

UC Berkeley

Reports

Title

Northern Uganda: Research Note on Attitudes about Peace and Justice in Northern Uganda

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/36v1s8nd>

Authors

Vinck, Patrick
Pham, Phuong
Stover, Eric
[et al.](#)

Publication Date

2007-08-01



Prepared by

Patrick Vinck
Phuong Pham
Eric Stover
Andrew Moss
Marieke Wierda

Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on
Vulnerable Populations

Human Rights Center
UCBerkeley
www.hrcberkeley.org

Payson Center for
International Development
Tulane University
www.payson.tulane.edu

International Center for Transitional
Justice (ICTJ)
www.ictj.org

New Population-Based Data on Attitudes about Peace and Justice

This research note presents preliminary population-based data on attitudes about peace and justice in northern Uganda. The note is intended to be descriptive and offers limited interpretation. A complete in-depth report will be released in the near future. The preliminary data is based on partial results of a cross-sectional study conducted in eight districts of northern Uganda from April to June 2007. Three teams of 8-16 trained interviewers conducted 2,875 interviews of randomly selected adults in the districts of Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira, Oyam, Soroti, and Amuria. Interviews were carried out using a standardized questionnaire (available upon request at hrc@berkeley.edu). The cross-sectional study was also informed by randomly selected in-depth interviews with adults in the districts under study and by key informant interviews with representatives of local and nongovernmental organizations and leaders of civil society in northern Uganda. More details on the methodology and limitations to this study are discussed on page 15.

Summary of Findings	2
Respondents	3
Priorities and Accountability	4
Mechanisms for Peace and Justice	5
Trials	6
Views on the International Criminal Court	6
Amnesty	8
Traditional Mechanisms	9
Root Causes of the Conflict and Truth Seeking	10
Victims and Reparations	11
Reintegration of the LRA	13
Annex 1: Exposure to Violence	14
Annex 2: Note on Methodology	15
Authors and Acknowledgements	16

