaction with Peace Committee members and activities. In addition, this forum was utilized together with the Pader Peace Forum Steering Committee to assist with the identification of local peace and reconciliation initiatives and disseminate information as well as consult on issues of local concern.

Activity 1.5: Pader Peace Summits.

The conflict in northern Uganda greatly affected Pader District directly resulting in a lack of development, loss of trust, and an overall loss of credibility among the district and sub-county leaderships. All these negative factors reduced the capacity to effectively pass on relevant information with regards to the peace process and issues affecting the district and the region as a whole. It was clear that Pader and northern Uganda required more than the final signing of a peace agreement between the Government of Uganda and the LRA but also the formation of a broad-based coalition for peace on the ground inclusive of diverse stakeholders and affected communities to address the different tensions and grievances that have been generated by the conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA); cross-border conflicts; the challenges of reintegrating former child combatants; and general widespread poverty. All of these factors have contributed to the polarization of Acholi society and require an inclusive and participatory process embracing victims, bystanders and other stakeholders.

“Mercy Corps has brought hope to the hopeless” This is a comment made by one of the trained TOTs of Lapul Sub-county during the peace summit. “One of the successes of this peace summit was that the summit was so “advocative” in nature. This was exhibited during different deliberations from different stakeholders’ e.g. the chairman LCV, woman member of parliament, and other presenters. This was indeed an opportunity I had dreamt of.....We have reached this level because we all contributed to this peace process. The summit is a sign of success...”

---TOT LAPUL SUB-COUNTY

Toward this end, Mercy Corps, together with other peace actors in Pader District, convened the inaugural Pader Peace Summit with the theme “Northern Uganda in the Shadows of Juba”. The Peace Summit took place between the 25th and 27th of September 2008 with a list of objectives that included:

- Identify and document best practices and lessons learned relating to conflict mitigation and peace;
- Share local needs, issues and priorities relating to peace and reconciliation;
- Develop concrete strategies and interventions to address local needs and gaps;
- Build coalition support for advocacy initiatives relating to local needs, issues and priorities, and develop follow-up action plans for carrying them through;
- Network with regional and national-level stakeholders in the peace process;
- Provide feedback on program progress and solicit recommendations; and,
- Disseminate messages supporting the national peace process.

The total number of participants initially invited was 250 but the numbers swelled to over 400 people who attended out of curiosity and/or interest. The peace summit drew participants from the national government directly associated with national and regional policies and the peace process. This platform created immense impact and hopes in the minds and hearts of not only Pader residents but northern Uganda as a whole. The summit addressed issues relating to the consolidation of sustainable peace through participatory presentation and discussion on issues of local and national concerns. Issues relating to reconciliation and the IDP return process, reminded the community to actively participate in self and transformative development in their respective communities. The summit identified twenty-one advocacy issues of which the following four were deemed most important:

1. **Information flow:** The dissemination of correct information backed by standardized messages
2. **Peoples Empowerment:** People should be able to garner their own incomes and to be able to cater for their own needs and the needs of their family members
3. **Conflict Management:** High on the list is the conflict on land, inheritance of property, and administrative borders
4. **Restoration of the environment:** This calls for a number of intervention activities including tree planting, improved farming practices, and a ban on grass burning for rodents

The second peace summit, more modest in nature though well attended and more organized, took place from May 27 to the 29th, 2009 in Pader District Headquarters with the theme: “*Rebuild Pader for Peaceful Co-existence*”. Following the success of the first summit, 350 participants attended. The summit discussed the achievements of the Pader Peace Program, the collective and individual role of the peace committees and peace actors in the district, and planned the way forward for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of for LRA rebels ahead of the final signing of the peace agreement. Other social issues such as the increase in violence as result of land conflict and the status of idle youth among others were also discussed.

“This summit has brought people from different corners of the country and the world. Now I feel people have listened to our cry and I feel happy that we are listening and talking to others who were once a distance away from us.....”

-- expressed by one of the Peace Committee members of Pajule.

While reviewing the summit highlights, advocacy issues identified during the first summit were also examined and planned for across the District. A joint action plan by the Pader local government and Mercy Corps was developed to follow up on the implementation of the four

identified priority needs for advocacy. Peace Committees and trained TOTs were on board to facilitate sensitization on the issues at all levels in the district.

Activity 1.6: Development of Framework for Pader Peace Forum Sustainability

As the Pader Peace Program ends, the sustainability of the Pader Peace Forum has not been fully realized. Although Mercy Corps facilitated the registration of the Pader Peace Forum into a viable Local Non-Governmental Organization able to receive private and donor funds, it still lacks dedicated, long-term financial, logistical and human resource support to ensure a more lasting, sustainable future. A concerted effort to build the capacity of the PPF and obtain the resources required to sustain operations at the district, sub-county and parish levels over the foreseeable future is still required.

Efforts to enhance the Pader Peace Forum were made as early as June of 2008 when Mercy Corps facilitated a discussion and mapping out the resources, financial and non-financial means, for sustaining the existing program and expanding activities. A sustainability workshop followed in July 2008 to provide training for PPF members and stakeholders on basic project planning and management, financial management and accountability, monitoring and evaluation of development, leadership skills, and grant proposal writing skills. Despite this training, the PPF remains without the dedicated, long-term financial, logistical and human resource support that is required to successfully run an organization.

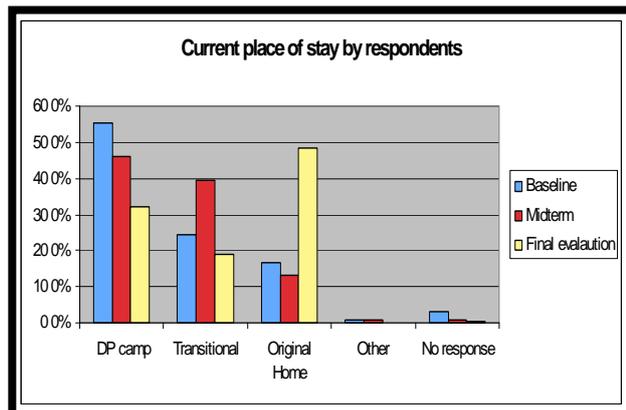
Activity 1.7: Monthly Inter-Agency Coordination Meetings.

