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Stability Peace and Reconciliation In Northern Uganda (SPRING)

CONFLICT AND RECOVERY BRIEFING REPORT No. 6

1 October 2009 – 31 March 2010



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**SPRING: STABILITY, PEACE, AND RECONCILIATION IN NORTHERN
UGANDA**

&

THE GREAT LAKES CENTRE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION (GLACCR)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BTVET	Business Technical Vocational Education Training
CAR	Central African Republic
CMC	Collective Marketing Committee
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSM	Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GLACCR	The Great Lakes Center for Conflict Resolution
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IR	Intermediate Result
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NFA	National Forestry Authority
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda
SPRING	Stabilization Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda
UGX	Ugandan Shillings
UPDF	Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association

1.0 BACKGROUND

For the last two decades northern Uganda has experienced violent armed conflicts which have had devastating impacts on the population. The protracted conflict between the government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has killed tens of thousands of civilians, led to abduction and recruitment of as many as 38,000 children¹, and has seen gross human rights violations by the armed forces. The conflict displaced more than 1.8 million people into internally displaced persons' camps throughout northern Uganda and parts of West Nile and Eastern Uganda for more than a decade².

In June 2006, the government of Uganda and the LRA entered peace negotiations which presented an optimistic chance for peaceful resolution of the conflicts. Although the Juba Peace Talks failed to produce a signed final agreement, the talks ushered in relative peace in northern Uganda and more than 85% of internally displaced persons (IDP) living in camps have returned to their homes.³

The relative peace has seen humanitarian agencies and government changing their strategies and priorities from humanitarian to recovery and development interventions. The government of Uganda has developed a three year⁴ *Peace Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda* (PRDP) as a framework for recovery and development of northern Uganda. Development partners including the USAID-funded Stability, Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda (SPRING) Project have designed recovery and development interventions within the PRDP framework with focus on areas where internally displaced persons are returning.

1.1 SPRING PROJECT

SPRING is a three year (2008-2010) USAID funded stabilization project designed to mitigate the causes and consequences of conflicts in northern Uganda. SPRING employs an integrated approach to stability by linking supporting economic security and social inclusion, peace and reconciliation, and access to justice activities. SPRING activities are implemented through existing civil society organizations (CSO) and private sector companies, in consultation with District Authorities and in conjunction with the PRDP. SPRING is supporting 26 local and international organizations and companies with a \$3.1 million stability fund to implement activities in six districts of northern Uganda: Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira, and Oyam.

1.2 THE GREAT LAKES CENTER FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Great Lakes Center for Conflict Resolution (GLACCR) is an independent not-for profit and non-governmental organization working for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Uganda. GLACCR was established to address the endemic conflict and security challenges in Uganda and the Great Lakes Region of Africa. GLACCR's current interventions are in northern Uganda which is still emerging from two decades of violent armed conflicts. In northern Uganda, GLACCR is working to

¹ Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations, "Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in northern Uganda," June 2007, p.22.

² Inter-Agency Standing Committee in Uganda, October 2009.

³ United National High Commissioner for Refugees, December 2009 Update on IDPs movement

⁴ PRDP was initially planned for 2007-2010 but it did not kick off until 2008 and has been pushed to end in 2011.

address emerging conflict issues and to consolidate peace in post-conflict northern Uganda. GLACCR's activities focus on the following strategic objectives:

1. Conflict research and policy advocacy;
2. Capacity building for civil society organizations and government institutions;
3. Promotion of cross border peace and reconciliation dialogues;
4. Promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance.

1.3 SPRING Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming (CSM)

In July 2009 SPRING awarded a grant to The Great Lakes Center for Conflict Resolution to mainstream conflict sensitivity into activities of all of SPRING's implementing partners (IPs). The conflict sensitivity mainstreaming project fits within SPRING's Intermediate Result (IR) 1: Ugandan capacity to mitigate conflict and promote peace and reconciliation increased; and IR 2: Conflict sensitivity mainstreamed into US Government programming⁵. The project also fits within the peace and reconciliation objectives of the PRDP.

The overall goal of the *Capacity Building in Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming* Project is to train SPRING's implementing partners (IP), local government structures and institutions in conflict sensitivity mainstreaming. GLACCR will then assist SPRING IPs in incorporating CSM tools into their planning and implementation processes and thus mainstream conflict sensitivity into their programs.

1.4 Conflict & Recovery Briefing Report No. 6

One of SPRING's activities is to provide USAID with regular briefings on conflict risks and dynamics and trends in its area of operation and, where appropriate, to propose activities to reduce tensions, avert conflict or address crises. This Conflict and Recovery Briefing Report is dedicated to publishing the results of a conflict assessment held by SPRING implementing partner Great Lakes Centre for Conflict Resolution (GLACCR). In February 2010, GLACCR held a series of conflict assessments with over 200 participants across the six districts where the SPRING project operates. The assessment collates the opinions of SPRING implementing partners and beneficiaries, as well as local leaders. The SPRING Peace and Human Security Forecast is based on the windows of vulnerability and opportunity as identified by participants. The SPRING Program Forecast presents SPRING's response to the conflict assessments.

