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GEOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

Stability Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda (SPRING) Project

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ACRONYMS

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation in Research and Development
APEP	Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program
BAFO	Best and Final Offer
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community Based Organization
CJTF-HoA	Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
COP	Chief of Party
CPR	Civil Procedure Rules
CSO	Community Service Organization (not Civil Society Organization?)
CRD	Community Resilience and Dialogue
DDP	District Development Plan
DNH	Do No Harm
DoD	Department of Defense
EC	European Commission
EMG	Emerging Markets Group
FAFO	Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo, Norway
GOU	Government of Uganda
HIPS	Health Initiatives for the Private Sector
HoA	Horn of Africa
HURIFO	Human Rights Focus
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPSS	Institute of Peace and Security Studies
IR	Intermediate Result
IT	Information Technology
LC	Local Chairman
LEAD	Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NUMAT	Northern Uganda Malaria AIDS and Tuberculosis Project
NUPF	Northern Uganda Peace Forum
NUREP	Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Program
NUPI	Northern Uganda Peace Initiative
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children



PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PRDP	Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
SPRING	Stability Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda
SWAY	Survey of War Affected Youth
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The overall objective of the SPRING (Stability, Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda) Project is to promote regional stability by addressing the causes and consequences of violent conflict (USAID strategic objective SO 11). The purpose of this geographic assessment, therefore, is to identify the geographical areas and sectors where the stabilization needs are greatest and where these needs are presently not being met. This report summarizes the assessment findings and makes recommendations about priority areas, issues, and interventions based upon the following selection criteria: the extent of past conflict and the need for stabilization; the extent to which activities meet indicators by intermediate result (I.R.); the extent to which the community is underserved by donor programs; and the opportunities to leverage resources from other programs.

The report is structured according to each component: Peace and Reconciliation; Economic Security; and Access to Justice. In addition, there is a subsection for the cross-cutting themes for which the project will provide emphasis: Youth and Education, and Land. In the Annexes to the report, we have included a Baseline Conflict Assessment and a Communications Assessment to provide a strategic context and to supplement the information provided by component.

1.2 Context

USAID's strategy for mitigating the causes and consequences of conflict shares a common approach with the range of political, economic, and social reforms foreseen under the government's Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda: to prioritize stabilization as a goal of all interventions. Both SPRING and the PRDP focus on stabilization because stability (or the lack thereof) will be a key factor in the success of all other post-conflict reforms and programs.

Therefore, SPRING began by conducting a Baseline Conflict Assessment to identify the stabilization needs at the macro level, focusing specifically the causes and consequences of the LRA conflict. This assessment provided a framework to identify the geographical areas and sectors where SPRING can have greatest impact and maximum demonstration effect of best practice in stabilization programming. The results will guide programming decisions for the entirety of the project and any changes in the situation will be identified through the regular conflict reporting and during implementation of activities. These changes and the related risk management strategies for the various conflict scenarios (cited in the Baseline Conflict Assessment) will be reflected in the SPRING annual work plans. (See Annex A which contains the Baseline Conflict Assessment Report, submitted 25 March 2008.)

1.3 Methodology

The assessment comprised three phases: planning, assessing, and post-assessment synthesis. During the planning phase, the Chief of Party and the Peace and Reconciliation Advisor conducted initial high level meetings with district officials in northern Uganda and with USAID with the purpose of announcing the objectives of SPRING team members who were to visit the districts (see Annex B). Other team members conducted desk research, developed the data collection instruments based on the results framework, and planned interviews and logistics for covering the region. A training was then conducted during which team members learned about the objectives of SPRING, refined the assessment tools and strategy, and finalized plans for conducting district and sub-county level visits in a manner to use the project cars efficiently while obtaining sufficient geographic coverage.

At the start of the assessing phase, team members worked in two groups: one team interviewing local government officials at the district level and the other team interviewing donors and international NGOs. Following a comprehensive interim briefing in Kampala with USAID, the team was reconfigured to focus more narrowly on the three components and collect more in-depth information on specific locations for interventions, current issues, and existing program resources. To do this, the team interviewed local officials at the sub-county and village level (LC1 and LC3), community-based organizations, and community members. In conjunction with these visits to local communities, the team also conducted assessments in five additional districts at the request of USAID. A summary of the completed interviews and meetings is displayed in Table 1; more information is provided in Annex D.

**Table 1: List of Interviews and Meetings**

District	Government		Donor/NGO/CBO
	District/Sub-County (In-Person)	Sub-County (Phone)	District/Local (In-Person)
Amuru	7	5	
Gulu	10	13	31*
Kitgum	13	18	13
Pader	9	15	9
Lira	12	8	5
Oyam	14	4	0
Adjumani	3	0	1
Soroti	5	0	0
Katakwi	5	0	0
Kaberamaido	4	0	0
Amuria	3	0	0
Total (207)	85	63	59

**Note. Gulu and Amuru.*

During the synthesizing phase, the COP and the three component leaders reviewed the findings in order to determine target sub-counties; develop descriptions of immediate interventions which could be undertaken by the project; update the preliminary work plan; guide the development of the monitoring and evaluation plan; and write this report. As required by the contract, an interim presentation was provided to USAID on March 25 and the second one is planned for April 25, 2008.

1.4 Recommended Locations

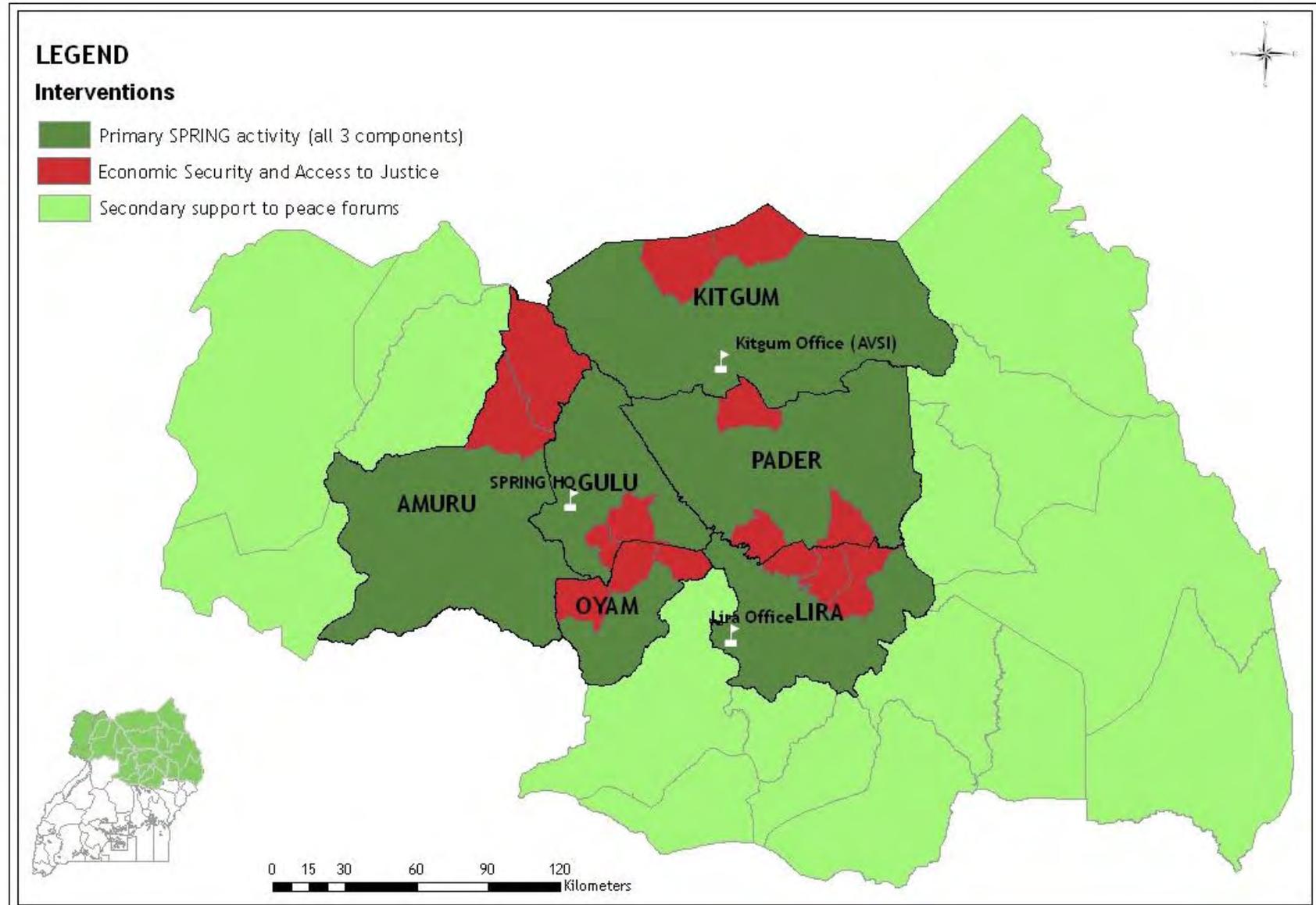
Map 1 shows the locations of our proposed interventions. We selected these locations because it was determined that the particular mix of needs and existing resources in each area presented good opportunities for SPRING to promote stabilization. Of course, USAID will make the final decision regarding where to work and which interventions may go forward. The SPRING field offices will oversee activities in these locations and serve as the focal point around which other component activities will be clustered.