As a way to maintain ongoing collaboration between peace actors in the district and avoid unnecessary duplication of activities, Mercy Corps facilitated monthly inter-agency peace actor coordination meetings in order to share best practices with partners, devise solutions to common constraints, reveal insights and news updates from the field and enhance cooperation among NGO partners toward joint events like the Pader Peace Summit. These groups also developed a matrix to document NGO operations in the district and align peace and reconciliation efforts without unnecessarily replicating peace structures. The inter-agency coordination meetings improved relationships between peace actors and gave a positive impression to district leadership. Coordination was very evident during the planning and implementation of the two summits. Development partners in the district like CARE Uganda, Save the Children Uganda, NGO forum Pader District, War Child UK, CCF Pader, ACORD, Friends of Orphans, CARITAS among others all joined in to make the two functions a reality through financial and in-kind support.

Intermediate Result 2:

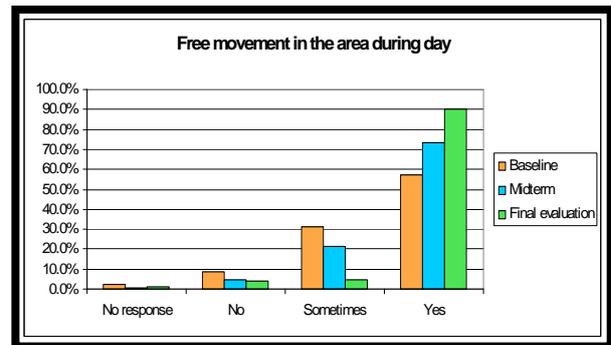
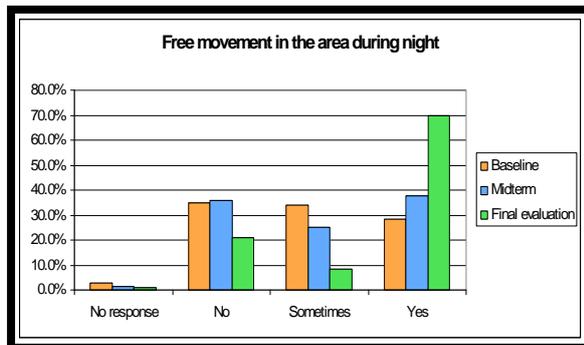
Local initiatives foster peace and reconciliation and facilitate a 50% increase in return and reintegration rate of former combatants, abductees and IDPs

While conducting the final evaluation, the respondents interviewed indicated that they were in one of three places, either already back in their original homes, in IDP camps, or Transitional Resettlement Sites. Although it is recognized that IDPs were spontaneously returning to their homes of origin, Mercy Corps wanted to independently establish the rate of return



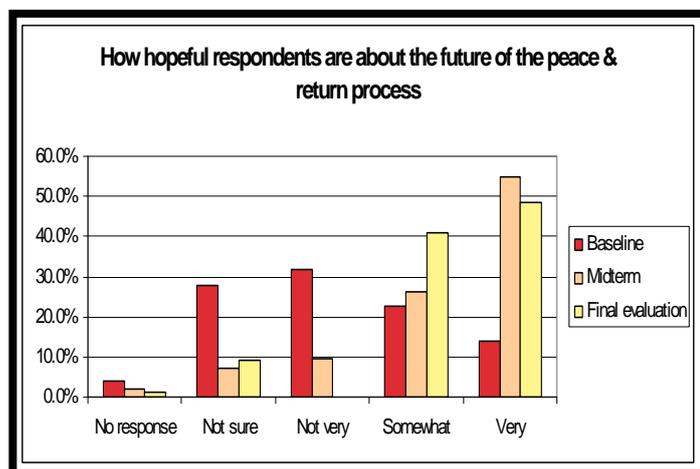
in Pader District. In order to properly assess IDP return, results of the final evaluation survey were compared against the baseline and midterm evaluations. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents interviewed, 48.2% (N=200) were staying in their original homes while 19.1% were in Transitional Resettlement Sites. The number of households that were still in camps reduced from 55.2% at baseline to 32.3% at final evaluation. Overall, the number of respondents in camps has reduced from 55.2% to 32.3% while there has been an increase in the respondents interviewed that have returned back to their original homes (16.8% to 48.2%).

In addition, freedom of movement by the public whether during day or night is a strong indicator of security within the communities. Improved security also leads to increased IDP returns. Mercy Corps’ final evaluation revealed major improvements in freedom of movement. The Final Evaluation findings demonstrated that 70% (N=290) of the respondents were moving freely at night compared to 28.4% at baseline and 37.9% during midterm evaluation. This is an indicator of peace that can not be directly linked to the Pader Peace Program as there are too many other factors that must be considered. However, the program activities contributed greatly to increase the accurate flow of information on issues of concern which included security.



The assessment on day movement had very similar results. Here the study findings indicated that 90.4% (N=372) of the respondents could travel freely during the day compared to the proportion of households who could travel freely during the day at baseline (57.5%).

Attitudes play an important role in people’s hope for the future. The fact the LRA insurgency resulted in a loss of hope for peace. Life in camps became the norm affecting people’s attitude towards the return process even after peace was being realized. It therefore became paramount to ascertain if the people who had suffered the insurgency still had any hope left in them towards a peaceful co-existing future. Based on the findings from the final evaluation, 38.4% of respondents’ were “very” hopeful and 40.9% were “somewhat” hopeful. The two responses give a strong indication that people believe in peace and the return process. However there was a slight decline of 16.5% in those who were “very” hopeful at midterm and final evaluation which is likely attributed to the timing of the mid-term assessment which coincided with LRA peace talks and high



expectations. During the final evaluation the peace talks were, and still are, stalled.