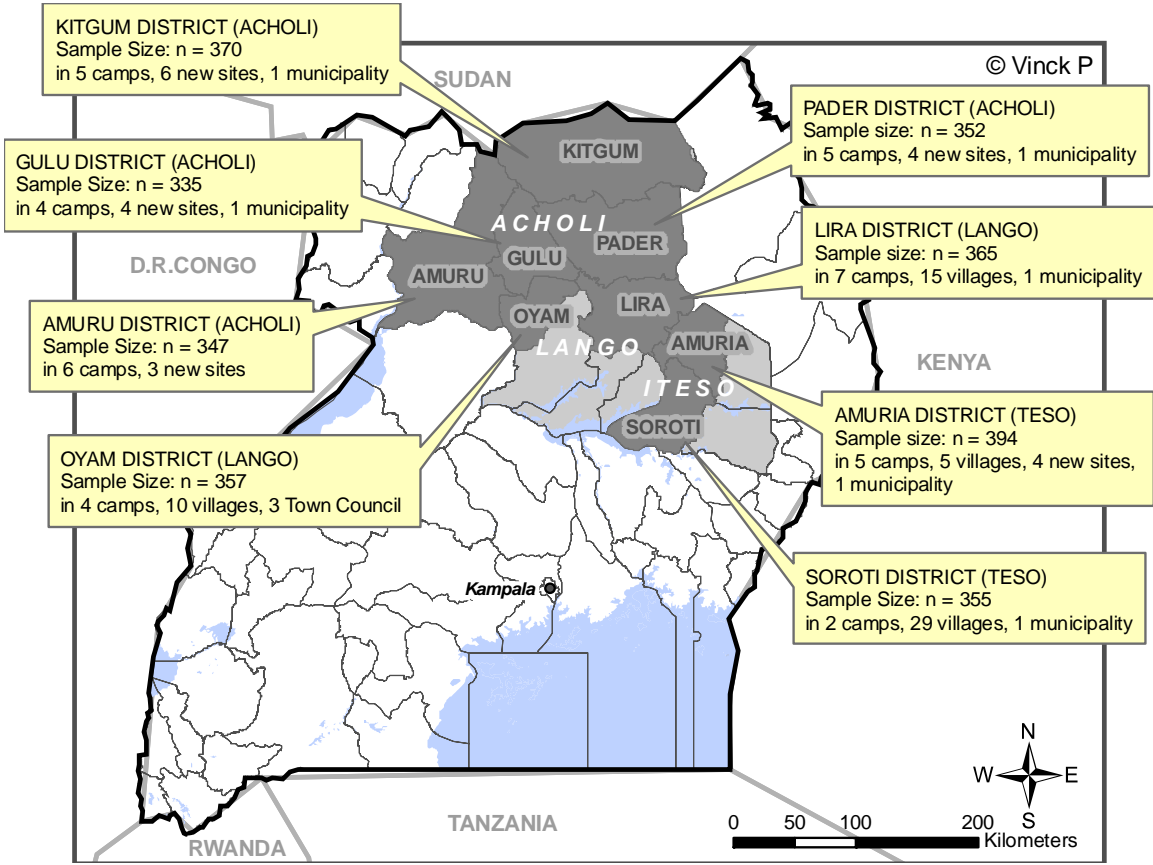
Summary of Findings

- **Priorities and accountability:** The main priorities for respondents at the time of the survey were health (45.2%), peace (44.1%), livelihood concerns (including food, 43.2%; agricultural land, 37.2%; money and finances, 34.8%), and education for the children (30.5%). Only 3 percent of respondents mentioned justice as a top priority. However, more than two-thirds of respondents (70%) said it was important to hold accountable those responsible for committing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in northern Uganda. Half the respondents said the LRA leaders should be held accountable, and 48 percent said all of the LRA. Forty percent said the government should be held accountable.
- **Mechanisms for peace and justice:** When asked which mechanisms would be most appropriate to deal with those LRA and UPDF responsible for violations of human rights, equal numbers mentioned the ICC (29%) and the Ugandan national court system (28%). Twenty percent said the amnesty commission. Only 3 percent said traditional ceremonies would be the most appropriate mechanism, while 49 percent said they would be useful in dealing with the LRA. When asked if they favored peace with amnesty or peace with trials, 80 percent of the respondents chose peace with amnesty. The figure may reflect the fear respondents have that trials would spoil the peace process. As many as 71 percent of those who had heard about the ICC said it had contributed to reducing the violence and to pressuring the LRA into peace talks. A majority (76%) said that pursuing trials now (i.e. prior to the conclusion of the peace talks), could endanger the peace process underway in Juba, Sudan. Establishing the truth was important to respondents. The vast majority (95%) said a written historical record of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda should be prepared, and 89 percent were willing to talk openly about their experiences in a court or public hearing. Over 90 percent supported the establishment of a truth commission. Coupled with figures on priorities and accountability, the data suggests that the vast majority of respondents do not want the ICC to jeopardize the peace process. But, given the chance, they would like to have some form of accountability for past crimes.
- **Exposure to violence, victims and reparations:** Suffering in the North has been widespread. Over 85 percent of respondents said they had lost income, had their house destroyed, or had assets confiscated during the conflict in northern Uganda. Twenty-one percent said they had been abducted by the LRA for over a week, and 2 percent for over a year. Fourteen percent reported being verbally abused or threatened by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF), and 9 percent said government soldiers had destroyed their property. Respondents were asked to give a single response to "what should be done for victims." Direct compensation to individuals was frequently proposed, including financial compensation (52%), food (9%), and livestock/cattle (8%). Equal numbers (7%) mentioned counseling and education for children. About 10 percent mentioned apologies, justice, or reconciliation.
- **Reintegration of former LRA:** A majority in the North are ready to live with the LRA in their midst, particularly lower ranking, and in the Acholi districts. Over two-thirds of the respondents felt comfortable living in the same community with former LRA combatants (70.1%) and their leaders (64.6%), but attitudes varied across regions: 30 percent of the respondents in the Acholi districts felt uncomfortable living in the same community with returned LRA leaders, compared to 46 percent in the Lango districts, and 53 percent in the Teso districts. Only half the respondents said the LRA leaders had the same rights as anyone else and should be allowed to participate in politics and govern if elected.

Respondents

A total of 2,875 interviews were conducted with adults randomly selected in camps, new settlement sites, villages, and municipalities in 8 districts of northern Uganda. Of these, 1,486 (52%) lived in camps, 464 (16%) in new settlement sites, 548 (19%) in villages, and 377 (13%) in municipalities or urban centers. Women represented 49.4 percent of the sample. The mean age of the respondents was 35. Forty-eight percent of the respondents were Acholi, 25.3 percent Lango, and 24.8 percent Teso. Sixty-four percent were Catholic, and 56 percent were illiterate.

The data in this report is presented by subregion: (1) Acholi subregion: Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader; (2) Lango subregion: Lira, Oyam; and (3) Teso subregion: Soroti, Amuria.¹ Ethnic distribution closely follows administrative regions: 98 percent of the respondents in the Acholi districts were Acholi, 97 percent were Langi in the Lango districts and 93 percent were Teso in the Teso districts. A total number of respondents is provided and adjusted for the population size in each district. Since not all the districts in northern Uganda were selected for this study, the results are only representative of the selected districts.



Location of Respondents by District and Subregion

¹ The data was collected to be representative at the district level. Districts were weighted for population size when aggregated into larger units. The weighted, aggregated results are representative at the subregional and total levels.

Priorities and Accountability

The main priorities among the respondents at the time of the survey were health (45.2%), peace (44.1%), livelihood concerns (including food, 43.2%; land, 37.2%; money, 34.8%), and education (30.5%). Only 3 percent of respondents mentioned justice as a top priority at the time of the survey. However, more than two-thirds of the respondents (70%) said those responsible for committing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in northern Uganda should be held accountable. Half the respondents said the LRA leaders should be held accountable, and 48 percent said all of the LRA. Forty percent said the government should be held accountable.