As detailed later in this report, we propose to implement Economic Security and Access to Justice activities throughout 15 sub-counties¹ in 6 districts (though the Access to Justice radio campaign to raise awareness about legal rights will have a regional audience). In contrast, we propose that Peace and Reconciliation activities be more geographically expansive and include activities at the regional and district level in six districts, with specific interventions clustered around the 15 selected sub-counties. The activities in the Peace and Reconciliation component require broad geographical coverage to support both intra- and inter-community peace building.

1 Northern Amuru: Pabbo and Atiak sub-counties; Southern Pader: Puranga and Patango sub-counties, central Pader: Acholibur sub-county; Northern Lira: Okwang, Adwari, and Orum sub-counties; Northern Oyam: Ngai, Minakulu, and Otwal sub-counties; Southern Gulu: Lalogi and Lakwana sub-county; and in Kitgum: Lokung and Agoro sub-counties.



Map 1: SPRING Interventions





2 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Peace and Reconciliation

2.1.1 FOCUS ON STABILIZATION

The majority of governmental, non-governmental and international programs in northern Uganda are focused on meeting the humanitarian and, to a lesser extent, the developmental needs of the 11 LRA² affected districts assessed by SPRING. There are very few agencies that are focused on stabilization, although the recent launch of the PRDP represents a key step in this direction from the government. Therefore, SPRING has a unique opportunity to help fill this gap by implementing programming designed to address the causes of the conflict in the six northern districts most impacted by violence.

Evidence suggests that the Acholi sub-region in particular has suffered extreme hardship throughout this conflict and requires the most stabilization. For instance, using the length of exposure to the conflict as a proxy indicator of the level of stabilization needs, Map 2 shows that the four Acholi districts are in greatest need compared to the surrounding districts as a result of sustained exposure to violence that dates back to the start of the conflict. This is further supported by data on the magnitude of displacement that suggest that the Acholi sub-region was most affected, followed by northern sub-counties of Lango, then parts of Teso and finally some sub-counties in Adjumani district. (See Map: Pre-Cessation of Hostilities Displacement, Annex G.)

The latest academic thinking and development policy highlights the importance of the link between security and poverty. The geographical pattern of the indicators of stabilization needs cited above displays a correlation with maps of proxy indicators of poverty. This correlation indicates that the consequences of the conflict, in particular deteriorating food security and prolonged displacement, have resulted in heightened poverty amongst the populations most impacted by the conflict, namely the Acholi sub-region and northern Lango sub-region.

The conflict map (Map 2) shows that in eastern Acholi, eastern Lira districts, and in the Teso sub-region communities are more immediately concerned with the ongoing conflict with the Karamoja sub-region. This was confirmed by interviews conducted in those sub-regions bordering Karamoja. The incidents of violent conflict between these sub-regions and the Karamoja sub-region which occurred during the LRA conflict continue to take place. It is not clear if there has been any marked increase in incidents following the decrease in LRA activity in these areas. This assessment revealed that this conflict presents a significant challenge for stabilization of northern Uganda, which, although beyond the scope of SPRING at this stage is a factor that must be considered in any planned interventions. We are concerned that there is still a chance for conflict between these sub-regions after the LRA Peace Agreement is reached and propose that prevention of this conflict should be considered in SPRING programming.

2.1.2 FINDINGS

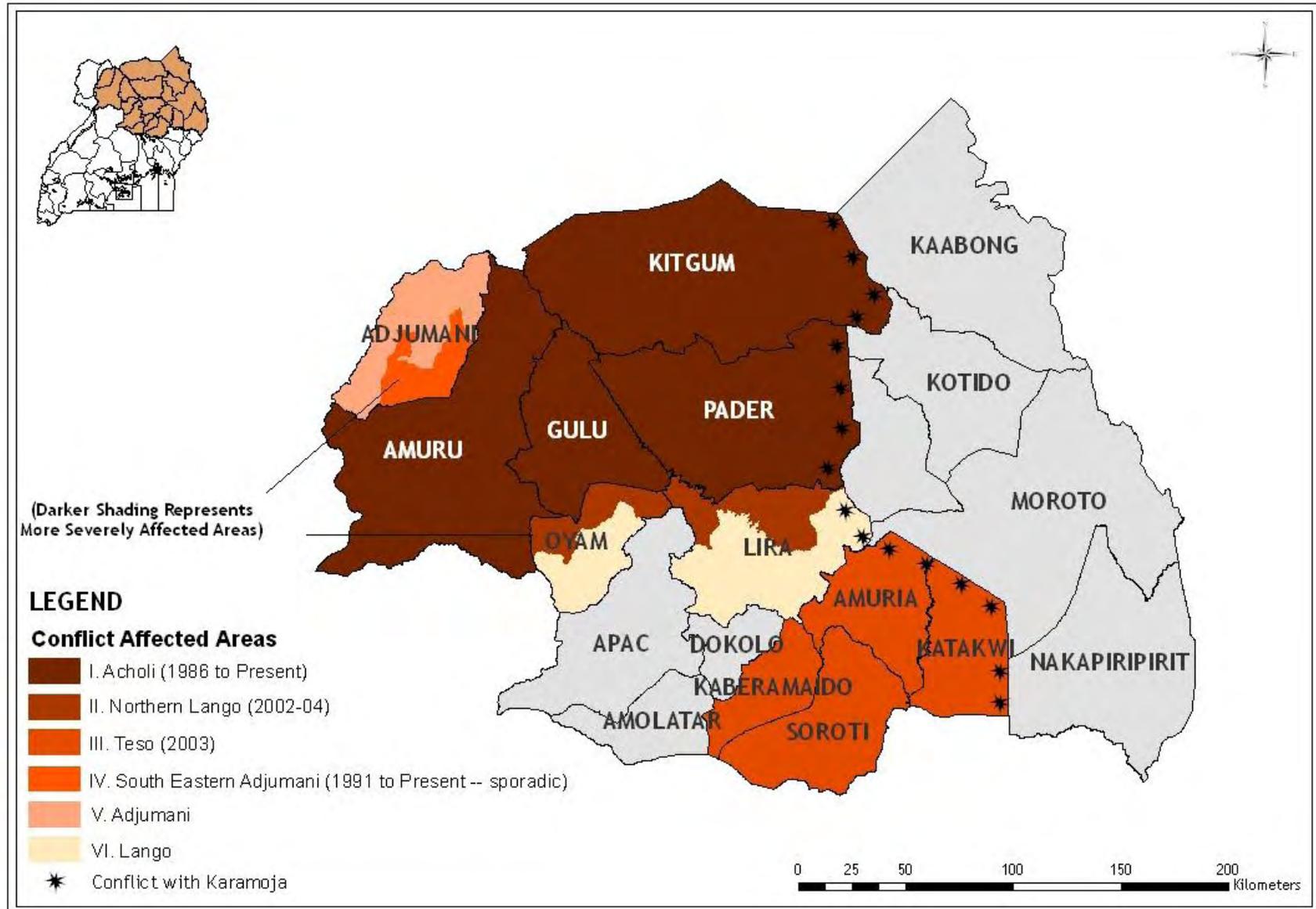
Impact of Juba peace process is pervasive (I.R. 1.1). The ongoing Juba peace process presents the most significant opportunity to date to resolve the conflict between the Government and the LRA. If this opportunity is to be fully exploited, the peace agreement presently being negotiated needs to be the first step in a broader regional and national reconciliation process. The apparent political will of the government and the LRA for a peaceful resolution of the conflict is further compounded by the growing will of the people to secure peace. In a recent survey of residents of Acholi and non-Acholi districts in the north, peace was rated one of the main priorities at 44%, coming a close second to health at 45%³.

² Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Lira, Oyam, Pader, Soroti, Adjumani, Amuria, Kaberamaido and Katakwi. Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader are in the Acholi sub-region and the conflict is characterized there as an intra-community conflict. To the extent to which conflict occurred outside of the borders of the sub-region, the conflict is characterized as inter-community, between Acholi and non-Acholi people.