Activity 2.1: Community Dialogues for Identification of Peace and Reconciliation Initiatives

Early in the project cycle Mercy Corps visited all sub-county and parish PCs to hold community dialogues toward the identification of local peace and reconciliation initiatives. Beginning in June 2008, sub-county and parish PCs held a series of consultative dialogues at sub-county town centers to discuss and propose joint initiatives that would enhance community peace and reconciliation. Mercy Corps emphasized the desire for these initiatives to serve as an indelible mark of the community's commitment to peace. At each community dialogue, a Project Committee of between 9-12 members was nominated by the PC members present to represent the entire community in the proposal writing and project management processes.

Following initial project proposal submissions that, in general, did not reflect a strong connection to peace, Mercy Corps began conducting conflict-mapping exercises with the community-appointed Project Committees as a mechanism of carrying out a rapid needs assessment to assist the Project Committees in redirecting their project proposals.

Activity 2.2: Application Review and Disbursement of Funds.

Mercy Corps and the Pader Peace Forum Steering Committee members received 20 local peace and reconciliation projects from all the 19 sub-counties and 1 from the District. Before the communities developed these proposals, The Mercy Corps Team held a series of community meetings at the sub-county centers to discuss and form projects committees. These committee members received first hand training in the development of community grant proposals and monitoring skills. Given the limited capacity in proposal writing, Mercy Corps developed and distributed a proposal template with guidelines to facilitate the process and more effectively screen and provide feedback. The proposals passed through a rigorous screening process to determine whether the proposals met the criteria for strengthening local peace and reconciliation capacity.

After proposals were approved, Mercy Corps oversaw the disbursement and utilization of funds in two tranches. Further commitment was elicited from the beneficiaries by signing a Memorandum of Understanding regarding fund utilization, monitoring and reporting procedures. The projects were to be implemented jointly by both the Parish and Sub-county Peace Committees; supervised by elected project committees in the entire district thereby strengthening cooperation and enhancing peaceful co-existence.

Activity 2.3: Peace and Reconciliation Initiative Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting.

The implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Peace and Reconciliation projects were spearheaded by the sub-county Peace Committees and elected project committees. Easy to use monitoring tools for the Peace Committees and members of the Pader Peace Forum were developed to monitor progress. Pader Peace Forum Steering Committee members together with the sub-county Peace Committees have continued to report the projects and the ultimate goal of building peace and reconciliation in their respective communities even after the close of the program. Project outcomes and impact were discussed with Pader District technical officers where appropriate to help guide project implementation.

In all, 20 Peace and Reconciliation projects have been implemented and handed over to the District technical officers and Pader Peace Forum. The table below shows the type of projects implemented:

No	Sub-County	# of Parish	Project Name
1	Adilang	5	Goat Rearing Project for Peace
2	Kalongo T/C	5	Construction of Cultural Peace Center
3	Laponoh	5	Goat Rearing Project
4	Lira Palwo	8	Bee Keeping Project
5	Lokole	5	Goat Rearing Project
6	Omot	4	Brick Laying Project
7	Paimol	4	Crop Cultivation
8	Parabongo	3	Goat Rearing Peace Project
9	Patongo	8	Cultural and Peace Center
10	Wol	5	Produce Buying and Selling
11	Acholibur	4	Peace Goat Rearing Project
12	Atanga	4	Memorial Monument
13	Aweere	4	Bee Keeping Project
14	Pader Kilak	4	Bee Keeping Peace Project
15	Laguti	3	Ox plough peace project
16	Lapul	4	Bee Keeping Peace Project
17	Pajule	6	Memorial Monument
18	Puranga	4	Bee Keeping Project
19	Pader T/C	3	Bee Keeping Project
20	Pader District Council	1	*Memorial Monument

Activity 2.4: Pader Peace Summits

Pader Peace Summits (see Activity 1.5, above)

Activity 2.5: Support and Monitoring of Summit Advocacy Initiatives.

During the first Pader Peace Summit, stakeholders identified twenty one (21) for advocacy initiatives capturing local needs, issues, and priorities. Four of the twenty-one were selected to reflect the needs of all as people moving from a camp related setting to more secured permanent homes. They include:

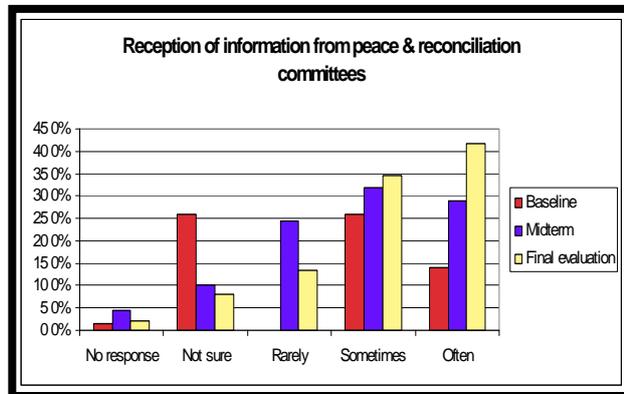
- 1 Information flow** (*The dissemination of correct information backed by standardized messages*)
- 2. Peoples Empowerment** (*People should be able to garner their own incomes and to be able to cater for their own needs and their family members*)
- 3. Conflict Management** (*High on the list is the conflict on land, inheritance of property and administrative borders, Karamojong raids to name a few*)
- 4. Restoration of the environment** (*This calls for a number of interventions activities such as tree planting, best farming practices and a ban on grass burning for rodents, community disarmament, demining among others.*)

Mercy Corps and the Pader local government have successfully implemented the above advocacy issues across the district involving key stakeholders and technical personnel at the local government strata. Sensitization campaigns were done in four zones targeting participants from Parish and Sub-county Peace Committees as well as a broad segment of returnees.