Respondents' Priorities ²	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Peace	45.8%	59.1%	20.8%	44.1%
Security	32.6%	5.0%	34.3%	27.7%
Food	43.0%	39.5%	48.1%	43.2%
Land	43.2%	27.2%	25.9%	37.2%
Health	45.4%	47.4%	41.8%	45.2%
Return	33.4%	10.8%	8.8%	25.0%
Education	32.2%	21.4%	34.1%	30.5%
Money	41.4%	22.2%	23.8%	34.8%
Justice	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%	3.2%
Water	0.4%	0.3%	2.1%	0.7%
Other	8.7%	17.5%	15.9%	11.6%
No response	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%

When asked directly what should happen to the LRA leaders who committed human rights abuses, 42.5 percent said they should be forgiven. (This figure was 33 percent among the Teso). In general, 52 percent preferred options such as forgiveness, reconciliation or reintegration for LRA leaders. Twenty-two percent of the respondents wanted the LRA leaders to be tried and, if convicted, sent to prison. More generally, 40.9 percent mentioned options including trials and / or punishment including imprisonment or death.

The majority of respondents (77.9%) said that the rank-and-file LRA should be forgiven, reintegrated or reconciled with, and 16.7 percent mentioned some kind of trial and or punishment. Almost 70 percent of respondents said the Ugandan military committed war crimes and human rights abuses in northern Uganda. About 33.7 percent said that they should be forgiven, reintegrated or reconciled with; while 55 percent said the Ugandan military should face trial and or be punished.

		Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Is it important to hold accountable those responsible? (yes)		67.2%	66.4%	84.5%	70.0%
Who should be held accountable? ²	The LRA leaders	54.3%	61.4%	27.9%	50.1%
	All the LRA	49.7%	62.3%	30.6%	48.0%
	The government	39.8%	11.3%	64.9%	39.9%
	The UPDF	23.6%	4.3%	11.5%	17.7%
What would you like to see happen to...		LRA leaders	Low rank LRA	UPDF soldiers	
Forgive them		42.5%	64.0%	29.6%	
Reconcile with them		7.2%	10.1%	3.4%	
Reintegrate them		2.3%	3.8%	0.7%	
Have them confess and apologize		2.4%	1.6%	2.1%	
Capture and kill them		5.0%	1.9%	0.9%	
Punish them		8.6%	4.2%	16.7%	
Put them on trial and then kill them		5.0%	1.8%	3.7%	
Put them on trial and then in prison		22.3%	8.8%	34.6%	
Other		3.7%	2.2%	7.4%	
No response		1.1%	1.5%	1.0%	

² Respondents were allowed more than one response. Therefore, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Mechanisms for Peace and Justice

When asked which mechanisms would be the most appropriate to deal with those LRA and UPDF responsible for violations of human rights, nearly equal percentages mentioned the ICC (29%) and the Ugandan national court system (28%). Twenty percent said the amnesty commission. Only 3 percent said traditional ceremonies would be the most appropriate mechanism, although 49 percent said local customs and rituals are useful for dealing with the LRA.

When asked if they favored peace with amnesty or peace with trials, 80 percent of respondents chose peace with amnesty. There were important differences across regions: in the Teso districts, only 59 percent chose peace with amnesty and 41 percent chose peace with trials. When presented with 4 options, 51 percent of respondents would prefer peace with amnesty, 26 percent would prefer peace with a truth commission, 15 percent would prefer peace with trials, and 8 percent would prefer peace with traditional ceremonies. These results should be interpreted carefully as the responses may be influenced by several factors including exposure to conflict, cultural differences, and differences in knowledge about specific justice mechanisms. As outlined above, a majority of the respondents said it was important to hold accountable those responsible for human rights abuses. Respondents further expressed strong support for trials (see following section), but fear that trials could spoil the peace process may be reflected in the support for amnesty.

Mechanisms		Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Traditional system		4.4%	0.4%	0.6%	3.0%
Ugandan national court		29.8%	21.4%	27.8%	27.9%
Amnesty commission		24.6%	9.4%	16.9%	20.4%
ICC		24.7%	47.1%	23.4%	28.7%
None		7.1%	8.9%	7.5%	7.5%
Other		1.3%	1.8%	10.0%	2.9%
No response		8.2%	10.9%	13.8%	9.6%
2 choices	Peace with amnesty	83.3%	86.1%	59.3%	79.7%
	or Peace with trials	16.7%	13.9%	40.7%	20.3%
4 choices	Peace with amnesty	53.1%	50.4%	46.3%	51.4%
	or Peace with trials	11.3%	10.9%	30.8%	14.6%
	or Peace with truth commission	25.8%	31.7%	18.2%	25.6%
	or Peace with traditional ceremonies	9.9%	7.0%	4.7%	8.4%

Trials

Respondents said that national courts (28%) and international courts (29%) were the most appropriate mechanisms to deal with those responsible for past abuses. However a few respondents (15%) favored peace with trials over peace with other mechanisms (31 percent among respondents in the Teso districts). Nevertheless, when faced with the proposition that ‘it is important to have trials for the LRA leaders,’ a majority (58.5%) stated that they either strongly agreed or agreed. Fewer (34%) agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that ‘it is important to have trials for the lower ranking LRA.’ When probed during in-depth interviews, respondents explained that they made this distinction because most of the lower ranking LRA were seen as recruited against their will.