³ Berkley-Tulane (December 2007) 'When the War Ends – Survey on Attitudes to Peace, Justice and Social Reconstruction in Northern Uganda'



Map 2: Northern Uganda Conflict Map





The same survey indicates that compared to a similar survey in 2005, the population is apparently also more amenable to the prospect of truth-telling, compensation, and amnesty mechanisms for some elements of the fighting forces as opposed to prosecutions. Clearly the situation in the peace and reconciliation sector is rapidly evolving, largely in accordance with developments under the Juba process. Obviously the degree of success in the conclusion and subsequent implementation of the final peace agreement will have far reaching implications for the stabilization needs, as highlighted in the scenarios mapped out in the Conflict Assessment Baseline Report. SPRING may need to respond to requirements for implementation of the terms included in the numerous annexes attached to the envisaged peace agreement. In particular, we anticipate there will be demands on the district peace and reconciliation offices which are likely to evolve rapidly over the coming months across northern Uganda. The community level focus of SPRING, with a network of trained and supported legal facilitators providing improved access to justice represents a key resource that could be of direct utility in the implementation of various provisions of the peace agreement.

Strengthening of current public sector framework for Peace and Reconciliation is a priority (I.R. 1.1). The public sector institutional framework for the coordination of peace and reconciliation activities has been fairly weak and in many cases non-existent. The support provided by previous USAID projects (NUPI and CRD) encouraged the formation of district level peace forum mechanisms across the north. The forums in the Acholi sub-region were particularly, during the life of the project. Additional tiers of public sector-led peace forums were established at the sub-regional, northern Uganda, and national level, and were also supported by NUPI. These additional tiers lacked a complimentary governance structure at the sub-regional and northern Uganda levels. The institutions envisaged at these levels never fully took hold and after the conclusion of the project support, activities at these levels ceased. Since the time of NUPI, the district forums have operated at varying degrees of intensity. As indicated in the evaluation of these projects there is a need for a more developmental approach to the support of the public sector institutional framework in the peace building sector⁴.

The district forums in Pader and Kitgum have recently received technical input from World Vision to support the development of respective strategic plans. In Pader this is now being followed up more intensely with support from Mercy Corps, which extends to establishing and supporting peace forums down to the sub-county and parish levels. If this proves to be a successful model for the extension of peace forums from the district to the community level, SPRING will assess how it can effectively support the replication or refinement of this model across the Acholi sub-region. The District Peace and Reconciliation Team (equivalent peace forum structure) in Gulu has recently been revived and the District Council is presently considering a proposal to provide limited staffing for a permanent secretariat to the DRPT. The European Commission has recently provided UgSh 600 million of funding for peace building activities, to be overseen by the DRPT and implemented in partnership with Save the Children Uganda, and traditional and religious leaders. The activities of the newly established district of Amuru largely continue to fall under the purview of the parent district of Gulu.

There are a number of agencies that have provided conflict management training, support and small-scale programs with community and public leaders in the peace building field. The implementation across the LRA affected areas has been patchy and sporadic. Peace building programming and coordination in northern Uganda is very recent and still evolving. The UNDP is the lead UN agency for coordination under the Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods Cluster, which is where peace building presently sits. How this international form of coordination relates to the previously described governmental coordination structures has not been resolved at this stage. What is clear is that the efforts should focus on institutional strengthening of the district peace forums in order to ensure the coordination mechanisms are sustainable and the degree of local ownership is maximized.

Interventions are needed which recognize that land is a source of current and future conflict (I.R. 1.2). The increasing realization of the lack of clarity regarding land rights in Uganda, the political controversy over the proposed amendments to the Land Bill, and the complicated history of communal land ownership mean that land is a source of conflict throughout Uganda. The lengthy periods of displacement and the fact that land is directly associated with the conflict mean that the issue of land is increasingly becoming a source of conflict in northern Uganda. The interviews with LC3 officials in the Lango and Acholi sub-regions testify to this fact, with 80% of respondents identifying land as the cause of the most recent conflict in their communities. Interestingly, 93% of LC3 officials interviewed cited land as

⁴ 'Evaluation of CRD and NUPI – USAID Uganda' July 2007



the most likely cause of future conflicts, 11% cited former combatants, and 18% cited robbery. Land, and the implementation of the peace agreement once signed, pose significant challenges in meeting the stabilization needs. While there is widespread need regarding land, we will approach land issues in a targeted manner, focusing on a few sub-counties with our interventions under both Components 1 and 3.

The main success stories in reconciliation involve resolution of conflicts at the community level (I.R. 1.2) occasionally with the support of external mediation from a combination of district officials, religious and traditional leaders in support of counterparts at the local community level. The mediation support provided by those from outside the concerned community largely occurs on an *ad hoc* basis and depends upon personal relations. This appears to be the case for intra-community conflicts within the Acholi sub-region as well as inter-community conflicts, for example between communities on the border between the Lango and Acholi sub-regions. The conclusion of the Final Peace Agreement, as it is being referred to presently, would provide the potential for an overarching strategic framework to guide peace building activities to be less reactive and more proactive and coordinated. It remains unclear at this stage whether this potential will be realized, and furthermore if this strategic guidance provided by the Final Peace Agreement will lead to a long process that can address the structural causes of the conflict.

Community and Youth-based Dialogue has improved in the last two years (I.R. 1.2). Work has been done in supporting peace clubs in schools and youth clubs, including ex-combatants as participants. Preliminary assessments indicate there is much scope for work in this field, including the information and dialogue components of peace building as well as linking this to work in the economic component.

There is a lack of specific information on the peace process (I.R. 1.3). The Communications Assessment (See Annex E) identified that the population is relatively well informed on the progress in the peace process at a very broad level, particularly in the Acholi sub-region. At the same time, the population across the north feels they have not been consulted and are not well informed on the details of the various agreements that have already been made. In general, the population states they are not well informed on issues that are of direct relevance to them, including: the provisions of the Amnesty Act, legislation and rights regarding land, means to seek justice, and more generally, how to access available services. This lack of accurate and reliable information is not uncommon in post-conflict environments, particularly in relation to political and sensitive topics such as the peace process.

USG programs must be reoriented to focus on stability (I.R. 1.4). The focus over the past several years on humanitarian and development programming and the almost complete absence of stabilization programs also means that the positive impacts of interventions on peace are limited, and in some cases have led to further conflict. The delivery of conflict mainstreaming training and technical support will be a starting point to address this need within the various USG program interventions in the north.

Individuals will be identified to serve as focal points for conflict mainstreaming for each component of the USG involvement in northern Uganda, including each USAID project and the Department of Defense Horn of Africa (DoD HoA) Team. This network of focal points will be the body for collaboratively identifying the training and technical support needs in conflict mainstreaming, developing the tailored training and technical support programs, implementing the programs and monitoring and evaluating the program in real time.

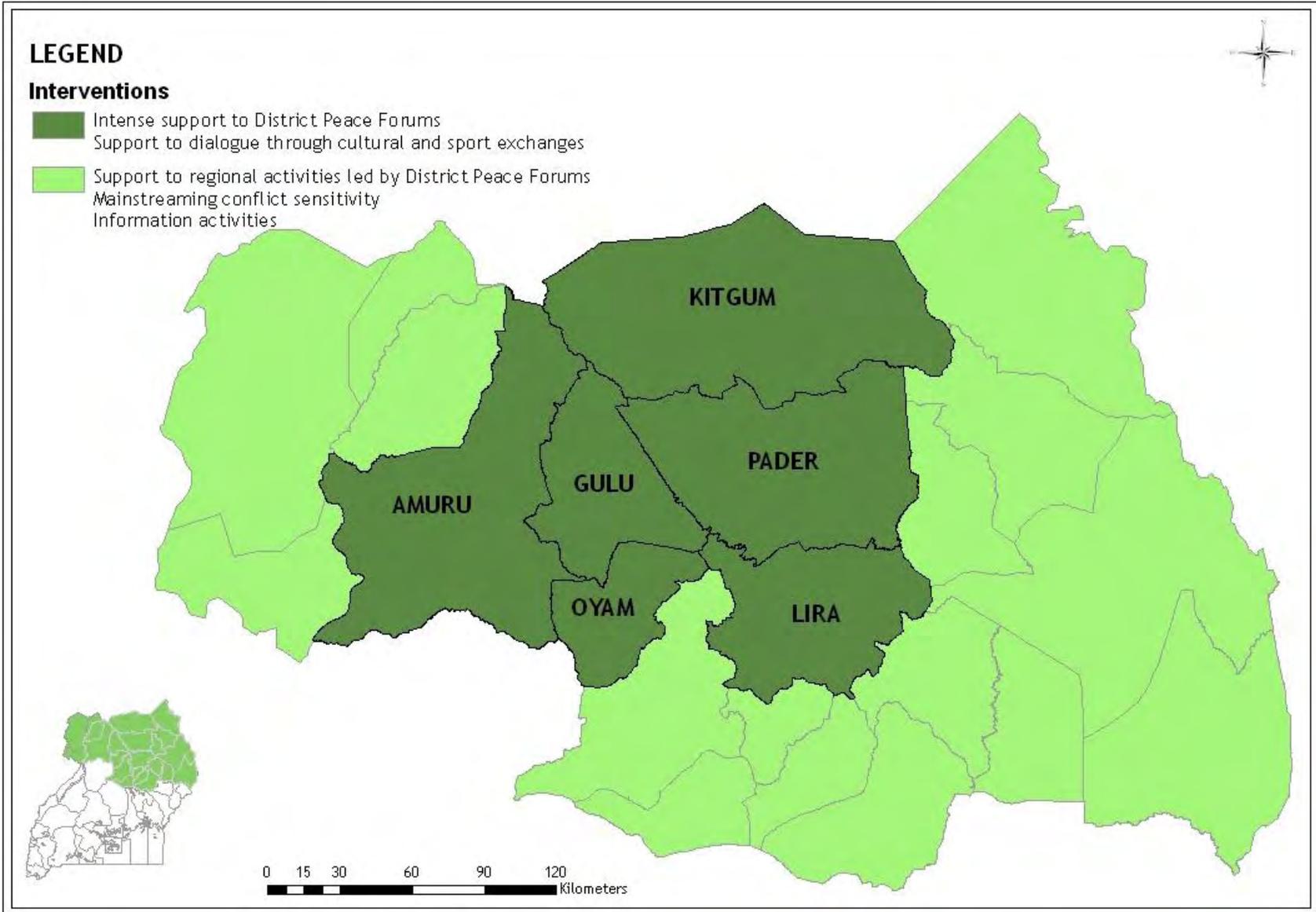
2.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The peace and reconciliation activities of SPRING will be widespread; we propose to work across all of northern Uganda supporting inter-community activities and to provide institutional support to the district peace forums in all six districts in the northern Lango and Acholi sub-regions. It is our intention to sign Memoranda of Understanding in all six districts which will cover all SPRING interventions. Map 3 shows the locations of Peace and Reconciliation interventions.