Intermediate Result 3:

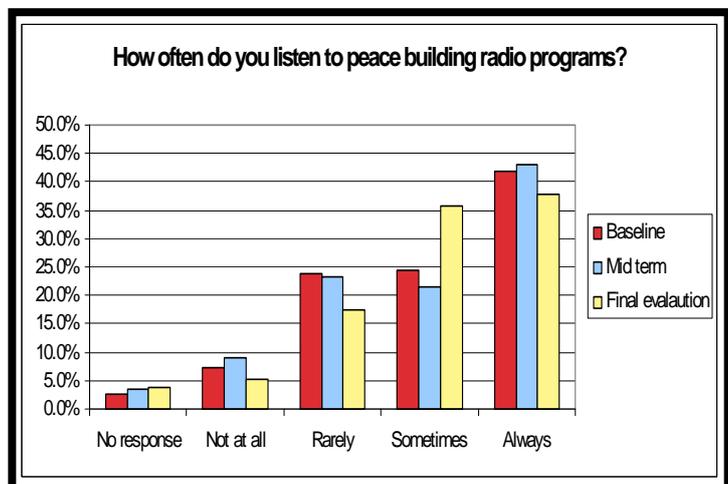
Increased, accurate information flow on issues of concern to Pader residents boosts community confidence in the peace and return process

Peace committees usually share information during monthly and quarterly meetings where members from different locations can discuss developments with other community members. Mercy Corps Final Evaluation demonstrated that the proportion of households who receive information from peace committees has increased from 13.9% measured during the baseline to 41.8% (N=173) at final evaluation. In addition, 34.6% of the respondents reported that they



“sometimes” receive information from Peace Committees. Combining the two survey responses (“often” and “sometimes”) brings the total to 76.4% (N=316) of the respondents receiving information from Peace Committees. During the baseline, only 26% of the respondents reported to “sometimes” get information from Peace Committees. By comparing baseline values with the final evaluation the Peaces Committees performed commendably to increase information flow regarding peace and the return process in Pader district.

Information flow and public discussion are also vital components in peace building and boosting community confidence. This became very evident during the failed peace talks as well as the military operation against the LRA in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Throughout the Pader Peace Program Mercy corps sponsored talk shows on various local radio stations and local leaders were brought in to discuss issues of return and peace in the District.



As part of the Pader Peace Program it became very important to better understand whether the public listened to radio programs. Based on the findings from the Final Evaluation, at least 37.8% (N=156) of the respondents reported “always” listened and 35.9% (N=148) “sometimes” listened. The combined positive responses reveal that 73.7% (N=305) listen to radio peace programs. At baseline, only 24% of the respondents reported to sometimes listen to the radio programs.

Activity 3.1: Community Dialogues for Consultation and Information Dissemination.

This is one of the activities that achieved lower than anticipated (37%) but made a considerable improvement in the communication between the District, Sub-county and Parish leadership. Pader Peace Forum and Peace Committee members have continued to facilitate and monitor community dialogues in all of the 88 identified parishes and 19 sub-counties and have continued holding dialogues in the absence of Mercy Corps staff. As a result, local residents continue to identify, develop, and discuss issues of concern for monthly radio

programs over local FM stations. Radio listening groups have also been actively engaged in community sensitization on domestic violence, the return process, and land conflicts.

Activity 3.2: Development and Transmission of Radio Programs.

As originally envisioned, a part-time Radio Production Specialist was hired to lead the development of a monthly, hour-long radio program that further develops topics raised during community dialogues. The specialist began by conducting a district-wide radio listenership survey to:

- Assess radio ownership and the use of radio within all the Sub-counties in Pader District.
- Assess the coverage of all radios stations received within Pader District.
- Determine the level at which Pader residents listen to local news dealing with peace and return process issues.

As part of the survey process, the Radio Specialist facilitated the formation of 25 radio listening groups across the 19 Sub-counties drawing members from Parish and Village levels. Membership was also inclusive for the composition of the groups included women, war affected youth, ex-LRA fighter, school children, religious and cultural leaders among others. As a way of building the capacity of the radio listening groups, the Radio Specialist conducted radio listening and community outreach training in collaboration with Internews Network. Internews provided recorded radio discussion programs which were used as models for developing radio features and programming. Guest hosts/participants were drawn from the membership of a diverse cross-section of community members and relevant technical experts in their fields. Locally developed radio programs were transmitted on LUO FM 92.4, Rapa FM at Palwak, and Mega FM 102. Regular hosts on the radio shows included Pader Peace Forum and Peace Committee members, District leadership (LCV, RDC, DPC, CAO), a diverse cross-section of community members, and relevant technical experts. Radio program content was regularly and consistently reviewed and discussed to prevent messages from becoming more politically motivated.

Mercy Corps provided 25 radio/cassette players for the 25 Radio Listening Groups located in all of the Sub-counties to facilitate the transfer of first hand information and information sharing. The following are a series of talk shows that have aired since the inception of the Pader Peace Program:

- The status and hope for peace in Northern Uganda? Will the on-going onslaught on the LRA bases in Garamba pose any major security threat for Northern Uganda?
- The way forward for peace and reconciliation between the Acholis and Karamoja. What role should the community and civil society organizations play in supporting this move?
- The LRA war and the people of northern Uganda have destroyed and still destroying the environment for future generation. What should the District officials and the community people do to preserve and restore the environment?
- Northern Uganda in the shadows of Juba. What is the hope for the return process for the thousand of IDPs?
- The general and parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2011. What will be the role of the trained peace committees, the PPF, the radio listening groups and the community people as a whole to enhance violent free elections in northern Uganda?

- The menace of idle youth in Pader District. What is the way forward for development partners to address this new trend of lawlessness?
- Child safety along the major routes in Pader. What should parent and driver do to avert accidents and unnecessary deaths?
- How can peace committees take part in making Pader district a violence free district during the coming 2011 general elections?

Activity 3.3: Coordination of Radio Listening Groups.