⁵ SPRING and GLACCR have also extended capacity building activities in conflict sensitivity mainstreaming to other USAID Grantees

2.0 SPRING PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY FORECAST

CONFLICT	WINDOWS OF VULNERABILITY	WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY
LAND CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside commercial investments without involving local community • Land grabbing by outside investors • Forthcoming elections may exacerbate land conflicts • Multiple land tenure systems • Insensitive media programs on land rights • High population growth rate, especially in Lango sub-region • Inter and Intra-tribal land conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive interventions by stakeholders including cultural institutions • Increased awareness of land rights, policies and documentation • Increased employment opportunities • Continued return of IDPs to their homes • Increased commercial projects (farming, oil etc) that benefit the local community
CROSS- BORDER CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought, especially in Karomoja districts • Creation of new districts, sub-counties and parishes • Continued lawlessness in Southern Sudan • Poor governance in areas along borders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disarmament of people with small arms • Regional cooperation and development initiatives • Cross-border peace and reconciliation dialogues • Cross-cultural exchanges and relationships • Clear demarcation and sensitization on land borders
OIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery of oil in Amuru is likely to increase land conflicts • Unequal resource allocation • Damage to the environment • Confusion over oil industry facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness campaigns to increase knowledge and benefits of oil industry • Local and national employment opportunities • Increased local and national wealth
SOCIAL SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truancy in schools, health centers and other civil servant posts • Poor service delivery leading to poor health • Weak education systems and poor student performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New infrastructure and services in areas of resettlement will finalize return of IDPs • Increased access to medical assistance and schools in rural areas • Improved infrastructure will strengthen economic development
CONFLICT WITH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support targeting former LRA combatants only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from cultural institutions and reconciliation systems

FORMER LRA FIGHTERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of former LRA combatants in active politics • Unemployment for youth in the communities • Continued stigmatization of former LRA combatants by the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive recovery and development programs being implemented in the region • Education & Employment opportunities available to former LRA combatants and vulnerable youth • Psychosocial programs in the communities
POLITICAL & REDISTRICTING CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigging of elections, intimidation and violence in the upcoming general elections • Involvement of state agents & gangs in rigging of elections, violence & intimidation • Uneven ground for competition among political parties • Perceived partisan and incompetent electoral commission • Redistricting along political divides • Capacity deficits in new districts & absenteeism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic education for the electorate • Inter-party cooperation and dialogue • Presence of national and international elections monitors and observers • Increased donor support for democratization and election processes • Devolved power that is in tune with local communities
LEADERSHIP CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High corruption among leaders • Low minimum academic qualifications for elected public officials and local leaders • Poor governance and accountability • Political differences among leaders • Lack of knowledge on roles of different leaders, including elected & technical leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building for leaders on the local government act, the constitution, and other government policies • Parliament to revise minimum qualifications for election to public office • Enforcement of code of conduct and good governance for all public office bearers
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment of women without involvement of men • Gender based violence prevention programs insensitive to local cultural values • Worsening poverty situation in the community • Excessive consumption of alcohol by both men and women • Passage of the domestic relations bill, especially if not supported by men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women empowerment programs that include men and are sensitive to local cultural values • Increased income generation programs inclusive of both women and men • Sensitization and education of the community on gender issues • Increasing roles of cultural institutions in addressing domestic violence • Ban on sales of cheap alcohol in the communities
CULTURAL CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty which makes cultural leaders vulnerable for manipulation • Involvement of cultural leaders in active politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to cultural institutions from civil society organizations • Capacity building of cultural leaders on their roles and development

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education level among cultural leaders is low • Influence of western values and life styles challenges weakening cultural values,, especially for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of young people on the importance and relevance of culture • Documentation of cultural values and norms for dissemination to the community, especially for youth
RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption in the different churches • Opposition to cultural and other religious practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interchurch dialogues and initiatives • Employment opportunities for educated youth • Clear government policies for registration and operations of churches

3.0 THE CONFLICT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A conflict assessment is prerequisite to conflict sensitivity mainstreaming and assists implementing partners in understanding the context in which they implement their stabilization activities. As part of its capacity building activities for SPRING and SPRING implementing partners, GLACCR conducted a conflict assessment in the six districts of Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira, and Oyam in February 2010. The conflict assessment had two goals: 1.) to assist SPRING IPs in their program planning by assessing the current conflict context in northern Uganda, and 2.) to help SPRING IPs put into practice conflict sensitivity mainstreaming activities.

The conflict assessment identified and analyzed conflicts and their causes and dynamics in northern Uganda, and specifically within the districts and sub-counties in which SPRING IPs programs are operating. The conflict assessment report will be used by all SPRING implementing partners as a planning tool to better inform decisions made at all stages of the project cycle: during planning, project start up, and evaluation. It is expected that SPRING implementing partners will periodically update this report according to the changing context in their respective districts and re-design or adjust their stabilization activities accordingly to respond to particular conflict issues in the communities.

Location	# of participants
Amuru	29
Gulu	23
Kitgum	22
Pader	30
Lira	34
Oyam	45
Total	183

3.1 Methodology

The conflict assessments were based on an adaptation of the United States Government's Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF).⁶ Prior to this conflict assessment, USAID/SPRING and GLACCR conducted a series of trainings for USAID and its partners on conflict sensitivity mainstreaming and the ICAF was used as a key training tool. The ICAF conflict assessment process was adapted for community-based conflict assessments.

