

**Teaching Peace:  
An Exploration in Youth Peace Building through Peace Education Programs  
in Gulu Municipality, Northern Uganda**

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**Abstract:**

After more than two decades of conflict and instability in Northern Uganda, there is finally relative peace. Now is the time of post-armed conflict transformation. The establishment of peace during this time will determine the direction of much of Uganda. Because youth were greatly affected by the conflict, they are particularly important to building a “culture of peace” (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). This study aims to explore the broad mechanisms of peace education and the role of youth in peace building using the case study of Gulu municipality. The research also utilizes key community representatives to examine the non-youth perspectives on the role of youth in peace building.

The study was conducted over a period of twenty-eight days. Four formal interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions, three informal interviews were conducted with partial use of semi-structured questions, and one focus group of eleven youth ages eighteen to twenty-three was conducted using semi-structured interview questions. The research did not utilize a translator or assistant as the entirety of participants spoke English fluently.

It is evident from the interviews that there are many ways to teach peace. Key community members in leadership positions are very supportive of peace education programs, but also have many creative ideas of new and different ways to improve or add to available youth activities. Funding is a major challenge to youth programs, but with more community voices sharing with one another and more donors and actors participating in implementation listening to those voices, there could be massive improvements to peace education in Gulu municipality to better function in this context.

**To my Acholi family:  
For caring for me as your own.**

**And**

**To my parents:  
For being so engaged in everything that I do  
and teaching me that every moment in life is a chance to learn.**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>Situation.....</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	
<b>Justification.....</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	
<b>Findings.....</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>Page 27</b>
<b>Works Cited.....</b>	<b>Page 29</b>
<b>Annexes:</b>	
<b>A. Semi-Structured Interview Questions.....</b>	<b>Page 30</b>
<b>B. Transcribed Interviews.....</b>	<b>Page 31</b>
<b>Martin Mapenduzi.....</b>	<b>Page 31</b>
<b>Justin Oryema.....</b>	<b>Page 33</b>

**Acire Jose Jola.....Page 36**  
**Moses Abongo.....Page 39**  
**Helen Nyeko.....Page 41**  
**Wade Snowdon.....Page 44**  
**Jessica Huber.....Page 47**  
**Peace Club Focus Group.....Page 48**

**CHAPTER 1**

*“Peace is not just a one-person effort. It should be a collective effort. Each person should be a guard...if peace is to escape, someone will catch it” (Justin Oryema 20/4/2009).*

## **Introduction**

It is not yet certain what the role of youth is in reconstruction, but it is a necessary question to begin examining. This research explores the role of youth in peace building during the present time of reconstruction. Are youth simply the recipients of peace education or are they essential agents in creating a “culture of peace”? (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). Considering the importance of the future generation for all of society, it is especially pertinent that young people are supported and empowered while growing up. Support and empowerment can be established in a variety of ways. In order to best serve the community, community members must serve one another. By sharing opinions and ideas on the role of youth in peace building in Gulu municipality, community members are involved in shaping the future of their society. Though the conflict has inflicted massive damage on the people of Northern Uganda, there is also now the opportunity to work together to find creative means of teaching peace to the next generation.

This study focuses on two main roles youth can play in the period of post-armed conflict transformation in Northern Uganda using a case study of Gulu municipality. In taking on positive responsibilities, youth can be both learners and peace builders. A plausible strategy to prevent future conflicts is to focus on teaching peace to youth, but there are many ways in which this can be accomplished. Peace education teaches lessons about peace and strategies for mediating conflict while peace building is the opportunity for youth to take practical steps towards ensuring a peaceful future for Northern Uganda. In order to examine the role of youth in peace building, research explores youth and community views on different forms of peace education, their potential impact, and the best ways for Gulu municipality to maintain stability for all members of the community.