Looking at the contribution of trials to the situation in northern Uganda, less than half the respondents said that trials would contribute to peace (46%), security (48%), and justice (49%). A majority (76%) said that that pursuing trials at the present time would endanger the peace process. Respondents in the Teso districts generally gave more importance to trials and felt more positively about the impact of trials on their communities.

	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
It is important to have trials for the LRA leaders (% agree)	54.3%	63.8%	68.1%	58.5%
It is important to have trials for the lower ranking LRA (% agree)	26.8%	31.3%	61.7%	33.7%
Trials will contribute to bring peace (% agree)	40.7%	48.1%	62.0%	45.7%
Trials will contribute to bring security (% agree)	43.1%	49.6%	62.0%	47.6%
Trials will contribute to bring justice (% agree)	45.5%	50.8%	62.2%	49.4%
Pursuing trials now may endanger the peace process (% yes)	79.0%	84.6%	56.0%	76.1%
It is possible to have fair trials in Uganda (% agree)	55.2%	73.5%	49.3%	57.6%
Do you understand how the court system works? (% yes)	26.8%	23.2%	11.4%	23.5%
The international community should conduct the trials for human rights abuses in northern Uganda (% agree)	60.1%	71.1%	70.9%	64.0%
3 choices				
National trials	23.7%	24.5%	28.7%	24.7%
or International trials	44.3%	38.6%	50.4%	44.3%
or No trials	32.1%	36.9%	20.9%	31.1%

Given the options, 25 percent of the respondents favored national trials and 44 percent selected international trials. Thirty-one percent said they would favor no trials at all. Most people agreed with the proposition that it is possible to have a fair trial in Uganda, but 64 percent also agreed that ‘the international community should conduct the trials for human rights abuses in northern Uganda.’ Only 23.5 percent of respondents said they understood how the national court system works.

There is some inconsistency between respondents’ strong desire for trials for LRA leaders and their preference for peace with amnesty over peace with trials. Respondents may feel trials now could jeopardize the peace talks currently underway in Juba, Sudan and thus hinder their ability to return to their homesteads and villages. Respondents’ views were also strongly influenced by the media. When asked how they formed that opinion during in-depth interviews, respondents frequently said they ‘heard it on the radio’.

Views on the International Criminal Court

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions on their views of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Most respondents had heard about the ICC (60%), predominantly through the radio (86.5%). About half the respondents who had heard of the ICC said the international court would arrest the LRA (54.5%),³ and contribute to achieving justice (63%) and peace

³ The ICC does not have the means to carry out arrests by itself and relies on state cooperation to accomplish this.

(61%). About two-thirds (67%) said the ICC should be involved in responding to the atrocities, and 55 percent said the international court was helping with the peace process. As many as 71 percent said the ICC had contributed to reducing the violence and to pressuring the LRA into peace talks. However, nearly half (46%) said the ICC could jeopardize the peace talks taking place in Juba, Sudan. Thirty-three percent said the international court would complicate the reintegration of former LRA. A majority of the respondents viewed the ICC as neutral (63%) and independent from the Ugandan government (64%).

	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Have you heard of the International Criminal Court? (yes)	69.6%	46.4%	38.9%	60.0%
Do you believe the ICC can arrest the LRA? (yes)	42.4%	69.6%	83.0%	54.5%
Do you believe the ICC was established only to investigate the situation in northern Uganda? (yes)	12.7%	22.5%	24.7%	16.6%
Do you believe that the ICC will contribute to achieving justice in northern Uganda? (yes)	53.4%	76.4%	82.7%	62.8%
Do you believe that the ICC will contribute to achieving peace in northern Uganda? (yes)	51.4%	73.9%	83.3%	61.1%
Should the ICC be involved in responding to the atrocities that have been committed? (yes)	61.3%	79.3%	74.9%	67.0%
Do you believe that the ICC involvement has helped or hindered the peace process? (helped)	49.9%	55.2%	73.9%	55.0%
Do you think the ICC contributed to reducing the violence in northern Uganda? (yes)	67.7%	72.9%	80.0%	70.8%
Do you think the ICC contributed to pressuring the LRA to negotiate peace in Juba? (yes)	58.6%	70.2%	76.0%	63.8%
Do you think the ICC will stop a final agreement from being reached at Juba? (yes)	42.9%	40.5%	65.6%	46.4%
Do you think the ICC will complicate the reintegration of the former LRA? (yes)	22.0%	49.9%	53.2%	32.6%
Do you believe the ICC is neutral? (yes)	59.7%	78.1%	58.0%	62.9%
Do you believe the ICC is an independent unit from the Ugandan government? (yes)	59.6%	77.9%	64.4%	63.9%