The Radio Specialist initially collaborated with the trained radio listening groups to plan and disseminate relevant radio content based upon identified concerns and needs in their respective communities. The groups collected feedback and recommendations regarding aired program content by filling out the radio listening monitoring tool. Mercy Corps and the Pader Peace Forum shared findings at quarterly monitoring and technical support visits. The number of radio groups were, however, reduced from the original 40 to 25 to maintain quality control and attentive monitoring. Twenty-five Radio Listening Groups were formed:

Sub-county	No. of groups	No. of persons
Atanga	1	15
Awere	1	15
Acholibur	1	15
Adilang	1	15
Puranga	1	15
Laguti	1	15
Lapul	1	15
Pader Kilak	1	15
Pajule	2	30
Pader Town Council	1	15

Sub-county	No. of groups	No. of persons
Wol	1	15
Lukole	1	15
Lira Palwo	1	15
Omot	2	30
Patongo	4	64
Kalongo	1	15
Parabongo	1	15
Lapono	1	15
Paimol	2	30
Grand Total	25	379

Radio Program Content

From a radio survey that was carried out in 19 Sub-counties within Pader District, a number of thematic conflict issues were raised by the people living in the various counties and parishes. Major thematic issues within the District included:

1. **Resettlement and Re-integration** with major focus on ex-combatants (returnees) and preparation of communities, factors hindering the return process, food, schools, fear of reprisal,
2. **Land Disputes:** This has been identified as a major concern by almost all the sub counties in Pader district but this cannot be addressed as it is still being debated upon in parliament of Uganda.
3. **Cattle Rustling** (Karamonjong issues)
4. **Domestic Violence**
5. **Justice** (Contact sources Lawyers, Advocates for returnees, etc)
6. **Civil Awareness** (Good Governance)
7. **Peace Process in Juba- Update** (www.allafrica.com, liaise with District heads, Resident Commission)
8. **Trauma awareness and Resilience** (Focus on Breaking cycles of violence and victim-hood).

IV. Major Achievements

As of February 2009, peace committees in Pader District, established and supported through Mercy Corps' Pader Peace Program, have resolved 352 cases of conflicts in 88 parishes and 19 sub-counties. These included:

- ✓ 152 cases of land disputes,
- ✓ 97 cases of domestic violence,
- ✓ 23 cases of border disputes between sub-counties,
- ✓ 8 cases of attempted divorces due to poverty in the family
- ✓ 6 cases of foiled suicide attempts by broke husbands
- ✓ 15 cases of child neglect due to poverty and drunkenness by the family head
- ✓ 51 cases of youth violence as result of gambling and heavy drinking.²

Land Conflict Resolution

Throughout Pader district, peace committees are reporting on their active involvement in facilitating the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region. Committee members are often the first to be called upon when a dispute arises or threatens to escalate. They also proactively identify potential interventions and offer their skills in bringing parties together and finding sustainable solutions. Peace committees have earned trust from their respective communities that other government institutions, such as courts, have not been able to do due to corruption, lengthy bureaucratic processes and high fees. The most frequent source of conflict cited by committee members is land. By providing a neutral forum for discussion and identification for alternative solutions to land disputes, peace committees are able to collaborate with local leaders, government officials and the conflicting parties when working towards peaceful resolution.

Omot Peace Committee

In Omot sub-county, the former base of the Lord's Resistance Army, Mercy Corps-supported peace committees on the sub-county and parish levels have been working diligently to address a rapidly growing number of land disputes. As the government is beginning to forcibly remove displaced populations from the camps, the number of land disputes is rising rapidly. The chairman of the sub-county peace committee warns that "another war is coming. The war after the war." As returnees seek out their former homes they often find their land occupied. The resulting confrontations frequently escalate into violent clashes, feeding on tribal affiliations and desperation in harsh conditions. Peace committee members describe incidents of hut burning, looting, and physical fighting as consequences of these disputes.

With tensions growing, so does the work of the peace committees. In Omot, a team of dedicated mediators is working closely with government officials and community leaders to intervene in arising conflicts, identifying solutions that meet the interests of both sides and incorporating traditional processes of reconciliation to make the relationships sustainable. Peace committee members are called upon on a regular basis as clashes occur, illustrating the respect and legitimacy that community members associate with this institution. Omot peace committee members have dedicated themselves to the peace process in Pader and northern Uganda by volunteering their time and efforts. As they guide conflicting parties to a peaceful resolution in land disputes, the peace committees have been able to provide support to a traumatized population that finally has the opportunity to build a peaceful future.

² See Quarterly Report, Feb 2009; number is informed by reporting forms from peace committees, dialogue sessions, and other meeting documentation.

Desired Wetlands

In early March, returnees arrived in Omot wanting to settle on wetlands to grow sugar cane. When another group also returned to the same land, the confrontation quickly turned into violence. As the situation escalated, a peace committee member was approached about this dispute, and by the time he arrived on the scene, he found a group of fifty armed people willing to fire at anyone who threatened to interfere. The peace committee member called on the leaders of the two parties to appease the situation. In a meeting between the leaders of the fighting parties, with the attendance of local government officials, the peace committee member led a discussion that was ultimately able to calm the situation. He now describes the situation as peaceful.

Return to Acholpi

During fighting between the Lango and Acholi people in 1995, many of the residents of Acholpi village fled their homes. Last month, a clan, whose members had been dispersed throughout the district, returned to their former home only to find the land occupied by another group. The returnees retaliated by burning a hut and looting the property. Once aware of the incident, the peace committee was able to calm a situation that could have escalated into involving over 500 people. Instead, the peace committee's chairman sat down with the two parties and was able to negotiate a settlement that involved the return of much of the looted items, and a cleansing ceremony that would address the burnt hut. By involving the elders from both parties, the peace committee was able to find a peaceful and sustainable solution to the dispute.

Atanga Peace Committee

Boundary Dispute

In a border dispute between Atanga sub-county and Lapul sub-county, a disagreement about the location of a boundary threatened to escalate. When each side began to forcibly claim the land by collecting firewood and digging in the area, tensions threatened to turn into violence. The sub-county government officials were not only unable to mediate the conflict but further exacerbated the tensions when they staunchly began to support their respective residents without appeasing the tensions. Atanga peace committee members, notified about the situation, were able to collaborate with the neighboring peace committee in finding a peaceful solution. They engaged government officials from both sides, consulted with elders and finally brought the two parties together in a meeting where they ultimately agreed that the original border had in fact been the rightful one. The two clans have lived next to each other in peace since this resolution.