## **Situation**

For more than twenty years, Northern Uganda was a conflict zone (Interview with Navigator, 28/4/2009). During the last three years, the region has been relatively peaceful, but has continued to

face many challenges resulting from the conflict. During the conflict, Gulu municipality in Gulu district became an area that was moderately secure as compared to more rural areas that were highly dangerous at the time. Many people moved into Gulu municipality during the many years of conflict for protection, but few are now returning to their villages (Interview with Moses Abonga, 23/4/2009). “Camp life<sup>1</sup> has eroded the way in which community works” (Interview with Jessica Huber, 28/4/2009). Similarly, lifestyles have changed a great deal as a result of the influx of people moving from village to a more populous area. Many communities in the municipality are made up of new people and are challenged in this time of post-armed conflict transformation to build long-lasting peace and utilize conflict management techniques.

Perhaps the group in society most devastated by the conflict has been youth<sup>2</sup> (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). “There are so many young which have been born and lived within this period...They grow up in this situation where they have not grow in peace so it is important that some learning framework be provided so that they know how it is to live in peace” (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). There are programs that have been instituted in hopes of building a culture of peace among the youth of Gulu municipality and throughout the North of Uganda, one of which is the REPLICA<sup>3</sup> program started by the Ugandan government. One of the goals of REPLICA has been to establish peace education and peace clubs in schools (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). Although peace education is now taught in schools in Uganda and is fairly well known, there are no academic studies of the success or failures of its implementation. It is also possible that through a variety of out-of-school programs, the community is finding alternative ways to teach peace to the youth.

Many impacts of the conflict remain major social issues in Gulu municipality today. Major challenges vary within each smaller division of the municipality, ranging from land to issues of respect between youth and elders, to gender-based violence, and more (Interview with Moses Abonga, 23/4/2009; Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009; Interview with Irene, 28/4/2009). There are creative ways

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<sup>1</sup> “Camp life” refers to the situation and consequences of many people forced to be internally displaced living in Internally Displaced Persons Camps during the time of insurgency.

<sup>2</sup> In Uganda, “youth” is defined as people between the ages of 12 and 35 (Interview with Martin Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009).

<sup>3</sup> REPLICA stands for Revitalization of Education and Participation in Learning in Conflict Areas.(Uganda National Education Support System).

to explore all of these issues, but as previously stated, there are no available studies on the variety of programs and their success or failure in Gulu municipality. During this time of relative peace, it is pertinent to work through the community's goals and ideas for teaching peace to ensure that they are inclusive and constantly re-evaluated to produce community-based values and future generations of peace makers.

## **Literature Review**

Peace education and peace building are distinct entities, but in particular contexts can work in partnership to establish a peaceful future for a particular place. Much of the available literature on

peace education is centered around the situation of inner city schools in the United States. There is also often an emphasis on diversity and multi-racial understanding (Bodine et. al., 1998). Even when applied, peace education as a concept combines many different ideas, methods, and practical tools that can be utilized by youth to combat violence and resolve conflict. The term “peace building” cannot be used as a synonym for peace education, but peace building can be a goal of peace education and is therefore relevant to combine in the study.

Peace building refers to a fairly general idea of resolving conflict and bringing about reconciliation. “Recent approaches to the resolution of conflict emphasize the long and gradual process of peace building and reconciliation that has to follow the stage of peacemaking” (Bar-Tal, 2000; Rothstein, 1999; Zartman, 1998 as cited by Maoz 2004). Peacemaking is often established politically, whereas peace building cannot happen solely through political change. “These agreements have to be accompanied by dynamics of social and psychological change at the grassroots level of populations at both sides, so that these agreements can be implemented successfully” (Bar-On, 1997; 1999; Bar-Tal, 1998; 2000 as cited in Maoz 2004). The key question then is, who is “the grassroots level” and how can the dynamics change socially and psychologically? Education is a way to promote peace building from the very youngest group in a society in order to ensure a change in dynamics over time.