⁶ U.S. Government Inter-agency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) was published in July 2008

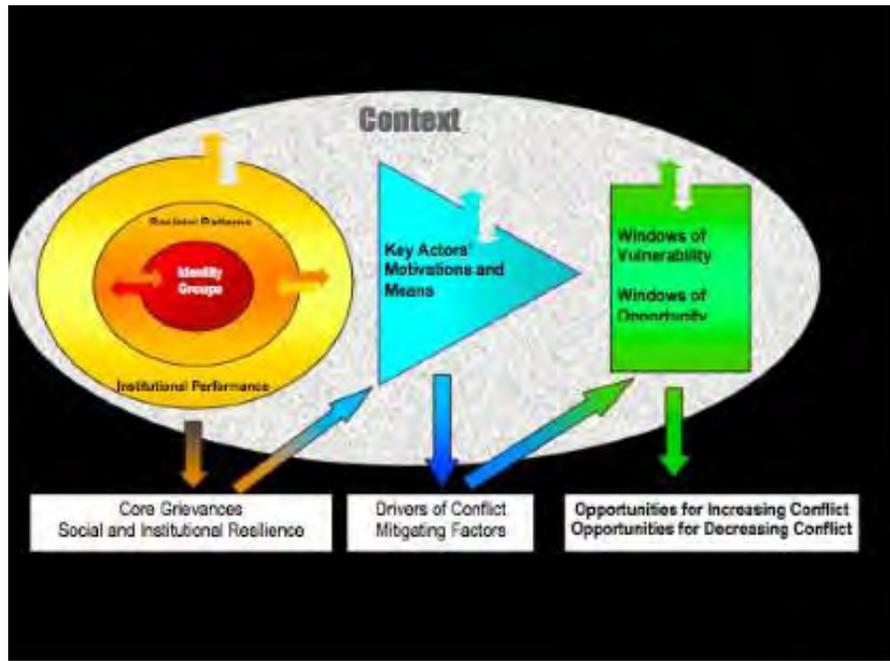


Figure 1: ICAF Conceptual Framework for Diagnosing Conflict

A one day workshop was conducted in each of the six districts where SPRING stabilization activities are being implemented. The workshop was organized as follows:

- Introduction to conflict assessment
- Profiling the district and sub-counties
- Identifying and prioritizing conflict
- Determining causes and actors
- Determining windows of vulnerability and opportunity.

Each workshop consisted of 30-35 participants from the respective districts comprising SPRING farmer groups⁷, staff of SPRING implementing partners, Sub-county Chiefs, Parish Chiefs, representatives of District Peace Fora, Community Development Officers, and youth leaders from the communities. Participants were invited to a conflict assessment in the district where they work and live. Participants were selected because they have adequate knowledge of conflict issues in their communities.

3.2 Limitations

A major limitation to the conflict assessment was the availability of district leaders to participate in the assessment workshop, particularly in Gulu District. However, the leaders from sub-counties and parishes fully participated in the assessment exercises.

⁷ SPRING works with economic security implementing partners that work directly with 276 farmer groups (8,275 farmers) and 33 collective marketing committees to increase production and marketing of commercially viable staple crops.

Another limitation was time. The conflict assessment was carried out at the time when other project activities were ongoing. Thus a decision was made to truncate the assessment to one day and address major conflict themes in specific geographic areas. Since the secondary objective was to instruct participants on how to conduct a conflict assessment, focus on these conflict assessments was on identifying current trends broadly with minimal group analysis. Nevertheless, much data was collected and the results provide key observations of the current context in northern Uganda consistent with more comprehensive research.

4.0 CONFLICT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following is a summary of views and analysis expressed by participants in the GLACCR conflict assessments. The findings from all six assessments are collated and summarized. Specific examples from several geographic locations are cited.

4.1 DISTRICT AND SUB-COUNTY PROFILES OF ACHOLI AND LANGO SUB-REGIONS

4.1.1 Land and the Return Process

85% of the displaced persons have now returned to their homes⁸. The people still remaining in camps are mainly vulnerable people such as elderly, widows, orphans and those with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses. Individuals who over the years prospered in small scale businesses have also remained in camps to continue with their businesses.

Land in northern Uganda is primarily owned under customary tenure, which is one of the recognized tenure systems in the 1995 Constitution of Uganda and Land Act of 1998 as amended. In the Acholi sub-region, over 90% of the land is customarily owned, which means decisions on its use require the consent of the family, community and clan.⁹

Uganda has three other land tenure systems: Freehold, Mailo and Leasehold. Freehold land tenure, associated with land titling, is on the rise in northern Uganda.

4.1.2 Social Service & Infrastructure

As people return to their homes, they are expecting services to follow. However, new and rehabilitated social services and facilities in the return sites are still inadequate. Provision of social services and infrastructures like water, bridges, schools and health facilities have been a major challenge to government and development partners.

A. Water

Access to safe water is a major problem in many parts of northern Uganda. For instance, Adwari sub-county in newly created Otuke District, Acholibur in Pader District and Lokung Sub-county in newly created Lamwo District have serious water problems. Communities that live along the Aswa River basin have difficulties finding safe water sources. Atiak is challenged by water supplies, where it is not uncommon for boreholes to dry up during dry season.

B. Education

Many schools do not have adequate numbers of teachers and those who are there are frequently late or truant. Classrooms and teachers' houses are also not adequate. northern Uganda exam results are the lowest in the country. The dropout rate is very high, especially among female students.

C. Health

The situation is not different with health centers. There are few health staff and staff houses are not enough or adequate. However, it is also clear that enticing staff to centers in rural areas is difficult. In many health centers, staff open late or are not present. The Lira participants recalled a situation in Lira

⁸ United National High Commissioner for Refugees, December 2009 Update on IDPs movement

⁹ Principles and Practices of Customary Tenure in Acholiland, Ker Kwaro Acholi, June 2008.

where patients who had checked into a health centre were left on their own for 1 week. Drug supplies are low or finished, and it is not clear if those supplies are absent due to poor planning or theft. In Atiak, people have stopped going to the Health Center 4 and instead are traveling to rural Okidi Health Center 2, because it is run by MSF.

D. Roads

Road networks are fairly developed, which has helped people return home. The government constructed security roads throughout northern Uganda to facilitate its operations against the LRA and development partners are currently initiating many cash for work programs around road reconstruction. Yet much needs to be done to rehabilitate these roads, especially in more rural areas. While the Kampala to Gulu road has drastically reduced travel times, the major corridor from Gulu to Juba is murrum and still in poor condition.