Respondents were asked what recommendation they would make to the ICC if they had the opportunity. Among the range of responses provided, the most frequent was to stop its arrest warrants (44%), although very few respondents in the Teso districts said so (8%). Twenty percent said the ICC should wait until peace is achieved. Those figures suggest respondents desire to see a successful outcome to the peace talks. However, some respondents (10%) said the ICC should move to arrest Kony and its top commanders, and 10 percent said it should hold the LRA accountable.

If you could make one recommendation to the ICC, what would it be?	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Stop its arrests warrants	49.1%	45.8%	7.9%	44.1%
Wait until peace is achieved	22.0%	10.4%	18.5%	19.9%
Arrest Kony and top commanders	9.0%	13.1%	13.8%	10.1%
Open office in the north	0.5%	0.4%	5.3%	1.0%
Hold the LRA accountable	8.6%	13.5%	10.6%	9.6%
Move court to Uganda	2.0%	2.4%	16.4%	3.6%
Forgive Kony/ the LRA	1.1%	2.0%	10.6%	2.3%
Continue with trials/ punishment	1.4%	3.6%	3.7%	2.0%
Be fair, try both sides	0.8%	2.4%	0.0%	0.9%
Don't know	2.8%	2.8%	3.7%	2.9%
Other	2.7%	3.6%	9.5%	3.6%

Amnesty

Twenty percent of the respondents said the Amnesty Commission⁴ was the most appropriate mechanism to deal with those responsible for human rights abuses. Over 81 percent said amnesty would help achieve peace, and 86 percent said they would accept amnesty if it was the only means of achieving peace. However, given the chance a majority of the respondents would like to have some form of accountability for past crimes

	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Amnesty will contribute to achieve peace (% agree)	82.3%	81.7%	75.6%	81.1%
Would accept amnesty if it was the only road to peace (% yes)	91.9%	91.3%	59.6%	86.2%

When asked what they would require of those who received amnesty before they could return to their communities, 48 percent said they should confess their wrongdoing, and 65 percent said they should apologize. In the Acholi districts, 20 percent of respondents said they should submit to traditional ceremonies compared to 3 percent in the Teso and Lango districts. In the Teso district, 14 percent said they should submit themselves to trials, compared to 4-5 percent in the Acholi and Lango districts.

What would you require those who received amnesty to do before they can come back in the community? ⁵	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Confess their wrongdoing	55.7%	24.0%	46.0%	48.1%
Apologize	63.7%	62.4%	73.7%	65.2%
Undergo traditional ceremonies	20.0%	3.1%	3.1%	13.9%
Give compensation to the victims	4.3%	4.8%	7.9%	5.0%
Subject themselves to trial	5.3%	3.5%	13.8%	6.4%
Nothing needs to be done	7.5%	6.7%	2.3%	6.5%
Change attitude, stop behaving badly	7.0%	23.5%	8.0%	10.3%
Go through reception center	2.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.8%
They cannot come home	0.1%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%
Other	3.3%	9.3%	5.3%	4.7%
No response	1.4%	2.9%	2.2%	1.8%

⁴ The Amnesty Act of 2000 established the Amnesty Commission which has the duty to monitor programs of demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants who apply for amnesty, as well to promote appropriate reconciliation mechanisms in affected areas.

⁵ Respondents were allowed more than one response. Therefore, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Traditional Mechanisms

Although few respondents (3%) identified traditional ceremonies as the most appropriate mechanisms to deal with those responsible of human rights abuses, 49 percent said local customs and rituals are useful to deal with the LRA. Over half of the respondents (57%) agreed with the proposition that those responsible for abuses should participate in traditional ceremonies and that they are needed to deal with the situation in northern Uganda (48%). Similarly, 47 percent said traditional ceremonies are needed before the LRA can come back to the community, and that they are necessary to bring peace (48%) and justice (47%). Fewer (35%) said that they consider traditional ceremonies as forms of punishment.

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

When asked which, if any, customs and rituals are important for dealing with the LRA, the most frequently mentioned ceremony was Mato Oput⁶ (48%). Twenty-nine percent also mentioned stepping on the egg. About 9 percent said no ceremonies were useful. It should be noted that over one third and nearly half the respondents in the Lango and Teso regions respectively 'did not know' or 'had no answer' when asked what ceremonies would be useful.

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

⁶ Mato Oput (drinking of the "bitter root") takes place within a clan or, in cases of wrongful killings or murder, between clans with a strong relationship, after the two parties have agreed to compensation and payment has been made.