Different from peace building, peace education can instead be considered a platform on which to learn peace building. Stephen Marks defines peace education in practice as:

“the range of educational activities from minimal mention in the classroom of various levels of conflict or of global problems, to the more comprehensive integration of research, teaching and action at all levels of the learning process, aimed at preparing people to participate in creating a just world and social order in which direct and structural violence are reduced as far as possible” (1983).

But why peace education? Why youth as recipients? One of the main reasons for youth to be the recipients of peace education is that “Youth involvement in and with violence is a pervasive problem” (Bodine et. al., 1998). Whereas older people may have enough experience in life to use the verbal to solve conflicts, “physical aggression and intimidation are often young people's first response to problems and disagreements” (Bodine et. al., 1998). Because they are old enough to discuss matters of peace and conflict, but young enough to have a great deal of influence on the future of a society.

Marks' definition is in accordance with the initial ideas of the person who first coined the term, Johan Galtung. Galtung asserted that the practical application of peace education differs according to the context in which it is taught (Galtung, 1975). Using the above definition, peace education is mainly understood in a conceptual way, leaving space for individuals to structure programs in their own framework. The four categories Galtung attached to peace education were development, conflict, peace, and future (1975).

In theory, there is no single correct way of teaching peace. In practice, however, the subject has the potential to be alienating in its nature. In Northern Uganda, where peace education is widely practiced, it is yet to be discussed in scholarly literature. Instead, there are numerous writings on the application and success of peace education in schools in the United States as well as programs that have been used for conflict situations in Northern Ireland and Israel and Palestine (Bekerman, Z. et. al.). In the context of the United States, writing on peace education often emphasizes diversity in schools and acceptance in the classroom (Bodine et. al., 1998). Though programs can differ depending on the place, it is important that there be some form of peace education available to everyone in the world.

In 1974, UNESCO<sup>4</sup> held a general conference in which seven objectives relating to peace education were established. The document asserts that “education should relate to such major problems of mankind as: the equality of rights of peoples and self-determination; the maintenance of peace; action for human rights; economic growth and development; natural resources and the environment; cultural heritage; and the United Nations system” (Marks, 1983). Today, there are many categories of peace education. Some of the more commonly discussed categories include “citizenship education,” “global education,” and “international education” (Marks, 1983). More recently, “human rights education,” “environmental education,” “population education,” and “disarmament education” have also been added to the field. Each sub-category of peace education relates to the others but can also be examined on its own terms.

One of the most widely discussed forms of peace education today is human rights education (HRE). It “promises to foster social tolerance, a democratic citizenry, and a climate wherein human rights abuses

are less likely to occur” (Cardenas, 2005). This form of peace education was not fully promoted until the mid 1990s following the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (Cardenas, 2005). Though there is yet to be sufficient research to prove that HRE has a significant impact in particular situations, many international donors support its use, finding that it “can reinforce social cohesiveness and a sense of nationhood in post-conflict societies” (Cardenas, 2005). Unlike other kinds of peace education that directly target youth, HRE targets three groups: “the public-at-large, schools and educational institutions, and professional groups, both governmental and non-governmental” (Cardenas, 2005). Contrary to critics of HRE in plausible application, “human rights standards and issues can be incorporated explicitly into school curricula” (Cardenas, 2005). Because the programs have been clearly formulated, HRE allows for the same values of human rights to be disseminated anywhere in the world.

In consideration of specialized application, athletics are often highly successful with youth. Programs using sports have the capacity to provide peace education and teach peace building because they “can foster physical, social, and emotional development: practice in cooperation and teamwork as well as competition, winning and losing; an increase in physical fitness and the self-control and discipline that create it; a sense of achievement from hard work and persistence; and even the ethics of knowing and abiding by the rules” (Nicholson et. al., 2004). If approached appropriately, sports can also teach teamwork, fairness, and mutual respect (WFD Inc. 2000 as cited by Nicholson et. al., 2004). Though it is only one of many kinds of programs, athletics hold great potential—provided there is proper leadership—to provide youth with life skills that will promote positive attributes and behavior throughout their lives.