Provide technical assistance to the district peace forums as agreed with each district and clearly articulated in each Memoranda of Understanding (I.R. 1.1). Technical support will be provided to all LRA-affected districts interested in receiving support. Preliminary consultations with the districts indicate that there is an interest in reinvigorating the district peace forums in the Acholi sub-region and northern Lango sub-region. As the peace forums were previously set up with a focus on addressing issues related to the LRA conflict there appears to be only limited interest in the Teso or West Nile sub-regions. No assessment has as yet been made of the interest in developing the district peace forums in Karamoja.



Map 3: SPRING Interventions — Peace and Reconciliation





Support activities promoting formal mechanisms for dialogue and regular contact between officials from districts across the north (I.R. 1.1), including meetings, development of systems for communications and conflict management and other activities identified or requested. This is to be limited to support for activities and will not include institutional support. This support is a follow up to the previously established Northern Uganda Peace Forum. The geographical coverage of this activity will include all of northern Uganda, namely; Teso, Karamoja, Acholi, Lango and West Nile sub-regions. Activities will be held in a variety of locations in northern Uganda with follow up in between being conducted through remote communications. It is presently planned that none of these activities will be held in Karamoja, although representatives from Karamoja will be included.

Provide training and limited institutional support to community based bodies (I.R. 1.2), including religious, traditional or official peace forums depending on what exists and is most effective in each location. This community level of intervention will be focused on the most highly impacted locations namely the Acholi sub-region and northern sub-counties of the Lango sub-region. More intensive support will be provided in communities identified for in-depth work under Component Two and Three. Intensive support includes grants to multiple organizations to work in the same geographic area as well as inclusion of peace and reconciliation objectives into the grant agreements of the implementers of economic activities.

Support cultural (music, drama and dance) and sporting (football and netball) exchanges within the Acholi sub-region and other sub-regions in the north (I.R. 1.2), in order to promote enhanced contact at the non-leadership and youth level. This activity can be taken up in partnership with youth group networks and schools; other agencies likely to be interested in supporting this initiative include: EC, UNICEF and private companies in Uganda (such as MTN or Coca Cola). The potential for sports and cultural activities contributing to furthering cross-community understanding and contact is well documented in other countries in Africa. There are some preliminary initiatives in football in Kitgum supported by World Vision and EC in Karamoja that can be further built upon. Similarly there is a wide experience of cultural activities contributing to peace that can also be scaled up effectively. The focus of this work will be within the Acholi sub-region and northern Lango sub-counties in order to address intra-Acholi conflict and also to address inter-community conflict between the Lango and Acholi communities. On the basis of successful implementation this will be scaled up throughout the entirety of northern Uganda.

Meet the information needs of the population through appropriate and accurate messaging (I.R. 1.3). The accuracy of the information provided will be guaranteed through close cooperation with the Mission Press Office and testing of key messages. The messages will be delivered using methods that appeal to the population, such as through ordinary members of the public explaining how they practically are facing some of the challenges in post-conflict northern Uganda. This information will also largely be delivered through partners indigenous to northern Uganda to further enhance local structures, such as the public, traditional or religious leadership, in the accurate delivery of public information. We also recommend that those individuals with success stories become leaders for training courses for ex-combatants during the Reinsertion Program organized by the Amnesty Commission, prior to returning to their communities. This will be an early intervention within the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program envisaged for ex-combatants under the Juba process (once it is concluded) in order to inspire and prepare the ex-combatants for the reintegration process.

Recruit a team of interns through the University of Gulu Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), to assist in the delivery of conflict management, mitigation and conflict sensitivity programming (I.R. 1.4). This team will be used primarily for the design, delivery, and evaluation of training and related technical support to local governmental officials, traditional, religious, and community leaders.

2.2 Economic Security

The overall economic situation in northern Uganda is dire and, as previously stated, the incidence of poverty matches those areas that have been most affected by the LRA conflict. Data compiled by the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics shows that the districts of Kitgum, northern and eastern Pader, and northern Amuru are among the poorest areas in the most impacted sub-region of Acholiland (See Map: Relative Poverty, Annex G). The length and intensity of the LRA conflict, with its mass displacements, have resulted in this horrendous pattern of economic degeneration, which is widely cited as one of the main negative consequences of the conflict.



2.2.1 FINDINGS

Opportunities exist to draw producers into commercial value chains by linking to processors on the border of Acholiland (I.R. 2.1). The findings of a recent UNDP study (2007)⁵ as well as SWAY I & II (2007, 2008)⁶ reconfirmed that cultivating land is the single most significant economic activity and has the highest potential for increasing the level of employment and incomes in northern Uganda. Accordingly, we intend to focus our economic interventions in a number of agricultural sub-sectors. However, there is a lack of capability to manage the processes of production, harvesting and post harvest technology, leading to high yield crop losses and low yields. There exist very low levels of horticultural crop production and processing; much of the vegetables and fruits consumed come from Mbale, Masindi, and Luwero. There is a lack of food processing capacity north of Lira, due to a lack of investment during the years of conflict. There are no direct market linkages between the farmers/producers and the end users and processors, thus the middlemen on occasion exploit the farmers.

There are a few examples of linkages to markets (groups of farmers sell cotton to major firms like Dunavant), however, we found that there are specific agriculture sub-sectors with ongoing value addition, processing and marketing activities which offer opportunities for developing such linkages. These sub-sectors and activities include:

- Rice production, processing and marketing in Gulu, Amuru, and Lira
- Sun flower production and milling, principally in Lira and Oyam
- Shea production, shea butter processing, and marketing, including packaged products sold to supermarkets in all 6 of the most impacted districts
- Stimulating surplus production for agricultural staple crops, including ground nuts, beans, simsim, millet, maize, pigeon pea, soya beans, rice, sunflower, pineapple, and sorghum in all six of the most impacted districts, to respond to newly identified national and regional markets
- Honey production, processing and marketing in all six of the most impacted districts
- Raising livestock for market in all six of the most impacted districts
- Commercial fish farming in all six of the most impacted districts
- Dairy farming in all six of the most impacted districts with limited milk processing in Gulu district.

In all of these locations, constraints exist which prevent the vertical and horizontal linkages to occur in the value chain which would transform the production of those crops into sustainable productive enterprises for communities across northern Uganda.

The farmers have poor access to timely and accurate market information. The Acholi Private Sector Development Corporation presently provides market information, but the organization was found to be rather moribund. Information is provided too infrequently and the organization needs better information collection and distribution mechanisms. A SPRING grant could provide support for developing the Corporation, which would in turn, meet the information needs of both staple crop producers and participants in commercial value chains. Rudimentary but effective market information distribution mechanisms that have worked in other East African countries could be employed. In Zambia, representatives in each village receive a text message with commodity prices daily and the updated prices are posted in public places in the village using chalk on a large wooden board.