Land Dispute

In a disagreement between two men returning to Atanga sub-county after years of displacement, one man began destroying and then planting in the other man's garden. When the elders became involved, they chastised the first man for the destruction and performed a traditional ritual that was meant to mediate the conflict. When the first man continued to use the land as his own, the peace committee was asked to intervene. Through a lengthy consultation process with all parties associated with the conflict, members of the peace committee were able to bring the two men together and jointly agree that the land would remain with its original owner. The respect for the work of the peace committee, which stems from its reputed neutrality, has enabled its members to mediate conflicts where previous interventions have failed.

Neutrality and Effectiveness

The peace committee in Atanga is recognized and respected widely among the population. Its involvement in dispute resolution is often the preferred method of conflict mitigation rather than taking a case to the court system. The judicial process is not only inaccessible to many because of the high fees that are required, but it is often lengthy due to its bureaucratic processes and mistrusted due to a high rate of corruption. The peace committees have been able to address disputes in an efficient and neutral manner, which the courts have been unable to do.

Atanga Peace Monument

The peace committee in Atanga is currently overseeing the construction of a monument to commemorate those who lost their lives during the long war in northern Uganda. One of the peace committee members described it as a reminder to future generations about the atrocities that affected the region for so many years. The names of individual victims to acts of both the LRA and the UPDF will be listed on the monument. One day each year, the peace committee plans to remember this group of individuals and to celebrate a community day of peace and remembrance.

Improving Local Governance

The PPP has been able to successfully engage Pader residents in initiatives that increase awareness about ongoing challenges for the district and the country as a whole. The first Pader Peace Summit gave its participants the opportunity to hear directly from government officials about the Juba peace process and voice their own opinions on government policies. The Summit also established four advocacy initiatives that will be raised with local government structures by Mercy Corps and its partners. The program has encouraged residents to seek out their local officials as their contacts for change.

Along these efforts, Radio Listening Groups have worked diligently at informing themselves and their communities about the most pressing issues for the region. Through songs and dialogue, they engage Pader residents, ensure accurate information flow and raise political awareness about peace and conflict in the region among its population. Group members listen to programs, discuss their message and disseminate this information to people in camps and permanent communities.

The radio listening group in Lapur has composed songs about the impact of the war on the communities in the region and calls upon all to advocate for peace. During the visits to IDP camps in the county, they sing and encourage residents to return to their former villages. One of the group's songs specifically addresses the rebels and urged them to make peace and to come home. The Lapur group includes ex-combatants and former abductees, providing them with a safe way to reintegrate them back into society while also providing an outlet to advocate for change. The members of the radio listening group have developed such a strong bond that they have now acquired land together, which they hope to prepare for planting season.

V. Constraints and Challenges

Throughout the program implementation Mercy Corps wrestled with resistance to the concepts of community ownership and voluntarism. This will continue to pose a challenge to the Pader Peace Forum. Program beneficiaries and even stakeholders such as local government officials in the district continue to request sitting allowances and monetary assistance for their participation. The theme during program implementation “*Kuc Mito*

Dyere” which directly translates to “*Peace Building Requires Sacrifice*” was deliberately chosen to reflect the challenges that an enduring peace will entail and honor the commitment of those communities who endeavor toward making the necessary voluntary sacrifices to realize peace. The idea was welcomed by the District Chairperson who is now discouraging councilors from making monetary claims. Communities need to be constantly reminded that, ultimately, this is their peace to forge and to keep and no one needs to receive a sitting allowance to do so.

Mercy Corps’ other programs and the programs of many other agencies often send a mixed message. Cash for work programs in the district create an internal conflict whereby program beneficiaries feel entitled to ask for cash supplements. It is critical that the Pader Peace Forum and the Pader Local Government Officials embrace and embody the community ownership message of the Pader Peace Program in order for the program to be sustainable beyond Mercy Corps’ presence. This is a challenge that requires constant sensitization and mentorship.

The Pader Peace Program was also constrained operationally. Financial and human resources were strained to meet the programmatic needs and geographic scope designed for the project. Initial budgeting did not foresee, for example, the need for bicycles for the thirty ToTs to conduct parish outreach. In addition, the field visit demands of the program (activities in every community in the district) were exhausting for two senior staff.

Lastly, the elusiveness of a final resolution to the peace process and the unabated conflicts with the Karamojong pose challenges to the confidence-building measures pursued by the Pader Peace Program. Conversely, however, in the current milieu in which the LRA conflict has (at least momentarily) receded into the background, the applicability of the Pader Peace Program to empower communities to address the Karamojong border conflict, land disputes, domestic violence and other conflicts is a testament to the Pader Peace Program’s versatility and the universality of its peace teachings. However, a renewed wave of peace talks with Karamoja is becoming an eminent issue as Mercy Corps engages Kotido, Kaabong and Pader district to implement Building Bridges to Peace with funding support from USAID.

VII. Conclusion

As the Pader Peace Program ends, substantial achievements have been recognized and considerable praise has been given for the program. Very participatory in its approach, the Pader Peace Program was engaged with stakeholders at all levels to ensure sustainability in the long term. Training Peace Committees to build peace in their own communities has yielded great dividends in creating community cohesion and sustaining confidence in the peace and return process. Empowering community-nominated Peace Committees and Project Committees has helped transfer accountability to the various communities and, in doing so, has instilled community ownership. Community ownership is also critical for the sustainability of the Pader Peace Program. Working with local community partners and local government authorities who request payment for their services has been both frustrating and counter-productive as program implementation and Pader Peace Forum participation lessened as a result. However, as Pader Peace Forum members were empowered to engage the community through the Pader Peace Program they have borne witness to the successes and the positive experiences that have helped them to realize the invaluable nature of the program to their community. Finally, it was essential to engage local government actors in program implementation to build strategic alliances and thwart spoilers in the peace process.