Regardless of the many ways of teaching peace and peace building, youth must also be agents in their education, whether in the classroom or otherwise. From the perspective of caregivers and educators, the “inclination is to do things "to" youth and "for" youth rather than "with" youth. The insight of positive youth development is that young people thrive when [people] listen to them, respect them as current contributors, and engage with them in meaningful investment in the community” (Nicholson, et. al., 2004). A positive relationship with caregivers and educators in itself is a form of peace education. By empowering young people, they also become 'empowerers' of others.

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<sup>4</sup> UNESCO stands for United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

Building upon previous studies, this research examines the practical application of peace education and youth peace building in the context of Gulu municipality. Considering the many approaches already discussed and the larger ideas of peace education, and the lack of research on the use of peace education and youth peace building programs throughout much of Africa, it is important to research the particular need and impact for specific locales on the continent. Without much research on the role of peace education in different parts of Africa, a dynamic is also furthered that assumes a “western” form of education is best for everywhere in the world. Though peace education is currently being used in schools as a result of the REPLICA program in Uganda, it is yet to be examined on a broader scale. Peace education in the municipality is likely distinct from peace education in the United States. Yet, because there is no writing or academic evaluation, it is uncertain what the outcomes have been thus far on the rest of society.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Justification**

In Northern Uganda, there have been a variety of programs and initiatives directed towards aiding

youth, but it is questionable as to how successful these programs have been. The generation of young people today will one day be the leaders of next generations. Whether they are leaders in the country, region, community, or household, they will determine the future of Uganda. With little coordination of youth programs between different members of society in Gulu municipality, it is important to consult a variety of people to ensure community participation in building the future. The aim of the study is to act as a gauge for the direction youth programs will take over the next few years. Peace education may determine the way the next generation interacts, but there are many ways to go about teaching peace.

This project is therefore also the opportunity to explore the many ways in which peace is taught in Gulu municipality, who can teach peace, and the impact or potential impact that these practices can have on society as a whole. As the people of Gulu municipality, government officials, cultural leaders, and NGOs move their focus from a conflict situation to a post-armed conflict situation in which there is relative peace, it is important to re-evaluate the methods used to prevent conflict in the future. This does not assume that peace must come through one form of peace education. Instead, the study hopes to provide some kind of toolbox with which to analyze conflict critically. By doing so, it can enable the community to take an active role in coping with political, cultural, and economic persecution. The independent study project aims to serve the youth and their community equally. With constant improvement on youth peace building programs, the community, too, will feel the impacts of peace in the years to come.

The main goals of the study are: to become acquainted with methods currently used by schools and organizations in Gulu municipality to teach peace education and practice peace building; to explore attitudes of prominent community members and youth regarding the role of youth in peace building in Gulu municipality; and to consider alternatives or additional options through analysis and criticism of existing programs.

## **Methodology**

The research was conducted over a period of twenty-nine days from April 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 until May 8<sup>th</sup> 2009. With limited time, I chose to conduct interviews solely within Gulu municipality. I worked closely with Akiteng Stella of the Youth Social Work Association as my adviser. Keeping time limits in mind, I

chose to focus on small samples of different perspectives on youth peace education in Gulu municipality. Stella provided initial contacts from which I was able to find interviewees. The different perspectives were organized into seven groups: educators, non-governmental organizations, local politicians, religious leaders, a community representative, youth, and the media. In total, I conducted five formal interviews with semi-structured questions, two semi-structured formal interviews, and one formal focus group with semi-structured questions. I chose to conduct the two interviews with NGO workers in a semi-structured way in order to gain a broader picture of the available programs to youth in Gulu municipality or the greater area of Northern Uganda. The five formal, structured interviews were meant to gather a range of perspectives from individuals concerning the role of youth in peace building. Through very specific, structured interviews, I was able to compare the views and ideas of the interviewees. The three participants whom I chose to conduct semi-structured formal interviews with were NGO workers who could provide more factual and programmatic information for the study rather than personal perspectives. Though the focus group was initially intended to be conducted in a structured, formal style, the tone became more informal and the nature of the questions also became semi-structured more so than structured. In addition, I conducted a brief observation at a hip hop performance in Gulu municipality considering simply the focus of the lyrics and the age of the performers.