In order for developments to take place along a value chain, it is usual for private sector firms to be in a position to enter into collaborative arrangements with farmers in a group. A number of government and development agency strategies offering extension services to the community also adopt a similar method of working through farmer groups. This allows for the provision of services such as input supply, extension services, and credit, by private firms to replace

⁵ UNDP, Republic of Uganda, 2007. *Returning to Uncertainty, Assessing Vulnerability in northern Uganda*, http://www.undp.org/cpr/iasc/content/docs/Dec07_Links/Doc_6.pdf

⁶ Jeannie Annan, Chris Blattman, Kristopher Carlson, Dyan Mazurana, *Survey of War Affected Youth*, <http://www.sway-uganda.org/>



those provided by NGOs which have no link to the markets. The incentives for the private sector to provide such services and the private sector's willingness to engage with producers usually depend upon the type of agreement reached with farmers. In our experience, both contracts where the price is fixed on the basis of season-long average and contracts where prices are set at the prevailing price at the time of harvest are more effective, than alternatives.

During the assessment a number of producer associations were identified, that offer models on how to organize farmers for their mutual benefit, some of which include vulnerable groups. There are a number of regional associations organized for the production of cash crops, including dairy and cotton, as well as village-based microfinance. There are substantial opportunities for the formation of additional farmer groups. One way in which to accomplish this is to reorient local and international NGOs to a more developmental approach when they work with farmers. Humanitarian agencies typically support vulnerable communities with livelihood programs without giving due consideration to the impact of marketing on the overall level and sustainability of economic development. Most communities now rely on repeated annual distributions of seeds and other regular inputs from the aid community, a trend typical of the dependency culture that has taken root in northern Uganda. Communities therefore no longer attach a monetary value to these inputs; this has an enduring negative impact on market structures and on the commercial behavior of farmers.

In contrast to these general findings, we did find that the activities of some agencies namely CRS, Oxfam, Save the Children in Uganda, ACF, World Vision and NRC, which include seed fairs and farmer field days create market opportunities for farmers in the community. There is also significant capacity to redirect NGO efforts from provision of inputs to facilitation of group formation in order that farmers may be organized to enter into supply contracts with processors or wholesalers. Through the SPRING grant fund system incentives could be provided to NGOs to develop new programs in this direction.

Stimulate growing surplus staple crops for food markets in southern Sudan, West Nile sub-region, southern and central regions in Uganda (I.R. 2.1). The challenge of clearing the land which has become overgrown during the years of the conflict exacerbates the need for injections of new tools into the agriculture sector. Only a few farmers own or have access to funds to hire ox-ploughs and oxen. The majority of the population uses traditional labor-intensive methods of farming (using hand tools such as a hoe). The use of these methods contributes to low levels of household productivity of staple crops. The ability to produce non-staple products aimed at more distant markets is highly constrained by this pattern of production. The present state of the agricultural sector in the six most highly impacted districts is the main economic consequence of the LRA conflict. Conversely, the present peace in northern Uganda represents a significant opportunity for rapid economic recovery in the agriculture sector. Despite these obstacles to production, farmers have already begun to expand production of crops, including maize, groundnuts, simsim, millet, rice, pigeon peas, and beans. As farmers begin second, third, or other subsequent growing seasons since the cessation of hostilities, the opportunities to grow a surplus beyond their own household level of subsistence are increasing. Therefore this is the right time to support farmers in such endeavors. This assessment found there is an opportunity for growth in the production of the following crops in the six districts impacted by the conflict, as follows:

- Amuru district by sub-county: Anaka (rice, ground nuts , sugar cane), Amuru (groundnuts and rice), Goma (beans, cassava, groundnuts), Pabbo (Rice), Atiak (simsim and peas), Alero (groundnuts and beans), and Lamogi (groundnuts) sub-counties
- Kitgum district by sub-county: Lukong (simsim, sunflower and millet) and Agoro (sugarcane, rice pineapple, maize, ground nuts , vegetables and beans) sub-counties
- Oyam district by sub-county: Loro (pineapple), Minakulu , Loro and Ngai (sunflower) sub-counties
- Pader district by sub-county: Patongo (shea nuts, sunflower), Acholibur (Sunflower, Shea nuts, millet, maize, and pea), Puranga (shea nuts) sub-counties
- Gulu district by sub-county: Lakwana and Lalogi sub-counties (sunflower)
- Lira district by sub-county: Okwang, Adwari, and Orum sub-counties (sunflower and upland rice).



2.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Target a few sub-counties in six districts, Amuru, Pader, Lira, Gulu, Oyam, and Kitgum. Many of which are on the borders between communities at the sub-regional level. By supporting sets of activities which can help to form farmer groups and which engage processors in the region, we can stimulate the private sector to link directly with farmers, thereby giving them profitable outlets for their products. The findings of this assessment identified the following areas for work where SPRING can have maximum impact in the economic sector. Map 4 shows the interventions for this component.

Northern Amuru — Pabbo, Atiak sub-counties: In northern Amuru, there has been a relatively low rate of return of IDPs from the camps partly due to the prevalence of mines and partly due to the fact that this was one of the areas most heavily impacted during the conflict. Those mines have now been cleared for the most part. The APEP project began demonstration plots in upland rice production in the region and SPRING can usefully replicate the successes of this project. This will also allow SPRING to leverage impact from the previous USAID investments in this location. There are a few pineapple demonstration plots with links to markets in Sudan, which can be further developed and cultivation expanded into other proximate locations. Furthermore, there is the potential to develop related sustainable enterprises to support the pineapple or rice producers, including land clearance services such as oxen or tractors, harvesting and husking, weeding, and thinning and provision of fertilizers. Each of these can create employment for vulnerable groups not linked directly to land.

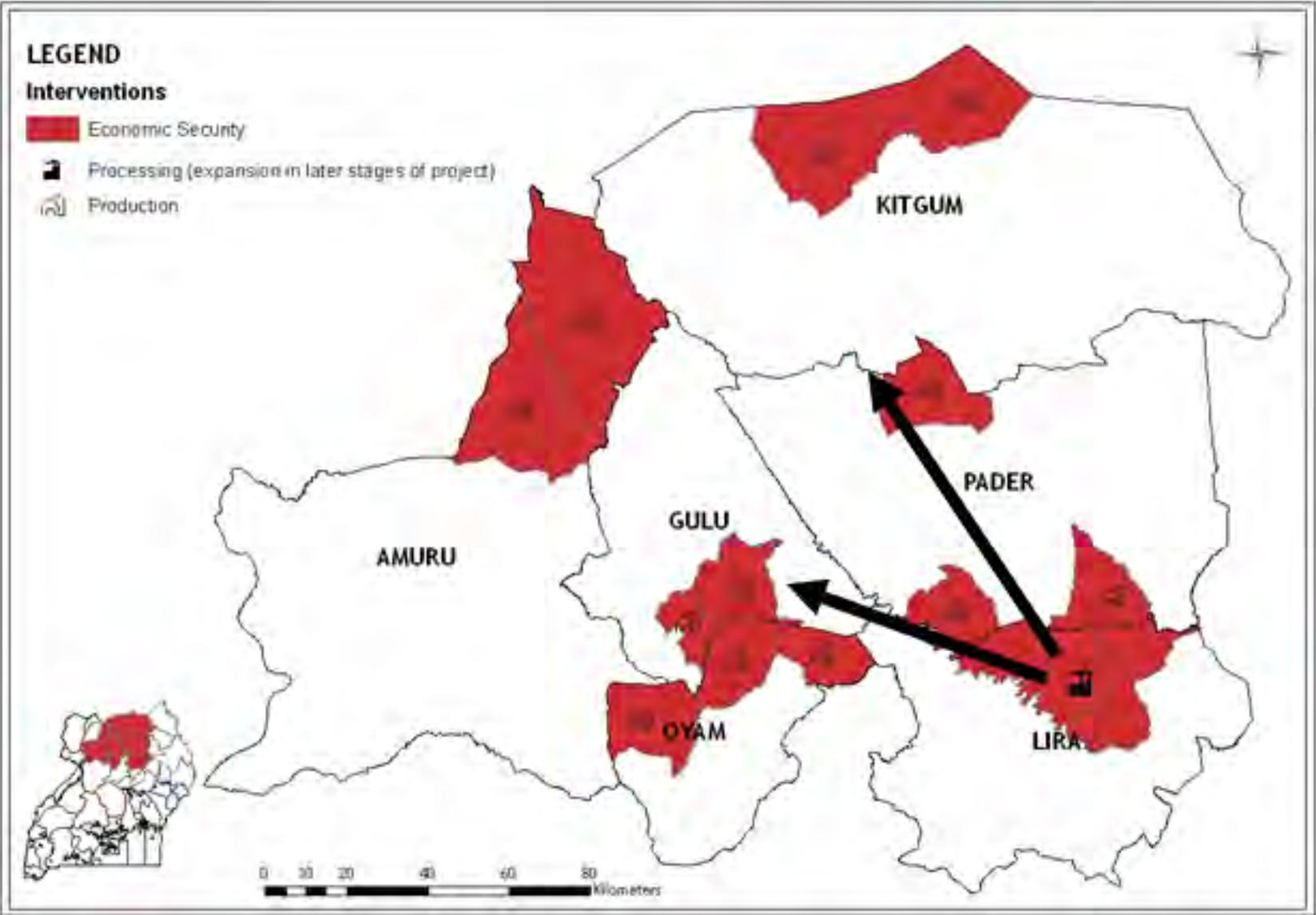
Pader — Patongo, Acholibur, and Puranga sub-counties and Northern Lira — Okwang, Adwari, and Orum sub-counties: We propose to encourage the facilitation of cross-community contractual agreements between producer groups within the Acholi community in Southern Pader and processors in the Lango communities of Lira, particularly for sunflower and simsim. Oilseed processors have been identified in Lira that are in need of additional suppliers. The LRA conflict led to the displacement of the majority of processing from the Acholi to Lango sub-regions. SPRING is well placed to support the building of the necessary confidence between these two communities to this end. This could then be used at an appropriate time as a model for communities in eastern Pader that are presently suffering from the ongoing conflict related to the Karamoja sub-region. The linking of sunflower producers in Pader to oilseed processors in Lira has the immediate benefit of processing taking place closer to the point of production. A number of production groups have already been formed in southern Pader among community members that have returned over the last year, and many are interested in expanding from staple crops into crops with a greater commercial potential. A number of active youth-based peace groups will be incorporated into these activities, such as the youth group in Acholibur called *Bedo l camp tek* meaning “It’s hard to live in the camp”. This particular group includes formerly abducted youth as members and hence will directly contribute to enhanced social inclusion. This group already has begun to produce sunflower and are eager for support and improvements to their access to markets. A large number of youth have been away from the land and many have no understanding of agriculture, so activities such as non-formal or vocational training are necessary to enhance support for commercial value chains and staple crop production. This training will include skills in grading and oilseed crushing at the farm level. SPRING will also establish links with existing vocational training institutions to enhance their current curriculum.