Fortunately, non-financial means of sustaining parish, sub-county and district conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation activities have been realized. All participants in the program are volunteers, including the trainers of trainers, committee chairs, community peace project leaders and radio listening group member. Therefore, the structures established will be sustainable beyond Mercy Corps' involvement in these communities but their effectiveness remains in question without the oversight and guidance of an entity like the PPF. The gap that remains is establishing the Pader Peace Forum as the legitimate overseer of the sub-county and parish Peace Committees that can continue to build relationships and maintain the network of peace practitioners that will serve beyond the life of the program.

Although the Pader Peace Forum has transitioned into a viable Local Non-Governmental Organization (LNGO) able to receive private and donor funds, it still lacks dedicated, long-term financial, logistical and human resource support to ensure a more lasting, sustainable future. A concerted effort to build the capacity of the PPF and obtain the resources required to sustain operations at the district, sub-county and parish levels over the foreseeable future is still required.

1. *Developing dedicated, long-term financial, logistical and human resource support for the PPF.*
2. *Continuing to monitor and develop peace structures at all levels within the District to promote sustainable peace and reconciliation*
3. *Responding to land issue disputes and taking additional measures to ensure people's land rights are observed*
4. *Assisting in the overall supervision of two Technical Officers dedicated to BBP*
5. *Implementing regular, rather than incident-related, interactions that are truly community-led to avoid creating conflict and lay the foundation for sustainable results.*
6. *Ensuring the sustainability of program results for both PPP and BBP*

The Building Bridges to Peace (BBP) Program, another Mercy Corps CMM funded program in Uganda, offers a unique way of addressing the sustainability issues of the Pader Peace Forum while preventing the establishment of parallel structures across programs. Significant groundwork has already been done through the selection and incorporation of the Pader Peace Forum as one of three integral partners in the BBP for cross-border work between Pader and Kotido Districts. However, the Pader Peace Forum remains the organization that is least equipped to provide the necessary support to BBP activities.

In addition to working with the Pader Peace Forum, Mercy Corps will continue to explore efforts to link the existing peace committee structures in the district with other peace actors like USAID funded SPRING to supplement their drive to mitigate conflict. The Pader Peace Forum's connection to a network of Peace Committees and Peace Builders make them an invaluable partner for organizations wishing to address peace issues and/or the local communities in Pader District.

Other opportunities still exist that could be easily utilized to capitalize on and sustain the results of the program. Radio listening groups have played an important role in information flow. Most effective in environments where there are already large populations, some radio listening groups will either disband as they continue on to their original homes or carry on the message and form new listening groups. As peace prevails and people return, communities formerly staying closer together will spread out as they move to their new settlements which

will either create a gap in information flow or an opportunity to reach ever more areas within the District. What is clear is more groups are required as more villages are accessed and developed. Additional radio groups would increase accurate and relevant information flow to a much wider audience. However, it should be noted that with the closure of the Pader Peace Program, radio programs will no longer be sponsored limiting the radio programming that could potentially be aired.

As previously mentioned, significant local capacity now exists in the District, with the Pader Peace Forum having long established district wide networks that have been operating for almost two years with networks of experienced peace committees, TOTs, and volunteers. Capacity of these peace committees varies widely within and across the Sub-counties but there is no reason that the stakeholders from the Program can not be utilized for other community works. New development partners and NGOs can work with the structures already in place.

Annex 1: Performance Table

Impact Performance Indicators	Baseline Value	Targets	Midterm Evaluation	Final Evaluation	Progress	Achievement
1.1: “Strong” Local Mechanisms for Conflict Mitigation, Peace and Reconciliation ³	41.5%	Baseline +75% = 73.0%	41.9%	55.5%	14%	76%
1.2: Level of funds secured by the Pader Peace Forum in proportion to its total 3–5 year operating budget ⁴	20% - mo.8 50% - mo.13 80% - EOP	--	-	-	\$1000	\$1000
1.3: # peace building structures established or strengthened with USG assistance that engage conflict-affected citizens	19	108		108	108	100%
1.4: # people trained in conflict mitigation/ resolution skills with USG assistance	0	769		963	963	125%
1.5: # of Peace Committee training manuals/workbooks completed	0	2	1	2	2	100%
1.6: Improved Coordination Between Peace Agencies ⁵	27.5%	Baseline + 50% = 42.0%	63.6%	65.2%	37.7%	155%
1.7 # of district-wide Peace Summits held	0	2	-	2	2	100%
2.1: “Strong” Local and District Support for Peace, Reconciliation and Reintegration ⁶	22.0%	Baseline + 50% = 33.0%	32.1%	25.8%	3.8%	78.2%
2.2: # community-based reconciliation projects completed with USG assistance	0	20	-	-	20	100%
2.3: # of people attending USG-assisted facilitated events that are geared	0	1500	-	1500	1500	100%

³ Measured as an average of the highest responses to the four sub-questions: assessed success of community members in resolving conflicts, trustworthiness of those mediators, access to those who resolve conflicts and how inclusive those who resolve conflicts are of the demographics of the community at large. Refer to midterm assessment data for details.

⁴ This hasn't been possible due to the composition of PPF members mainly made up of local and national politicians. Efforts to transform PPF from a government body to a credible civil society organization are complete and with the new status, securing funds will be made possible.

⁵ Measured by the average of all ‘very well’ responses to the question (assuming more than one organization working in peace building) how well they were working together.