I did not hire a translator or research assistant for the project. Every interviewee spoke English comfortably and could respond to my questions without language difficulty. The choice of participants reflected the goals of the research and was not a personal choice for the sake of simplicity. The goal was to hear the perspectives of key community leaders on the role of youth in peace building in Gulu municipality. The majority if not all of the community leaders in the municipality speak English fluently. For the youth focus group, I did ask that at least some members of the group speak English and can translate for others, but as it turned out, the entire group spoke conversational English or fluent English.

I chose to record responses during interviews by writing in a notebook as opposed to using a recording device with the exception of the focus group to spare the tedious task of transcribing hours of interviews. This proved to be both rewarding and challenging. Though it limited the time that would later be spent reviewing interviews, it also meant that it was difficult to focus on the interviewee during

the actual interview. As a result of this method, some data may have been lost. The meanings may also be skewed because while writing quotes and important ideas of the interviewee, it was particularly challenging to also write many notes during the interview. In the case of the one recorded focus group, the task of transcription was highly tedious as expected. With approximately thirty three minutes worth of usable recording, it took about one hour and forty five minutes to transcribe the conversations.

The focus group took place in the late afternoon at an organization in Gulu municipality that provides training to young people. The group of youth were gathered only that same day and later expressed that they would have liked more time to prepare. The group was made up of thirteen people initially, though one person left early on in the interview without speaking and another was unable to participate because she was only sixteen years old. The group was seated in a circle on chairs in a small sewing class space with the sound of only one or two trucks passing as a distraction. Of the eleven in the official group, all were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three with four females and seven males. Out of this group, three females and four males spoke.

One major issue that I did not consider before planning interviews to conduct was the age and sex variety of participants. The focus was on career or role in society before it was about hearing the views of the elderly, youth, in between, girls, women, boys, and men. As a result, there are four female voices and nine male voices heard in the findings section. I utilized a focus group with youth to find a range of views on subjects from youth themselves. All other interviewees were twenty nine or older. Because the focus group had eleven participants, it was fairly representative of youth compared to the seven interviews conducted. There may however be some information lacking as a result of the smaller number of female participants.

### *Challenges*

Initial challenges of the research included establishing accommodations, contacts, and meeting with an adviser to discuss the project for the first time. With only four weeks to conduct seven interviews, a focus group, and complete a write-up of the research, it was particularly pertinent that the research went according to my previously stated plan. There was little opportunity to research organizations in Gulu municipality ahead of time and before arriving in Northern Uganda, I was under the impression

that I could investigate youth peace-building programs at the Youth Social work Association (YSA). As it turned out, the organization was not working in particular youth peace building activities or peace education, so the study was instead conducted independently from an organization to explore broader community views.

Resources used in the research were fairly limited due to funding and time. I accessed books from the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) which had a wealth of writing on peace education and teaching conflict resolution. I also utilized the Internet from Human Rights Focus, but did the majority of writing at the IPSS. As a result, the logistics were the greatest challenge of writing the research paper without the use of internet at the IPSS. Other challenges included a lack of available internet and a hostile environment at the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies where the research was to be compiled and written. Both issues added to a much higher level of stress than expected which in turn may have affected the quality of interviews as well as writing. Similarly, the frequent electricity failure as well as the failure of the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies to utilize the generator at such times, made the period of writing the research findings particularly challenging. Other outside factors that may have contributed to poorer research quality or content include moodiness as the result of hot weather, an inability to emotionally deal with daily verbal harassment by men, and frustration regarding cultural differences relating to timeliness. Valuable working time was lost due to illness during the research period. It was also a major interruption in the study when the resources of the IPSS were no longer available to students with one week left to write the research.