4.1.3 Economy and Employment

A. Agriculture

In northern Uganda agriculture is the pre-dominant economic activity. The population practices subsistence agriculture using rudimentary implements with low outputs. Additionally, floods in 2007 and drought in 2009 hindered development opportunities that were emerging with the reduction of internal displacement. Despite these challenges, development partners and government are encouraging modernization and commercialization of agriculture to address poverty and food insecurity. Northern Uganda was once the food basket of the country and is poised to regain this status. Despite low outputs, the region is moderately food secure and farmers are being encouraged to bulk their surplus and take advantage of regional and national market opportunities.¹⁰

The government is improving agricultural production through the NAADS programs while development partners are working to help the communities modernize farming methods, introduce value-added processing activities and improve market information and linkages between value chain actors. Development partners are also encouraging credit and savings through promotion of village savings and loan associations (VSLA) and on a pilot scale introducing commercial credit through mobile banking and warehouse receipts schemes.

During the war, a majority of people in northern Uganda lost their animals to armed forces and Karamojong warriors.¹¹ However, over the last ten years, the government and development partners have been supporting restocking and veterinary health programs.¹²

B. Non-Agricultural Vocational Training

Development partners are also investing significantly in vocational training programs for youth targeting skills such as construction, motor vehicle repair, carpentry, tailoring and hotel and restaurant management¹³. While such skills support growing sectors such as construction and tourism, improved efforts are needed to link graduates of such courses to viable employment opportunities. Too often,

¹⁰ FEWSNET Food Security Outlook – Jan- June 2010.

¹¹ The District Veterinary Office in Gulu estimates that upwards of 90% of livestock in the region were lost due to conflict.

¹² For example SPRING and its partner the Ugandan Veterinary Association (UVA) are supporting private vets in Gulu and Amuru (areas served by the recent VETCAP program) to open new and expand existing businesses through small grants and business skills training.

¹³ SPRING and its partner AVSI are supporting over 300 vulnerable youth through scholarships for vocational training programs, business and life skills training and small start-up capital grants.

development partners assume youth will become entrepreneurs and start their own business after completion of training programs, when they are still underequipped and undercapitalized to compete as a small business.

4.1.4 Environment and Natural Resources

Environmental degradation is a serious issue in northern Uganda especially in areas that hosted internally displaced persons. During displacement, people depended on firewood in the areas surrounding the camps for fuel. Trees have been seriously depleted and tree planting is minimal. In Atiak sub-county, environmental degradation is attributed to the proximity to Sudan. People from Southern Sudan enter Uganda to cut trees and grass and lay bricks without any controls placed on these activities. In all the sub-counties covered by the assessment, tree cutting for charcoal has been reported as a major contributing factor to deforestation, soil erosion and even economic opportunity. In Pader and Lira for example, people have cut down large numbers of Shea trees for charcoal, despite the high, yet underdeveloped, commercial potential of Shea nut oil production.

Further, the lands occupied by internal displacement camps have become bare and unproductive. In addition to the construction of the camps, such lands are practically not useable because of waste and damage from the inhabitants. People also buried many dead bodies in camps and although some are now exhuming bodies of their relatives for reburial in the return sites, many more are yet to do the same.

In Amuru district, oil has been discovered in large quantity and the exploratory drilling is now ongoing. Production is due to begin as early as 2011 and is expected to have an impact on the economy and the growing tourism industry in and around the Murchison Falls National Park.

4.1.5 Security and Crimes

Generally, the security situation in northern Uganda is calm since the LRA left northern Uganda. The crime rate is relatively low as only a few cases are being reported in the communities, and most relate to petty crimes such as theft. Armed robbery is not common although there is concern that many people still illegally possess small arms.

There have also been few cases of unexploded devices and landmines that have undermined the return process in some areas. Landmine cases have been reported mainly along border with Southern Sudan in Lokung Sub-county in Lamwo District. This area was heavily mined during the war.

There are a number of issues at the border with Southern Sudan which are threatening security among the border communities. Pastoralists from both sides of the border clash frequently with authorities and communities. The region is awash with small arms.

4.1.6 Politics and Leadership

As Uganda heads to general elections in early 2011, the population is becoming polarized and divided along political party lines. The major political parties in northern Uganda are the Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC), National Resistance Movement (NRM), Democratic Party (DP) and Forum for Democratic Change (FDC). Traditionally, northern Uganda has been an opposition stronghold¹⁴ but with the armed conflicts now over, there is evidence that central government is making efforts to win

¹⁴ Most elected politicians in northern Uganda are from parties that are in opposition to the ruling party National Resistance Movement (NRM).

support of the population. Programs such as the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern Uganda are seen as evidence of these efforts.

The two decades of armed conflicts have weakened leadership structures in the region especially at local levels. This has had a negative impact on service delivery and development of the region. Corruption is widespread and in many cases leaders are not transparent and accountable to the populace for their decisions and management of public resources.

4.1.7 Culture and Norms

A. Rural & Agrarian

Northern Uganda is a rural agrarian society. Central and local governments maintain rule of law, but traditional and religious institutions maintain influence over local communities as well. Cultural institutions in northern Uganda have played crucial roles in ending the conflicts and also rebuilding lives of people affected by the conflicts.

B. Clans

There is a general perception that harmonious relationships still exist among neighboring clans and tribes in northern Uganda despite years of conflict. For examples, Madi people who had lived in Amuru district and Langi who permanently live in Gulu and Pader districts have coexisted relatively peacefully. These tribes and clans have intermarried helping to strengthen relationships.