Oyam — Ngai, Minakulu, and Otwal sub-counties and Southern Gulu — Lakwana and Lalogi sub-counties: There has been a high rate of return and well organized community groups are already in existence. Similar to the program in southern Pader and north Lira, links can be facilitated with oilseed processors. This will build upon the progress in economic recovery that has already taken place. There are characteristics of the area which indicate its potential for maximum impact: SPRING’s partner AVSI has a well established presence in Opit Camp and the Oyam district authorities are supportive to use this oilseed linkage model as demonstration of livelihood enhancement that can be replicated in other sub-counties in Oyam district.

The community also indicated they would be interested in a SPRING intervention to model bee keeping as part of a livelihoods intervention to target women and disabled. This work will be further complemented by the pilot community policing work and cultural and sport exchanges planned between the Acholi and Lango communities in this area.



Map 4: SPRING Interventions — Economic Security





Kitgum — Agoro, and Lukung sub-counties: There is an established group of farmers in this community with a strong interest in hot chili production, which SPRING proposes to support. The project will assist in the identification of food processing and packaging companies with links to the retail sector to provide a more assured market for this chili production initiative.

Promote growing surplus staple crops in more remote sub-counties of Kitgum, Pader, and Amuru to bring more economic opportunity to marginalized groups: Once farmers are able to clear more land and produce more rounds of staple crops, production will increase. SPRING can support the farmers' ability to monetize this surplus in staple crops through improved access to well established markets in the region with growing levels of demand, such as South Sudan. SPRING will undertake further research on the markets in Sudan, West Nile, and Kampala and, based on these market surveys, identify three or four of these sub-counties as pilots for staple crop expansion. We will base our choice, in part, on those sub-counties that are close to other value chain activities, described above. We propose facilitating links with these markets by funding activities which support crop production techniques, including timing of production and provision of seeds for appropriate varieties, as well as assistance in development of storage facilities.

All groups we work with will receive training in group dynamics; market information; orientation of production groups to marketing groups; marketing training around a specific product; accessing and using market information which will be disseminated using posters; text messages; and radio.

Later in the project, we also propose to uncover additional opportunities to encourage economic activities in these six districts. There is some possibility that due to environmental degradation to already arid climate conditions in eastern sub-counties of Pader and Kitgum, along the Karamoja border, we may have to consider development of non-agricultural livelihoods. We will run a competitive process in which grant proposals will focus on soliciting the communities' own ideas about economic opportunities. While we anticipate SPRING will have to work with applicants to expand project concepts, we believe that this will be an effective way of including marginalized groups.

2.3 Access to Justice

Access to justice is generally interpreted broadly, encompassing more than just one's ability to appear before a judge and jury.⁷ It includes the existence of legal remedies to conflicts and disputes (e.g., international and constitutional law; customary norms and laws), the capacity of individuals to *seek* legal remedies, and the capacity of formal and informal legal systems to *provide* legal remedies.⁸ SPRING will support interventions that address the second and third components: individual and institutional capacity.

In order to seek legal remedies, complainants must have some awareness of laws and their legal rights, the ability to seek legal counsel, and the ability to access formal and informal justice systems (e.g., pay court-related fees, transportation). At the same time, a formal or informal justice system can only provide complainants with legal remedies if it has the capacity to adjudicate cases (e.g., judicial personnel, infrastructure) and to enforce laws and customs (e.g., police, elders, and prisons).

SPRING assessed both the individual and institutional barriers that limit access to justice, focusing specifically on legal aid, existing dispute resolution mechanisms, and people's awareness of legal rights.

2.3.1 FINDINGS

Institutional Barriers:

Capacity of Legal System to Adjudicate Cases (IR 3.1). Years of civil war and displacement have greatly impaired the functioning of the formal and traditional legal systems, from the High Courts in Gulu and Lira to the more than 4,500 Local Council Courts (Sub-County, Parish, and Village)⁹ in SPRING's six priority districts.¹⁰ The assessment identified

⁷ Vera Institute of Justice (2003). *Measuring Progress toward Safety and Justice: A Global Guide to the Design of Performance Indicators across the Justice Sector*. <http://www.vera.org/indicators>

⁸ Sudarshan, R. (2003). *Rule of Law and Access to Justice: Perspectives from UNDP Experience*. <http://www.undp.org/>

⁹ Government of Uganda (2007). *Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan for Northern Uganda: 2007 to 2010*.



a multitude of institutional needs at all levels that ranged from stationary and legal references to personnel and infrastructure.

In particular, we learned that the Local Council Courts have significant needs and represent an opportunity for SPRING to intervene at the community level. Though the functioning of this system has deteriorated throughout the course of the war, it remains the primary source of justice for most community members. Thus, SPRING interventions have the potential for a meaningful impact on people's access to justice at a local level.

SPRING conducted phone interviews with representatives of 63 sub-counties and collected information about the LC3 (Sub-County) and LC1 (Village) Courts (Table 2).¹¹ When asked to list the challenges facing the LC3 Courts, 79% of respondents mentioned that court committee members are not well trained, which often leads to rulings based on personal convictions rather than Ugandan law. One third of respondents highlighted a need for legal reference materials to guide court decisions. Similar patterns were observed for the LC1 Courts, with a notable exception in the high rate of perceived corruption (38%), which respondents linked to a perceived lack of legitimacy (overdue elections) and lack of training (65%).¹²

Sub-county representatives indicated that the traditional judicial structure is also a significant influence on Acholi society and an important source of justice, especially in land matters. Elders are commonly relied upon to help resolve boundary disputes, reconcile parties to minor conflicts, and provide guidance to communities. And while this system is seen as useful, there is a perceived need to better understand how traditional and formal legal systems should interact. This appears to be less of an issue in the Lango and Teso sub-regions, however, because informants indicated that most issues are handled by the LC court system rather than traditional legal mechanisms.

Table 2: Challenges Facing Local Council Courts

Challenge	LC3 (%) ¹³	LC1 (%)
Lack of training	79	65
Lack of allowances/motivation	51	48
Transport to court and/or incident site	46	12
Lack of office space/materials	44	47
Lack of stationary	38	22
Other	34	27
Lack of legal reference materials	33	17
Lack of legitimacy	20	37
Lack of court committee members	15	13
No show of plaintiffs/defendants	10	5
Corruption or bias	5	38

¹⁰ Evidence of this impairment is the current ratio of remands to convicts in the prison population. According to the Prisons Department for Northern Uganda, 69% of the prison population in the first week of March 2008 was remanded pending trial. Pre-trial detention is considered by the Vera Institute of Justice to be a good proxy indicator for access to justice because it reflects the collective functioning of several institutions (e.g., courts, law enforcement).

¹¹ Members of the assessment team also met with representatives of 12 LC2 (Parish) Courts.