Root Causes of the Conflict and Truth Seeking

Ninety-three percent of the respondents said it is important to know the root causes of the conflict, and 84 percent said it is necessary to establish truth to achieve peace. When probed about what the root causes of the conflict are, 54 percent identified the struggle for power, and 33 percent identified the actions of the LRA. Others said fighting for equality (16%) and disparities between the north and the south of Uganda (13%) were root causes of the conflict. Twelve percent said actions of the government were a root cause of the conflict.

What are the root causes of the conflict? ⁷	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Struggle for power	55.3%	38.6%	66.0%	54.0%
Poverty	7.8%	7.0%	14.8%	8.8%
Disparity between North and South	14.3%	8.5%	11.7%	12.8%
Fighting for equality	23.1%	6.7%	1.3%	16.3%
LRA rebellion	39.4%	39.9%	3.8%	33.4%
LRA ignorant	7.5%	2.5%	6.0%	6.3%
Government actions	14.1%	6.7%	10.2%	12.0%
Karimojong actions	0.9%	3.7%	0.0%	1.3%
Bad spirit	7.4%	5.0%	5.6%	6.7%
Holy Spirit Movement	13.2%	11.4%	1.6%	10.8%
Other	4.0%	11.6%	8.2%	6.2%
No response	12.2%	19.1%	16.6%	14.2%

The vast majority of respondents (95%) said a written historical record of what had happened during the war in northern Uganda should be prepared, and 89 percent were willing to talk openly about their experiences in a court or in a public hearing. Over 90 percent of respondents answered positively when asked if there should be a truth commission. When asked more generally how to establish the truth, respondents suggested investigating the LRA (42%), investigating the UPDF (27%), and establishing a truth commission (29%). Almost half of respondents (49%) stated that they had already participated in a truth-telling process. When exploring the subject during in-depth interviews, we found that two camps in the north organized a community truth-telling event. However, most respondents did not have an accurate understanding of what a truth-telling process involved. Most believed it was limited to the confession of wrongdoing.

	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Is it important to know the root causes of the conflict? (yes)	94.1%	86.9%	94.3%	92.8%
It is necessary to establish the truth about what happened to achieve peace (agree)	80.9%	87.8%	91.8%	84.1%
Should the population establish a written record of what happened (yes)	94.3%	96.1%	93.1%	94.5%
Would you want to talk openly in a court or public hearing about what happened to you? (yes)	91.7%	85.2%	84.7%	89.3%
Should there be truth commission? (yes)	95.1%	94.8%	84.6%	93.3%
Have you participated in a truth telling process? (yes)	55.4%	41.2%	34.0%	49.1%
Should there be any memorial? (yes)	95.5%	95.7%	89.6%	94.5%

Ninety-five percent of the respondents said they wanted memorials to be established to remember what happened in northern Uganda. The most frequent proposition was to establish a written historical record (41%), 24 percent proposed to dedicate a day of remembrance, and 16 percent said a memorial, such as a statue or other object, should be erected.

⁷ Respondents were allowed more than one response. Therefore, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Victims and Reparations

Northern Uganda's brutal war, now in its twentieth year, has taken a terrible toll on civilians. Countless have been displaced and exposed to violence committed by both the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Union Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF, the Ugandan army). Although people living in Acholi areas bear the brunt of the conflict, data show that those in Lira, Oyam, Amuria, and Soroti have also suffered.

LRA abductions have been a constant feature of the war.⁸ Thirty-seven percent of the respondents said they had been abducted by the LRA. Twenty-one percent were abducted for over a week. Fourteen percent said they were forced to loot, 8 percent to injure people, and 3 percent to kill someone. Twenty percent said they were beaten by the LRA, and 5 percent were maimed. In all cases the proportions were higher among the Acholi respondents.

In addition, fourteen percent of respondents reported being verbally abused or threatened by UPDF soldiers. Nine percent said the UPDF had destroyed their property, and 6 percent had assets confiscated. Four percent said they were maimed or injured by the UPDF, and 6 percent were beaten.

Women and children have been particularly affected. Three percent of the respondents said that they had been sexually violated (5 percent among women). It is possible that incidents of sexual violence were under-reported due the sensitivity of the subject. Complete data on exposure to a list of 27 traumatic events are presented in Annex.

Respondents were asked to identify who, in their opinions, were the victims of the conflict in northern Uganda. They generally defined victims broadly, using such answers as 'everybody in the north' (60%), 'the Acholi in general' (52%), or 'everybody in the IDP camps' (20%). Thirty-two percent identified children as victims of the conflict. Not surprisingly given the high level of exposure to violence reported above, almost all the respondents self-identified as victims (95%).