C. Religion

Religion plays an important role in northern Uganda. The majority of the population in northern Uganda is Christian, mainly Catholics, Anglicans, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostal and the various “born again” churches. There is also a significant Muslim population.

4.2 CONFLICTS, THEIR CAUSES AND ACTORS

4.2.1 Land conflicts

Land conflicts are dominant in post-conflict northern Uganda for a number of reasons. The return process has escalated land conflicts. Many elders who knew land boundaries died during displacement or now feel they must remain in camps because they cannot rebuild their homes. Widows and children born in camps struggle to identify land and in some cases are denied their rights to family land because male relatives push them off the land. This has caused many to remain behind in camps or to endure land disputes with their own family members.

A. Dueling Land Tenure Systems

Traditionally land is owned communally in northern Uganda and held in custody by traditional leaders, such as clan leaders¹⁵. As people become more aware of the economic value of land, freehold tenure and land titling are becoming preferred over customary ownership, which is evident by the higher land prices for titled land. Both traditional leaders and district land boards are recognized by Ugandan law. The existence of both systems is causing tension, however, because the laws of both systems are applicable but are not always harmonized. Therefore, it is no longer clear who has the right to decide how the land is used or owned.

B. Commercial Interests

Further, large scale commercial farming is a new development in northern Uganda and there is growing interests from investors from throughout Uganda and even abroad. The desire to acquire large plots of land for commercial farming (especially by local and national politicians) has created rumors of land grabbing. Land grabbing rumors are largely unsubstantiated to date, but remain a source of deep anxiety especially at the village level. Central government is pushing for investment in northern Uganda at a time when the people who own the land are returning from camps, which has fueled suspicion that land is being used for the benefits of those outside the community. This has led to a political tug of war between central government and local government on private investment in northern Uganda, which is being played out in local communities. For example, the Madhvani Group of Companies bid to acquire 40,000 hectares of land in Amuru district for a sugar plantation that was personally announced by President Museveni, has met fierce resistance from the local leaders and opposition members of Parliament. Efforts to block this development have escalated and the case is currently being decided by the Chief Magistrate. Despite the potential commercial benefits of large scale investments, such projects are often sidelined by political conflict.

C. Politicization of Land

Indeed, it is clear that accusations of land grabbing are all it takes to sway a crowd in one's favor in northern Uganda. Politicians from all parties have used such accusations to rally the local community behind them to vote for them and support them to achieve their political ambitions. In fact, in the last elections in 2006, promises to the local people to defend their lands went far to buy support towards successful campaigns.

¹⁵ 90% of land in northern Uganda is customarily owned.

4.2.2 Cross-Border Conflicts

Land conflicts are increasing along borders within districts and sub-counties, between districts and sub-regions and even between communities across international borders. The primary cause of border conflicts is the existence of resources across and along these borders. For instance, the Karamojong cross into Pader, Kitgum, and Otuke Districts to graze their animals and steal animals from these districts. People from Southern Sudan also cross into Amuru District to exploit resources like sand for construction, trees for charcoal and land for laying bricks. This is made worse by the lack of strong security along borders, which has made illegal cross border activities rampant. Illegal possession of small arms makes these cross border conflicts even more threatening and violent.

A. Sudan Border Conflicts

Similarly, in Atiak Sub-county, many Sudanese traders openly carry and move with small arms. Cattle keepers, who graze their animals along the border, cut trees and burn charcoal inside Uganda. Disappointingly, there is a sense that Ugandan authorities have not done much to stop the Sudanese from carrying arms as they cross the border. Further, many Ugandan traders going to Southern Sudan have been harassed and some even killed, while others lost their goods.

B. Game Parks and NFA Boundary Conflicts

There are border disputes between Murchison National Game Park and a number of parishes in Amuru, Gulu and Oyam districts that border the park. The National Forestry Authority (NFA) also has border disputes with communities that border forest reserves throughout northern Uganda. The major source of conflict between park and NFA authorities and communities are illegal hunting of animals in parks and cutting of trees and settlement in the forest reserves.

Examples of Border Dispute Areas

- **Amuru:** Atiak sub-county has border disputes with Palaro Sub-county and Adjumani District
- **Amuru District:** Within Atiak Sub-county there is a border dispute between Palukere and Pawel Parishes
- **Amuru District:** Pabbo Sub-county has land disputes with Amuru Sub-county
- **Gulu District:** Lakwana Sub-county has border disputes with Ngai Sub-county in Oyam District
- **Gulu District:** Odek and Lalogi Sub-counties have border disputes with Otwal Sub-counties in Oyam District
- **Lamwo District:** Lokung has border disputes with Southern Sudan and between Olebi and Pobel Parishes
- **Pader District:** Puranga Sub-county has border disputes with Adwari Sub-county in Otuke District

4.2.3 Social Services & Infrastructure Conflicts

A. Water

Due to the poor infrastructure and service deliveries in areas of return and resettlement, there is increasing concern that competition for limited resources will cause conflict. As water supplies dwindle in certain areas, conflicts are erupting. Long queues for short supplies of water also provide a platform for tensions related to the LRA-conflict and return to surface. Victims and perpetrators inevitably stand in line together, and there are fears that waiting or failing to secure water could exacerbate existing tensions.

B. Health and Education Conflicts

Tensions are also increasing between community members and the staff of health centers and schools. With a lack of adequate supplies in both institutions and frequent staff truancy, the community is increasingly frustrated. There are reports of parents “disciplining” teachers who are truant, which has led to violent disputes. There are increasing accusations that health workers are stealing supplies and selling them to private clinics or individuals, leaving the community without treatments for long periods of time and creating situations of life and death. There are suspicions that the housing concerns raised by teachers and health workers are, in fact, excuses to remain in larger towns that have more hospitable living conditions.