¹² Considering that LC3 representatives were the respondents, the Corruption/Bias rate of 5% of the LC3 Court (compared to 41% of the LC1) might be low.

¹³ Percentages do not sum to 100% because respondents could identify more than one challenge.



Limited capacity to Enforce Laws/Customs (IR 3.1). Law enforcement is another important component of a legal institution's ability to provide justice. In northern Uganda, this entity has also suffered as a result of protracted conflict and displacement. In general, our interviews suggest that there is a lack of understanding about the roles of the various law enforcement entities, such as Special Police Constables, and their relationship to the larger justice system. This confusion extends to the local communities who tend to view the police with a sense of mistrust. Additionally, law enforcement entities also face significant institutional limitations related to insufficient funds. In some circumstances, victims are required to pay facilitation fees (e.g., the costs of transport) to ensure that justice is provided. Additionally, now that people are moving out of centralized camps that are easier to patrol, police struggle to provide adequate services to outlying villages where robbery and theft is perceived to be a source of future conflict.

Individual Barriers:

Access to Formal and Informal Legal Systems (IR 3.1). In discussions with community members outside of the town centers, travel costs were often cited as a reason for not accessing the High Courts and, to a lesser extent, the LC3 Courts. While not formalized or standardized across the districts and sub-counties, court fees were also mentioned as a barrier to access. At the local level especially, a lack of compensation from the government leads court committee members to charge "facilitation" or "sitting" fees. Often, community members are not willing to pay such fees to LC1 Courts because they do not perceive these bodies to be legitimate.

Access to Legal Aid (IR 3.1). Non-governmental organizations such as Human Rights Focus (HURIFO), Norwegian Refugee Council, and the Justice and Peace Commission have been training human rights volunteers (quasi-paralegals) across the North for several years. (See the map illustrating the geographic distribution of HURIFO paralegals in Annex G.) In general, there is a greater need for additional volunteers in Gulu and Amuru compared with other districts when population size is considered. This is, however, a relative need. On average, there is only 1 HURIFO "paralegal" for every 2,700 people per sub-county.

Awareness of Legal Rights (IR 3.2). Through a series of community consultations, it became apparent that a significant portion of the populace lacks a clear understanding of their basic human rights, including the right to seek legal remedies, and gender based rights such as freedom from domestic violence.

Another major gap in collective knowledge is the issue of land rights. This is an important area for intervention as land has become a sensitive issue in the North because of prolonged displacement. For instance, when asked to describe the most recent conflict, 80% of the sub-county representatives interviewed said land. More than 90% indicated that land was also a potential source of future conflict. Commonly cited reasons for recent and future land conflict were unclear boundaries, the need to reclaim occupied land, and lack of knowledge about land laws.

2.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the results suggest that there is a significant lack of both community awareness about legal procedures and basic rights – the ability to seek justice – and the capacity of the existing formal and informal legal systems to provide justice. While these needs, and the resources to address them, vary across the different sub-counties, meaningful variability is hard to detect because individual and institutional capacity to seek or provide justice, respectively, is very low across all of SPRING's priority districts.

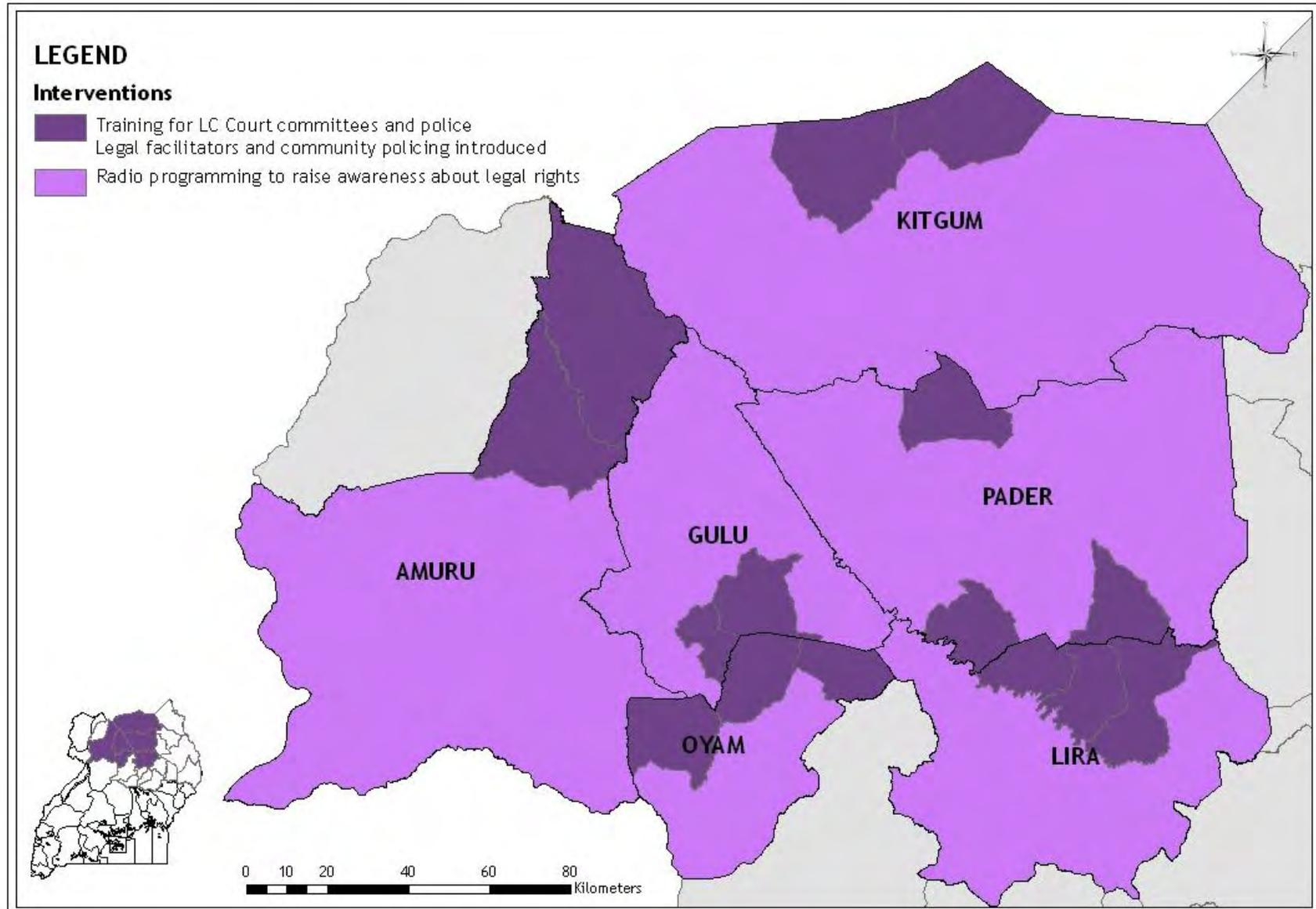
Therefore, it is recommended that SPRING co-locate its Access to Justice interventions with other SPRING technical components, at least in the first year (see Map 5). This will facilitate quick start up and efficiency in the use of project resources such as transport and staff, thereby allowing SPRING to achieve maximum organizational impact. Lessons learned from these initial interventions will enable SPRING to identify opportunities to expand the reach of the project to other areas of the North.

Addressing Institutional Barriers:

Increasing Capacity of Legal System to Adjudicate Cases (IR 3.1). To address the opinion held by a majority of sub-county representatives that LC3 and LC1 Court committee members are not sufficiently trained in legal procedures, constitutional law, and customary law, SPRING will partner with Legal Aid Project, Law Development Centre, and ACORD to develop training materials on various legal issues such as the Local Council Court Act of 2006, land law, human rights law, and family law. These materials will be used to train Local Council Court committees in several sub-counties to be more effective and grounded in Ugandan law. Through these efforts, SPRING will



Map 5: SPRING Interventions — Access to Justice





reinvigorate dysfunctional, inefficient, and idle Local Council Courts, thereby providing the public with more outlets for seeking justice.

Increasing Capacity to Enforce Laws/Customs (IR 3.1). There is a demonstrated need for community sensitization and police training on the role of different law enforcement entities and their relationship to the justice system. SPRING will work with its partner agencies to train police on proper procedure and their role in the larger legal system. SPRING will also create and disseminate informational material about the role of the police to sensitize the community.

To address the need to build trust in the police, SPRING will work with local communities to select from the community a “legal facilitator” and train that individual on legal matters and methods for effectively liaising between the police and the community. This person will serve as a community counterpart to police Community Liaison Officers.