⁶ Measured as an average of high responses to the two sub-questions: the frequency of local government community visits to discuss topics of conflict, peace and reconciliation and the responsiveness of local government authorities to community needs relating to conflict, peace and reconciliation.

toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups						
2.4: # grass-roots or civil society activities supporting high-level, official peace or reconciliation process negotiations supported by USG assistance	0	10	-	10	10	100%
2.5: # of advocacy initiatives identified at district Peace Summits and completed	0	4	-	4	4	100%
2.6: % of survey respondents reporting stronger linkages between community and parish, sub-county and district peace initiatives ⁷	50%	75%	-	79.3%	29.3%	106%
2.7: : Stronger Linkages Between Community, Parish, Sub-county and District Peace Initiatives ⁸	79.3%	50%	61.9%	62.9%	-16.4%	125.8%
3.1: “Good” Level of Confidence in Peace and Return Process ⁹	37.6%	Baseline + 50% = 56.4%	54.1%	80.2%	42.6%	142.2%
3.2: # USG-assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflicts	0	107	-	107	107	100%
3.3: # people reached through USG-assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflicts	0	193,600	-	336,000 ¹⁰	336000	174%
3.4: # of community dialogues facilitated at the parish and sub-	0	321	-	102	121	37%

⁷ 79 3% of respondents surveyed in the baseline indicated the presence of strong linkages between community, parish, sub-county and district peace initiatives, thereby exceeding the initial target of 50%.

⁸ Measured by percentage of ‘Yes’ responses to whether respondents can name recent joint peace and reconciliation initiatives at the parish, sub-county or district level; however, it must be noted that while the initial figure has decreased, the percentage of those who responded yes and were then able to actually name one or more initiatives significantly increased. This suggests that it is possible that this question was not properly clarified in the baseline survey exercise as many individuals reported yes and then were subsequently unable to name any peace and reconciliation initiatives.

⁹ Measured by the average of high or affirmative responses to the five sub-questions: return to normalcy with engagement in economic or farming activity, freedom of movement during the day, freedom of movement during the nighttime, personal confidence in the peace and return process and current accommodations (responses of ‘original home’ – indicating that they have returned and are no longer occupying a transitional or internally displaced camp).

¹⁰ This figure includes the estimated population of Pader District reached through radio Programs and community dialogues conducted by Peace Committees.

county level						
3.5: # of radio programs aired covering issues of local concern, national policies and peace process	n/a	6		4	4	66%
3.6: # of Radio Listening Groups formed and active	0	25	-	25	25	50%
3.7: Increased Access to Information through Peace Committees ¹¹	13.9%	70%	28.9%	41.8%	27.9%	59.7%

¹¹ Measured by percentage of 'Often' (more than once a month) responses to whether respondents are receiving information from the peace and reconciliation committees.

Annex 2: Success Story: “Inside look from an Outsider”

When I¹² first came to northern Uganda I was taken aback by the stark contrast between Pader district and the south. I thought it was hot in Kampala, but as I traveled farther north and closer to the Sahara the temperature climbed even higher. As we drove from Kampala the roads change as well. Smooth tarmac highways suddenly turned into pock marked dusty trails. Even the power lines that crisscrossed the country side in the south ended before I arrived in Pader.

But the climate of northern Uganda wasn't the only thing that held a surprise for me.

In a region haunted by one of the longest conflicts in Africa I discovered the people still had hope and optimism for the future.

The Acholi, who have dealt with over twenty years of insecurity and violence, were finding hope and optimism in community projects sponsored by Mercy Corps. This was especially apparent in Atanga sub-county where some of the worst atrocities were committed. The people who live in this area have experienced some of the worst violence in Uganda.

During the 20 year civil war Joseph Kony and His LRA rebels senselessly took the lives of over 440 men, women, and children in the Atanga sub-district. Before 2007 hundreds of children who lived in the bush would become “night commuters” and flood bus stations and buildings in populated places seeking asylum from the LRA. Parents constantly feared for their children's, as well as their own lives. Through all of this they have still managed to keep a positive outlook

They have taken the initiative, with help from Mercy Corps, to build peace in the area from the ground up. Community leaders have received training in Conflict Mitigation and Management and created peace committees in various communities. These committees have helped settle everything from land to domestic disputes.

But this initiative has done so much more than just that

In (town with sub-district hq) there is a monument honoring those killed in the area during the instability. It is a sobering sight, a list including the date of each massacre and the number of people who perished is etched on the back of memorial. One can't help but imagine pictures of armed guerrillas storming into brick and mud huts killing any who would not join their cause, and the cries of the children who were not lucky enough to escape their clutches.

As they dedicated the monument and delivered speeches commemorating the dead I expected a harsh condemnation of those who committed the crimes against their brothers and sisters. That's when northern Uganda astonished me again

The (speaker) exclaimed that the “monument is a symbol that will serve as a reminder to future generations”, “something that can stop further war”. But most importantly he said, “if we truly want peace, we must forgive those who committed these atrocities”.

And so those affected forgive, but most likely never forget.

¹² “I” refers to a Mercy Corps Summer Intern that visited Mercy Corps programs in Kitgum and Pader in July of 2009

Annex 3: Results Framework

Strategic Objective: Increase community and institutional capacity to mitigate conflict and advance peace and reconciliation in Pader District

Intermediate Result 1: Established and strengthened parish, sub-county, and district level mechanisms for conflict mitigation, peace, and reconciliation

Intermediate Result 2: Improved enabling environment for peace, reconciliation, and returns.

Intermediate Result 3: Increased, accurate, information flow

IR 1.1: Increased number of peace structures created and strengthened in throughout of Pader District.

IR 1.2: An increased number of people in Pader District feel that local mechanisms for peace and reconciliation exist and are effective.

IR 1.3: Improved quality of training materials for local peace actors.

IR 1.4: Improved conflict mitigation skills among members of the Pader Peace Forum.

IR 1.5: The Pader Peace Forum has an increased capacity for continued operations.

IR 1.6: Increased coordination among peace-building actors in Pader District.

IR 2.1: Community dialogues are held that identify local peace and conflict issues and initiatives.

IR 2.2: Community projects that address peace and conflict issues are identified, implemented, and monitored.

IR 2.3: District level Peace Summits held that identify advocacy issues.

IR 2.4: Advocacy issues are implemented at the grassroots and national level.

IR 3.1: Community dialogues are held to identify information needs of Pader residents.

IR 3.2: Radio programs that address community information needs around peace and conflict issues are developed and disseminated.

IR 3.3: Radio Listening Groups are established to share information related to the peace process and to develop content.