4.2.4 Oil

In Amuru, the discovery of oil reserves has sparked grave concerns about the grabbing of land and poaching of extremely valuable resources from those outside of the community. Apart from basic knowledge of oil discovery and drilling, the population and their leaders have scant information about the government’s plans for the development of the oil sector. The absence of information has fueled speculation and misunderstanding. For example, people are in the dark about information such as how revenue from the oil will be shared. Concurrently many wealthy individuals, such as local and national politicians and business leaders, have been buying up land in Amuru with the hope that oil will be discovered on their lands and they will receive massive compensation or even shares in the oil revenues.

4.2.5 Conflict with former LRA Combatants

Conflicts between former LRA combatants and individuals and communities are mainly over atrocities committed by the former LRA combatants during the war. These atrocities include abduction and forceful recruitment into LRA ranks, maiming of limbs and noses and ears of civilians, massacre and destruction of property. As former LRA combatants and victims return to live in the same communities, unresolved grievances will inevitably fuel conflicts between victims and perpetrators, especially because many members of the community believe those who committed atrocities against them have gone unpunished because they have received amnesty and immunity from government.

A. Targeting Support to LRA Combatants

Another source of conflict is continued targeting of former LRA combatants by government and development partners for support. In fact, there is even a sense from victims and the community that such support is a reward for atrocities committed on them. Many of these projects and other forms of support have targeted former LRA combatants and yet the situations of people who suffered in their hands are not better. This is also the case for vulnerable youth who suffered from displacement and are struggling to find access to education and employment, but who do not qualify because they were not combatants.

B. Conflict Politics

Furthermore, former LRA combatants are often used as political pawns among politicians. There are reports that LRA combatants are used to identify colluders among the community and even within

opposition parties. Last year's accusations of support for the new rebel group, United Patriotic Forces by some opposition politicians, demonstrates the relevance of lingering conflict politics on the current election season.

4.2.6 Political, Re-districting & Local Leadership Conflicts

A. Elections

While conflicts between political parties are natural, there are a number of factors that have exacerbated conflicts mainly between the ruling and opposition parties. Apart from the desire to capture power and promote particular political ideologies, there is serious conflict over the competency and neutrality of the Electoral Commission. Opposition political parties, civil society organizations and international diplomats are calling for it to be disbanded if free and fair elections are to be held in Uganda. Further, there is conflict over the change and manipulation of Constitution of Uganda to remove presidential term limits by the ruling party. There are also politically sensitive bills in parliament like the land bill and domestic relations bill that are generating conflicts among the different political parties.

Elections rigging and violence is another source of conflict between political parties. Although all political parties have participated in vote rigging and violence, the ruling party is perceived as the major culprit because they have the access to arms and security agents. Rumors of intimidation and violence caused by political leaders are common. For example, during the last elections in 2006, there were several instances where ruling party politicians and security agents were accused of torturing, kidnapping and intimidating voters.

There is also concern that the 2011 elections will likely negatively impact development programs such as the PRDP. For instance, there is concern that implementation of major central government programs are likely to be delayed to wait for the period leading up to the elections. Further, there is concern that opposition parties could interfere with and even disrupt programs perceived as coming from the central government in the period leading to elections. There is also deep concern that political leaders from across the spectrum will embezzle public funds to accumulate resources to fund their political campaigns.

B. Re-districting

Decentralization and redistricting in Uganda and in the north in particular are fuelling confusion and conflict in local communities for a number of reasons. Redistricting is seen as politically motivated and associated with the consolidation of power of the ruling party. As previously mentioned, redistricting is creating divisions and disputes in communities and villages that had previously co-existed. From a practical perspective redistricting brings with it capacity-building problems. Already blighted from years of inactivity related to the conflict, new districts are challenged to perform their duties and serve the needs of a community in recovery from conflict. The biggest concern generated by participants is absenteeism. New posts created in new, under-developed districts and sub-counties are often vacant or the duties are performed from more developed town centers that may not even be in the district. The most obvious example of Amuru district officials was cited in the Amuru assessment. District officials are more often outside of Amuru than within, which makes service delivery poor and increases

tensions with people in the community. The Amuru District Council itself is frustrated, and is considering certain ordinances to improve the presence of officials in the district.

C. Political Leadership

From the assessment, it is clear that many local leaders do not entirely understand their roles and this has caused conflicts among themselves. The most recurrent leadership conflict, reported across all areas covered by the assessment, is between elected and technical officials at district, sub-county and parish levels. Conflicts between elected and technical leaders occur mainly because of a lack of knowledge of their respective roles. Further, many elected leaders tend to have less education and expertise than their technical counterparts. On the other hand, technical leaders are often accused of having a lack of the commitment to their work because they are not accountable to the public, whereas elected leaders kept engaged on the issues by their constituents. These tensions are further compounded by widespread accounts of corruption and decision-making fuelled by self-interests of political leaders.

4.2.7 Domestic Violence

The long years of conflicts have damaged the social fabric and led to high levels of domestic violence in communities. During displacement many men were unable to fulfill their traditional gender roles, such as opening up land and decision making on family matters. At the same time, women became the sole providers responsible for retrieving relief food and starting petty businesses in camps, such as alcohol brewing.

A. Targeting Support to Women

The increased targeting of women by development agencies has given many in the community the impression that women are empowered at the expense of men and this has undermined the traditional power of men in the families. The perception by many community members, especially men, is that women empowerment programs are not sensitive to the local cultures and tend to be radically different. Because men do not adequately understand the need for women's rights, they believe such rights are undermining their authority. Further, as more girls and women go to school, the level of awareness and understanding of women's rights has increased. One male participant said, „it is now time for them [NGOs] to stop being our women's husband". There are feelings among men that the empowerment of women has fuelled conflict and division in families and in the communities; leading to a rise in separation and divorce in northern Uganda.