### *Biases*

The study of peace education is inherently biased. Though it is open to interpretation, the notion that peace can be taught assumes that this is what the community would like their children to be learning. My own personal bias is that youth can play a significant role in peace-building in any context. It is likely that this bias stems from the individualistic nature of my upbringing in the United States. Another bias that I have may be the result of a lack of creativity or insight into more traditional means of upbringing in Acholi land<sup>5</sup>. From my own background, the opportunities to learn peace-building, conflict management, and mediation strategies were only found in the classroom or in after school

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<sup>5</sup> Acholi land is found in the North of Uganda. It includes the districts of Gulu, Amuru, Pader, and Kitgum. The population mainly consists of people from the Acholi ethnic group.

programs that cost money. These strategies are thus mainly focused in youth-youth relations, but often exclude other members of society in youth interactions.

In comparing my cultural background to that of Gulu municipality, the role of the elderly is another bias that may have influenced the study. While the elderly in my family are often sent away to nursing homes and lose any influence over family decisions that they may have once had, the tradition of the elderly in Gulu established the group as the educators, the mediators, the key decision makers, and the most respected members of society (Interview with Martin Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). Therefore, my assumption that youth *should* play a key role in peace building comes from a background of emphasis on individuality, the next generation, and a lack of respect for elders.

## CHAPTER 3

### Findings

The idea of “peace,” is just that: an idea. People talk about *world peace* as if it is something tangible, but truly peace does not exist without conflict. Thus, peace education is not merely teaching people to be nice to each other or to never fight or disagree, but rather to teach approaches to solving conflict.

The findings include activities with a range of goals. Though it may seem unfocused, the range of goals are merely exemplary of the many functions of peace building for youth. The word “peace” can easily be overused, but on a human level, “peace” means numerous things for different people. Many interviewees found it to be more conceptual, often using another grand concept of “freedom” in describing how he or she understood the word. If peace does mean “freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of movement” (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009) and “freedom of mind,” (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009) then teaching the matter is a huge undertaking. To teach all of these inner feelings to youth is particularly daunting, but must be assessed in the region of Northern Uganda during this period of post-armed-conflict transformation.

There is a great emphasis on youth participation in peace building in Gulu municipality. Community members recognize that though the entire region was affected by the conflict, youth make up the population that was most severely harmed (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). The reintegration of formerly abducted children is not the only issue facing the region. “Loss of life was generous,” explained Navigator, the twenty-year-old leader of a peace club. Just that in itself had a huge impact on the general function of society. Other outcomes of conflict include poverty, as well as the loss of property (Interview with Navigator, 28/4/2009). There’s also been a huge influx of people into the municipality (Interview with Moses Abonga, 23/4/2009). The combined outcome has been a massive disruption of traditional ways of educating young people to behave in particular ways.

### *In The Past*

Traditionally, children learned peaceful life skills from their family, community, and community leaders. They were required to participate in group digging for long hours on a neighbor or relatives' land to learn team work, humility, and acceptance of discomfort (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). Often, it would take much more time for young people to do the work of adults, making the process lengthier and thus the children more patient and hard working as they grew up (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). They also learned specific manners like not fighting near community spaces such as the borehole (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). Thus, in the past, children learned at a young age to work together, be humble, be flexible regarding discomfort, share, and respect community members and property.

Other means of teaching peace in history included cultural dancing and music. Clans would gather from throughout the Acholi region to demonstrate their courtship dance and compete for marriage. During the gathering, people displayed their very best dancing abilities and other talents. Like the previously stated practices, traditional ceremonies like the courtship dance encouraged hard work from people and strongly discouraged laziness. It also provided the opportunity to bring together people from different places and with different communities to demonstrate their local culture. Through sharing, came greater understanding and respect. The practice of courtship ceremonies has dwindled, but is becoming more common again in recent years (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). As a result of conflict, the methods of educating young people have drastically shifted.