In addition, to help meet the security needs of this transitioning post-conflict society, SPRING will work through its partners to establish community Crime Prevention Panels to serve a monitoring role and expand the reach of law enforcement as people move out of centralized camps. Baker (2004) reports on several examples of successful Crime Prevention Panels in other regions of the country.¹⁴

Addressing Individual Barriers:

Increasing Access to Formal and Informal Legal Systems (IR 3.1). While SPRING will not be able to address the financial barriers people face in accessing the Local Council Court system, particularly at the LC 1 level, it will be able to support initiatives to improve the functioning and perceived legitimacy of the courts, thereby encouraging the public to seek justice and respect court rulings. This is outlined further in the section on improving the capacity of the legal system (above) and the section on increasing individuals’ awareness of legal rights (below).

Increasing Access to Legal Aid (IR 3.1). While other organizations are training human rights volunteers and quasi-paralegals, the need remains great. SPRING will partner with grantees to train additional volunteers and develop an outreach project to inform people about the legal aid services available in their community.

This project will introduce legal facilitators in the selected communities shown on Map 5 as the first point of legal advice in the community. They will be trained to understand the points of access to the formal and informal systems. They will be recruited from the community and given training at a basic level about family, land, criminal, and civil law such that they can provide information on each of these to community members and advise on alternative ways to resolve conflicts or legal/human rights matters.

Increasing Awareness of Legal Rights (IR 3.2). In addition to these efforts to increase legal awareness through the training and deployment of legal facilitators, SPRING will also design radio programming to reach a broader audience. StraightTalk, SPRING’s implementing partner, will lead this design and dissemination effort.

2.4 Cross-Cutting Themes

2.4.1 A SUMMARY OF NEEDS RELATED TO YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Importance: War and prolonged displacement have defined the lives the younger generation. Though resilience is the norm, the conflict has taken a toll. Many youth are without livelihood opportunities or the ability to pursue a formal education, especially at the secondary or post-secondary level. Yet youth are eager for opportunities.

To meet this need and have a positive impact on a demographic experiencing several important life transitions (e.g., into adulthood, out of camps, into post-conflict period), SPRING will incorporate youth and education throughout its programming. For instance, cultural events related to Peace and Reconciliation interventions will work with youth peace clubs. We also propose to partner with vocational schools to train youth in business support services to match occupational training with the needs of commercial value chains as well as directly with youth groups such as *Bedo l camp tek* in Acholibur to bring them into the agricultural sector.

¹⁴ Baker (2004). *Post-conflict policing: Lessons from Uganda 18 years on*. <http://www.jha.ac/articles/a138.htm>



In the next few weeks, an expert on youth and education, with years of managerial experience at AVSI, will join the SPRING team to contribute to planning for the implementation stage.

Being Inclusive Without Being Exclusive: A reality of this conflict, often overlooked by humanitarian agencies, is that all youth have been affected, not just the formerly abducted, ex-combatants, orphans, or young mothers. Yet it is common for people, youth in particular, to be identified as beneficiaries because of their status as a member of one of these groups, rather than any demonstrated needs. Recent research conducted by the Survey of War Affected Youth¹⁵, an AVSI partner, challenges the utility of this conventional approach. Their findings suggest that targeting based on broad categories does not necessarily reach the most vulnerable members of a community or those with the greatest needs.

In addition to being ineffective, this approach can actually have negative effects. For example, programs that limit enrollment to ex-combatants may promote stigmatization and hinder efforts to support community reintegration. Similarly, targeting formerly abducted youth for economic assistance in a community devastated by years of conflict can lead to resentment as most people displaced from their homes have legitimate needs.

For these reasons, SPRING and its partner agencies will generally avoid using broad categories of “need,” like formerly abducted youth, when identifying beneficiaries. Rather, SPRING will base decisions on demonstrated need. However, as certain characteristics, such as orphan status, are associated with increased risk of vulnerability and marginalization, SPRING will seek to ensure that individuals with relevant risk factors are considered for participation in program activities and assessed for need.

2.4.2 A SUMMARY OF NEEDS RELATED TO LAND CONFLICT

The right of land tenure is currently a major issue which will have impact on peace and on economic security in northern Uganda. Tenure also is a key area of work for the justice sector as traditional and government leaders review the laws on customary tenure and examine ways in which the traditional and statutory systems can work in harmony. The uncertainties regarding the outcome and impact of the current Land Bill under consideration in Parliament contribute to instability.

Individual clans have put out announcements by radio mobilizing clan members to go and demarcate the boundaries of what they call *ngom kwaro*, their ancestral land. Some of the announcements threaten non-clan members to leave the land and desist from grazing, cutting grasses, and harvesting wood fuel, building materials, or wild honey. These kinds of clan threats, as well as general misconceptions about tenure and land rights, have caused some panic among the population and resulted in several new challenges, such as:

- Violations of land rights as more powerful wealthy individuals with political backing, or unscrupulous cultural leaders of larger more powerful clans taking advantage of the confusion, grab large chunks of land
- Committing of crimes like malicious damage to property and grievous bodily harm by residents fearful of land seizure
- Confusion about land tenure rights among non-clan members who had settled and co-existed on those particular lands before displacement into IDP camps

During our interviews, we were told of examples of this type in Amuru district, sub-counties like Koch Goma, Aleor, Atiak, Pabbo and Purungo as well as in Pader sub-counties like Wol, Lira Palwo, and Paimol. We think that we can extrapolate from these anecdotes to state that the problem is prevalent throughout northern Uganda and this was confirmed from our sub county phone interviews.

SPRING assessment team members were told that a higher potential for land disputes exists in Pader and Amuru due to the long duration of stay in IDP camps and that the participation of traditional leaders in resolution is critical. The customary knowledge that directed people regarding their boundaries and land ownership has since been lost. The young generation often cannot identify their land. Their alternative, consequently, is to request the support of clan leaders, who may be ignorant of the law. Furthermore, land matters which are brought through the formal justice

¹⁵ Cf. pg. 8.



system at the High Court may also be referred to traditional justice mechanism. The Civil Procedure Rules (CPR) Order 12 provides for mediation as an alternative dispute resolution that is accepted by court. Here customary interests come into play; cultural leaders are used to settling these cases.

Because of the urgent nature of the land issue, first SPRING will focus on expanding the number of land disputes that can be settled quickly. Then SPRING will tackle some of the larger systemic changes related to demarcation and government ownership of land in the medium to longer term.

In particular, we recommend that SPRING:

- Launch a campaign through a suitable intermediary to sensitize and train communities on the rights to land and the appropriate options they have for settling disputes in selected pilot areas
- Focus on upgrading skills and understanding of land issues within the traditional and formal systems such that all parties are familiar with the existing laws and how they can be applied to rapid solutions in the jurisdictions related to the pilot areas above

3 CONCLUSION

3.1 SPRING Office Locations

We recommend that SPRING locate field officers in three locations, but will have five areas of focus. Our proposed selection is based upon both the geographical location of program activities at the sub-county level and the availability of existing SPRING or AVSI office infrastructure. As highlighted earlier in the report, the in-depth interventions are clustered around the following areas:

- Cluster 1: Southern Pader and Northern Lira
- Cluster 2: Southern Gulu and Northern Oyam
- Cluster 3: Northern Pader
- Cluster 4: Northern Kitgum
- Cluster 5: Northern Amuru

We recommend that an office in Lira town cover Cluster 1 activities and work with the processors in Lira related to the all other clusters. The second and fifth clusters will be covered directly from the Gulu office as this is relatively close to the main SPRING office and the Field Officer can be well supported from the headquarters. The third cluster is not as intense level of activity as the other clusters and can therefore be covered from Kitgum together with the fourth cluster. Therefore the Field Officers covering all three components of SPRING, who will be the main point of contact for ongoing assessments, directly implementing activities and managing grant projects, will be located as follows:

- Gulu – SPRING Headquarters (Clusters 2 and 5)
- Kitgum – AVSI Field Office (Clusters 3 and 4)
- Lira – Office location to be determined (Cluster 1 and support to activities related to processing)

3.2 Next Steps

Once USAID has authorized us to proceed, we will communicate the criteria and recommendations contained in this report to relevant stakeholders. First, we will hold bilateral discussions with each of the districts, following up on the several consultative meetings held during the assessment, to commence the negotiation of the Memoranda of Understanding. After, to ensure transparency and to manage the expectations of both the beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities, we will hold official launch events, publishing the information in the local media as part of the official launch of SPRING.

Throughout the implementation process, we propose to interact with related programs of USAID, other development partners, the GoU, and civil society including direct coordination with the District Peace Forums – the key institution



| for stabilization programs—in accordance with the Memoranda of Understanding concluded with each district. The Peace and Reconciliation component will develop formal mechanisms with all other USAID programs in northern Uganda in order to deliver the required mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity. The economic component will also develop close linkages with the economic projects, in particular LEAD. Additionally, the newly announced OTI projects will be an important link to allow SPRING to expand some of its communication and institutional strengthening goals. The project will also maintain contacts with key bodies in Kampala, including the Office of the Prime Minister, the Amnesty Commission, USAID, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.