B. Displacement

Displacement also served as a catalyst for early marriage and polygamy since families were eager to discard dependents in order to maximize food relief rations. Families lived in close proximity due to overcrowding in the camps. Children as young as fourteen were getting married, triggering a number of family problems, including early pregnancy, family and child neglect, domestic violence, separation and divorce.

C. Alcoholism

The increasing level of alcohol consumption by both men and women has increased domestic violence in the communities. The introduction of cheap alcohol packed in sachets and brewed directly in camps (and now in villages) means that the majority of people can afford and have access to alcohol.

Combining increased alcohol consumption with severe poverty from the conflict and from lack of access to livelihoods, as well as increased awareness of the changing role of women in society has led to increased occurrences of domestic violence.¹⁶

4.2.8 Cultural & Religious Conflicts

There is concern that moral decay, due to two decades of conflict, is high in the community. This has led to many related social problems like excessive drinking, child neglect, defilement, early marriages, domestic violence, prostitution, divorce, and laziness. This has also increased dependency on foreign assistance in the communities. The relationships between men, women and children have also suffered and caused further tension on families.

A. Traditional Institutions

Traditional institutions, which would normally play a key role in shepherding cultural norms and practices have been damaged by conflict and displacement. Traditional leaders have become impoverished and thus vulnerable to political influence. For instance, in a number of chiefdoms in northern Uganda, there are traditional leadership wrangles being fuelled by politics. Additionally, while the older people in the community have maintained respect for cultural leadership, interest in cultural leaders appears to be waning with younger people.

B. Western Cultural Values

Furthermore, there is tension between traditional culture and increasing influence of western cultural values. There are increasing levels of education, access to western media and internet as well as opportunities to travel for many people. There is a concern among certain community members that these opportunities may be undermining local culture and contributing to the rise in the societal problems described above.

C. Evangelicalism

The quick pace at which churches are being established is causing conflicts in the northern Uganda. New churches bring new ideologies and these new ideologies are creating divisions in the community based on beliefs and philosophy. The increase in churches is also linked to financial gains. In fact as one participant in Lira district put it, "it is a lucrative business nowadays to start a church". As such, churches are fighting for followers and converts in the communities. Further, as churches proliferate, new leaders emerge and trust and accountability that is assumed by the congregation is difficult to control. Church leaders are traditionally unquestioned by their congregations, and in the case of new leadership, there is a concern that a lack of established trust and transparency could lead to corruption and other misuses of power such as defilement.

¹⁶ Such perceptions are supported by data, such as the 2008 survey conducted by the Uganda Law Reform Commission.

5.0 SPRING PROGRAM FORECAST QUARTERS 2 & 3 FY 2010

Planned Activity	Activity Description	Issue(s)
Results of the Unpacking the P in PRDP project	A prioritized and widely consultative plan of action for taking forward the delivery of PRDP Strategic Objective #4, "Peace-building and Reconciliation."	Security/Politics/Culture
Risk Assessment & Planning/Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming	Site visits to 22 SPRING implementing partners will be made to ensure conflict sensitivity in programming planning	Security/Politics/Social Service & Infrastructure
Presentation of Bibia Report to USAID and regional partners	An exploration of building a peace market on the Uganda/Sudan border uncovered many challenges that should be addressed before the project moves forward.	Economy and Employment/Land
Alternative Dispute Resolution	Following their mobile legal aid clinics, SPRING IP CRR will respond to ADR cases	Land/Culture/Security
Parish Dialogues on Group Farming	Ker Kwaro Acholi will send teams of cultural leaders to meet with SPRING farmer groups and offer advice and assistance on dispute resolution and group dynamics	Economy and Employment/Culture/Security
Oil Dialogue Series	A second meeting will be held between oil companies operating in Amuru and Amuru district officials, hosted by SPRING IP International Alert	Environment and Natural Resources/Land
Peace Education Classes & Guidance & Counseling	SPRING Implementing Partner UMECS has launched the Peace Education and Guidance & Counseling Programs in 7 schools that will reach over 2,000 students	Economy and Employment/Culture
Micro-stability Funds Distributed	SPRING IP Gulu District NGO Forum will award \$75,000 towards small peace, justice and economic security activities to 23 community-based organizations	Economy and Employment/Culture
Early Childhood Development Cooperatives	SPRING IPs Concerned Parents Association and WACFO will establish Childcare Cooperatives with SPRING beneficiaries in Amuru, Oyam and Lira	Culture/Social Service & Infrastructure
Land Stakeholder Collaboration Manual	A manual that details the land roles and responsibilities of cultural leaders and local government officials will be published	Land/Culture/Politics and Leadership

Government Certification for Vocational Students	SPRING will ensure that its students undertaking vocational training will be Government of Uganda BTVET certified	Economy and Employment
Government certification for Vocational Institutions	SPRING will ensure that 4 vocational institutions it works with will be GoU BTVET certified	Economy and Employment
Drought Contingency Plan	SPRING will develop plans for its 8,000 farmers in preparation for unpredictable rain fall in the 2010 planting season	Land/Social Service & Infrastructure/Environment & Natural Resources
Seed Loan Repayment	SPRING will monitor the repayment and investment of seeds loans from its 2009 scheme	Economy and Employment
Capacity Building for Collective Marketing Committees	SPRING's will deliver a comprehensive capacity building program for its CMCs to ensure self-sustainable and profitable agricultural cooperatives.	Economy and Employment

APPENDIX A:

CONFLICT ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION LIST

LIRA

Anila Judith, Acdo, Onyaa Joel, Chairman Baroko , Omara Alfred, Parish chief, Odongo Caroline, ACDO, Etot Justine, Chairperson, Acuma Franklin, AGSCC, Amot Job, Program officer, Otim Clement Emmanuel, CDO, Ocen Sylvester, Parish chief, Onangi Oscar, CDO, Aryam Geoffrey, Parish chief, Rose okello, LIDFA, Odongo JB, Farmer, Oleng Ben, Parish chief, Patrick Ojok Apala, Field worker, Amuge Semmy, Chairpers, Ocen Duke Adupa, Subcounty chief, Okello Geoffrey, Parish chief, Okello Maladpa, Parish chief, Ogwang Bosco, Parish chief, Otim Benard, Staff, Opio Victor, LIDFA, Egwar Charles, LIDFA Amongi Eveline, Parish chief, Olaa Ambrose, Conflict specialist, Lamwaka Emily, Conflcit&Recon. ASSt Jessica Huber, Dr. programs, Acen Middy Grace, Member, Akwete Hudson, Board LIDFA, Aguma Thomson, Secretary, Mrs. Lucy Atyang, CPA, Qgwang Bosco, Extension worker, Ocaya O denish, Parish chief, Agwang Florence , NECPA

OYAM

Ojok geofrrey, NECPA, Kia Semmy, NECPA, Atim Benson, ASB, Angyro Joel Peter, Parish chief Ekodule O Cosmas, Parish chief, Ojok Emmanuel, CDO, Odongo Benedict Opeto, Parish chief, Okite Tonny Richard, ACDO, Otim Anthony, Parish chief, Ayeni Jacob Paul, Forest Asst., Opiru Richard Owaka, Parish chief, Okello RobertOkello Yubertino , ADFA, Olwii Robert, Parish chief, Okuru moses, ADFA, Omara Bonny, Member, Okello Ceaser, NECPA, Ayo Pilato, A4A, Obong Hudson, ASB, Ojok Humphrey, , Okullu Thomas, Member, Odongo denis, ADFA, Oper Alfred, Chairperson, Okonye Abel, Youth group, Harriet Akello, ADFA, Owic Tonny, Chairperson Youth, Otim Micheal, Parish Chief Akuca Akaa Boniface, A4A Field officer, Ocen Halyo, Trazora A4A, Okwanga Robert Alen, , Odongo Gilbert Bob, Aroma Smaule, , Okech Geofrey, , Obote Godfrey, , Oper Patrick, , Opio James, , Okodi Peter, Obong Tommy, , Ogwang Joe, , Akok Phoebe, , Okello G. Francis, , Okullu David, , Otiti James, Ojok Tonny, Opio Lawrence, Beatrice Okello,

KITGUM

Zach Bagley, Project officer, Okee tucker, F E W, Omo Nixon, Parish chief Ayella Jimmy George, Chairperson, Omach Joel JJ, CDO, Okuna Richard, Subcounty chief Oyat Benson, Parish chief, Olaka Okaka , Parish chief, Oyoo Jimmy Brain, Parish chief, Opio alessius Bongomin, Subouny chief, Onekalit Dennish Jameson, Field worker, Okot Charles, Chairperson, Amone Silvano, Farmer member, Abita Anthony Cyrus, AACDO, Abwola Fred, Chairperson, Odongyim Charles, Group secretary, Canwat Churchill, Chairperson, Akello Florence, Project officer, Ociti Nixon, Project

Asst., Ochola Simon Peter, Project officer, Olwoch Kulis Dickens, Program officer, Okot George Padonga, Secretary RFJP

AMURU

Langalanga david, Extension, Opobo Isaac, LCFC, oloya Daniel, Parish chief, kidega Joe , A4A
Yomcwiny meroni, A4A, Abola simon, Lamii Tam, Arop Victor, WACFO, Okello Simon Bushenyi , Youth mobiliser, Kilama Patrick Otukene, Youth mobiliser, Opio Alfred, CYMG, Amono Paska, WACFO, Obote Bosco, Extension, Odoch Patrick, Youth, Ocitti Lali, Extension, Pyero Paul Olum, Parish chief, Opio Richard Atuk, Kal parish, Auma Mary Bongomin, Prog. Asst., Nyeko Richard, Parish chief, Ochora Geoffrey, KSWVO, Oloya Daudi, KSWVO, Okeny Simon, KSWVO, Obette Charles, KSWVO, Latigo Jimmy, KSWVO, Oluba Ben, KSWVO, Opobo David, Subcounty chief, Loum Alfred, Parish chief, Lamaro Gloria Peace, CDO, Apio Catherine , LCV Pabo

PADER

Lakot Betty, , Angom Betty, Opiyo Janaro, , Enabu Simon Peter, , Bruno Okwir, , Lam Patrick, , Oryem Bosco, Team leader, Lapogo Grace, Parish cheif, Regina Kidega, ASB, Erio B. Kidega, ASB, Okello S. Akot, NEP, Auma Gloria, NEP, Anying Madelena, CDO, Ocia Otto benard, NECPA, Okech peterkin O., NECPA, Akullu Anna, NECPA, Adonyo Richard, NECPA, Odoch Quinto, Parish chief, Obua Samuel, Farmer, Odong denish, NECPA, Owkir Robert, Parish chief, Auma Ritah Consolata, CDO, Adokorach Nancy, CDO, Aporo Samuel , FEW, Okello JJ Olum, Subcounty chief, Akot Grace, Parish chief, Emuna Emmanuel, FEW, Okiya Joseph, teacher, Okello Santo, farmer, Justine Otema, Parish chief

GULU

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