Who are the victims? ⁹	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
Everybody in the North	48.5%	84.9%	74.5%	59.8%
The Acholi people	62.3%	18.6%	48.4%	51.7%
The Lango people	2.6%	12.5%	2.4%	4.4%
The Teso people	1.2%	6.3%	15.3%	4.5%
Everybody in the IDP camps	20.4%	10.9%	30.5%	20.3%
All Ugandans	0.1%	0.6%	1.1%	0.3%
The civilians and villagers	5.1%	0.4%	0.3%	3.4%
The children	38.6%	14.9%	23.8%	31.6%
The youth	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
The women	3.2%	1.7%	0.8%	2.5%
The elders	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.7%
Those have been abducted, killed	6.1%	5.3%	15.4%	7.5%
Those maimed, directly armed by the LRA	4.4%	4.4%	10.2%	5.4%
The disabled	0.5%	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%
The armed groups	1.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.8%
Other	2.4%	2.2%	2.8%	2.4%
Do you consider yourself a victim of the conflict?	99.4%	98.9%	76.2%	95.3%

⁸ Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, and Eric Stover, *Abducted: Forced Conscription and the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda*, Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley and Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University, July 2007.

⁹ Respondents were allowed more than one response. Therefore, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Respondents were asked to give a single response to “what should be the done for victims.” Direct compensation to individuals was frequently proposed, including financial compensation (52%), food (9%), and livestock/cattle (8%). Equal numbers (7%) mentioned counseling and education for children. About 10 percent mentioned apologies, justice or reconciliation.

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

Reintegration of the LRA

Respondents in the 8 sampled districts supported the need for the people of northern Uganda—and the country as a whole—to live together peacefully. Most respondents felt comfortable living in the same community with former LRA lower ranking combatants (70.1%) and leaders (64.6%). About two-third felt comfortable living as close neighbors or family members or working with former LRA. This however means that a third to 40 percent of the respondents felt uncomfortable in such situations. Respondents were less frequently uncomfortable with lower ranking LRA.

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

Attitudes about reintegration of LRA members varied across regions: 30 percent of respondents in the Acholi districts felt uncomfortable living in the same community with former LRA leaders, compared to 46 percent in the Langi districts, and 53 percent in the Teso districts. Non-Acholi respondents reported greater discomfort in the presence of former LRA leaders and lower ranking LRA than Acholi respondents.

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

Fifty-four percent of the respondents said that LRA leaders had the same rights as anyone else. Forty-six percent agreed with the proposition that LRA leaders should participate in politics and, if elected, be allowed to govern. The percentage was similar when asked about lower ranking LRA. Seventy percent of the respondents said that former LRA leaders and lower ranking can form part of the national army. Respondents in the Lango and Teso subregions were less sanguine about that proposition than their Acholi counterparts.

Annex 1: Exposure to Violence

<i>Self-reported exposure to selected violent events</i>	Acholi Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Pader	Lango Lira, Oyam	Teso Amuria, Soroti	Total
General exposure				
Lost income	89%	92%	69%	86%
Had house destroyed	93%	94%	49%	85%
Had productive assets taken away	91%	91%	53%	85%
Had other assets taken away	95%	93%	52%	87%
Violations by the LRA				
Beaten by LRA	33%	13%	3%	24%
Maimed by LRA	5%	8%	5%	5%
Abducted by LRA	49%	25%	4%	37%
Abducted by LRA for at least 1 week	28%	13%	2%	21%
Abducted by LRA for at least 1 month	19%	6%	1%	13%
Abducted by LRA for at least 1 year	3%	2%	0%	2%
Forced to carry loads by LRA	40%	18%	3%	29%
Forced to walk long distances by LRA	42%	18%	11%	32%
Forced to loot by LRA	19%	8%	2%	14%
Forced to beat or injure people by LRA	10%	3%	1%	7%
Forced to kill someone by LRA	4%	1%	1%	3%
Violations by the UPDF				
Verbally abused or threatened by UPDF	19%	4%	4%	14%
Property destroyed/stolen by UPDF	11%	3%	6%	9%
Productive assets taken away by UPDF	9%	1%	4%	6%
Family member maimed/injured by UPDF	3%	1%	8%	4%
Family member killed by UPDF	4%	0%	1%	3%
Restricted from moving by UPDF	5%	1%	0%	3%
Beaten by UPDF	8%	3%	3%	6%
Sexual Violations				
Saw someone sexually violated by the LRA	9%	7%	7%	8%
Saw someone sexually violated by someone other than LRA	12%	5%	5%	9%
Saw someone sexually violated by UPDF	1%	1%	0%	1%
Was sexually violated	4%	2%	3%	3%
Was sexually violated by UPDF	2%	1%	1%	1%

Annex 2: Note on Methodology

The survey data presented in this report were collected from April to June 2007 in eight districts of northern Uganda. (This research was a follow-up to an earlier survey conducted among the same population in April and May 2005.¹⁰) Three teams of 8-16 trained interviewers, each familiar with the local language and representing a diversity of age and gender, collected data using a standardized questionnaire. The sampling universe included adults (>18 years of age) living in the eight selected districts. Respondents were selected using a multi-stage sampling strategy. Camps, new settlement sites, and villages were randomly selected using sampling technique proportionate to population size. (For the villages, subcounties were first sampled, then parishes and then villages). Municipalities were also included in the sample. Interviewers were assigned to zones in the sites where they selected every other household in a randomly chosen direction. A household was defined as a group of people normally sleeping under the same roof and eating together. In each household, interviewers randomly selected one adult (at least 18 years old) to be interviewed from a list of all eligible adults. Three attempts were made to contact a household or individual. Due to the sensitivity of some of the questions, the interviewers were assigned to same-sex respondents. For each of the four districts, a minimum of 300 households were interviewed. One-on-one interviews were conducted anonymously in a confidential setting. Oral rather than written consent was obtained due to the high illiteracy rate.

Research instruments: The survey instrument covered 13 topics (1) demographics, (2) place of living/displacement, (3) livelihood, (4) priorities and access to services, (5) access to information, (6) sense of security, (7) understanding of peace and justice, (8) peace and mechanisms for peace, (9) reintegration, (10) accountability and mechanisms for justice, (11) the ICC, (12) truth, (13) exposure to violence, and (14) psychological impact. The instrument was developed by a team with expertise in human rights, law, transitional justice, epidemiology, psychiatry, anthropology, surveying, and the conflict in northern Uganda, in consultation with local actors. The instrument was translated in the three local languages and tested. Back-translation and consultation with local experts was used to ensure the quality of the translation. In-depth interviews and key informant interviews were also conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the concepts and justice mechanisms under study.

Data collection and statistical analysis: Data was collected using Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) for digital data collection. The collected data were subsequently imported and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 15.0.

Limitations: Although all possible steps were taken to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the data, possible limitations must be acknowledged, including (1) recall error and the sensitivity of some questions may have affected the accuracy of respondents' answers; (2) constructs and concepts used in the questionnaire may have been difficult to understand; (3) although three attempts were made to contact selected respondents, not all selected people could be interviewed (it is unknown whether the opinions of those people significantly differ from those of the overall population); and (4) as respondents were randomly selected in eight districts of northern Uganda, the data do not therefore represent the opinion of all Ugandans.

¹⁰ Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Marieke Wierda, Eric Stover, and Adrian di Giovanni, *Forgotten Voices: A Population-Based Survey of Attitudes about Peace and Justice in Northern Uganda*, International Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley, July 2005.

Authors and Acknowledgements

Authors:

Patrick Vinck is Director of the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations at the University of California, Berkeley and Adjunct Associate Professor at Tulane University.

Phuong Pham is an Assistant Professor at the Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University and a Senior Research Fellow at the Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley.

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

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

Marieke Wierda is a Senior Associate at the International Center for Transitional Justice and Head of its Uganda and Prosecutions Programs.

Author Contributions: Drs Vinck and Pham supervised the field data collection and analyzed the data.

Acknowledgements: We wish to thank Beth Gaddis and Neil Hendrick for their contribution to the data collection. We also thank the interviewers and respondents for their courage and for taking the time to share their views with us.

Funding: This report and its research are supported by grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and Humanity United.

The Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations is a joint project of the UC Berkeley Human Rights Center and Tulane University's Payson Center for International Development. The Initiative conducts research in countries experiencing serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. We use empirical research methods to give voice to survivors of mass violence. The Initiative works to ensure that the needs of survivors are recognized and acted on by governments, U.N. agencies, and nongovernmental organizations. We help improve the capacity of local organizations to collect and analyze data about vulnerable populations so that their human rights can be protected. The Human Rights Center conducts research on issues in international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes, justice and reconstruction, health and human rights, and globalization. The Payson Center is an interdisciplinary center created to promote sustainable human development among vulnerable populations through innovative and interdisciplinary education, research, and programs.

Human Rights Center
University of California, Berkeley
460 Stephens Hall #2300
Berkeley, CA 94720-2300
Phone: (510) 642-0965
www.hrcberkeley.org

Payson Center for International Development
Tulane University
6823 St. Charles Avenue - 300 Hebert Hall
New Orleans, LA 70118
Phone: (504) 865-5240
www.payson.tulane.edu

The International Center for Transitional Justice is an international human rights organization that assists countries pursuing accountability for past mass atrocity or human rights abuse. The Center works in societies emerging from repressive rule or armed conflict, as well as in established democracies where historical injustices or systemic abuse remain unresolved. We are operational in about 30 countries around the world, bringing to bear technical expertise and comparative experiences on transitional justice issues to partners including civil society, truth commissions or tribunals, governments, the United Nations or regional organizations, and interested individuals. We currently have offices in Bogota, Brussels, Cape Town, Geneva, Kinshasa, Monrovia, New York and presences in Beirut and Jakarta.

The International Center for Transitional Justice
5 Hanover Square, Floor 24
New York, NY 10004
Tel: (917) 637-3800
www.ictj.org