### *Schooling*

Through conversations and interviews, it is apparent that there is an emphasis on western schooling methods in Gulu municipality today. This emphasis demonstrates the changing role of past forms of peace education that came from elders and the community. The change is partially the result of inevitable changes in a society following conflict. One main change was lifestyle while living in Internally Displaced Persons Camps (Interview with Wade, 25/4/2009). It was once common for people to participate in traditional activities such as Wang-o in which entire families gather around a fire at night for stories, teachings, and cultural lessons for life (Interview with Wade, 25/4/2009). Youth are now directed to schools as the most valid source of knowledge. Recent government programs such as REPLICA encourage the development of peace education and youth peace building through schools as intermediaries. The program utilizes peace clubs and different curriculum objectives (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009), but lacks attention to the inclusion of the greater community and thus may actually undermine the community instead of building peace.

Thus, in order to better understand the community understanding of the role of youth in peace building and the practical application of peace education, interviewees were asked to describe the program that they would establish for peace education. According to Acire Jose Jola, Principal Education Officer of the municipality in Gulu municipality, there are three important elements to a curriculum on peace education. First, students learn the concept of peace and related fields. Included in the concept would be the definition and more theoretical aspects of peace. Next, examples are provided through demonstrations to “illustrate and explain the concept of peace” (Interview with Acire Jose Jola,

22/4/2009). Finally, students further engage with the concepts through performance and visits. Throughout each section, examples from local, national, and international situations are used so that students are aware that peace and conflict are not only relevant to Northern Uganda. (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009).

Of course, some programs in schools are less localized. The Ugandan government instituted a new program called REPLICA in response to “the physical and psychological consequences of the armed violence in Uganda” (Uganda National Education Support Center: Ministry of Education and Sports). The name stands for “revitalization of education and participation in learning in conflict areas” (Uganda National Education Support Center: Ministry of Education and Sports). The foci of the program are “peace education, leadership and governance, psychosocial support, performing arts and learning in schools, promotion of the girl-child education, and community integration”(Uganda National Education Support Center: Ministry of Education and Sports). REPLICA was started because it was thought that children learned aggressive behavior during war (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). In order to combat aggressive behavior, schools are encouraged to form “peace clubs and other clubs that enhance the promotion of peace” (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). The goal of the clubs is to “build and help children to live with others in a friendly manner”(Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). The goals of the REPLICA program can be utilized in the classroom and in schools in general as well as school-associated programs and non-school programs. If used appropriately and re-evaluated on a regular basis, the goals may prove to be highly effective in promoting peace to youth with a wide range of interests.

Peace clubs vary greatly in topic, number of members, and specific activities. Ultimately though, they create a safe space in which peace is addressed on the terms of the group of students. In order to accommodate a range of interests and activities, there are peace clubs available to students that focus on a variety of topics. They can be found at many schools and through organizations so that young people unable to attend school, or who are already finished with school still have the chance to be involved. Some examples of the subjects of peace clubs include drama, debate, traditional dance, and religion clubs (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). Peace clubs can support different numbers of students, but overall they hold the potential to fill the gap that has been left by the lack of community role in teaching peace to youth.

At first glance, peace clubs may not appear do much for the community, but as lifestyle has changed significantly from the conflict, they may do just that. “Camp life has eroded the way in which community works” (Interview with Jessica Huber, 28/4/2009). Because many families and communities have changed a great deal throughout the conflict in the north, there must be new mechanisms for community building. In entirely new communities with new people and fewer family members close by, it is the youth who are mainly connected because of schooling. Schooling, however, is mandatory with Universal Primary Education (UPE). Peace clubs may not have a specific curriculum and can thus be more welcoming to discussion and expression. By involving students in the more open environment, they can better get to know each other and possibly begin to establish a new community through other students and their families.

According to Acire Jose Jola, the Principal Education Officer of the municipality, teachers should be key stakeholders in the promotion of peace education in Gulu municipality because they are so connected to the youth. However, teachers tend to concentrate on the subject syllabus (22/4/2009). There are not necessarily trainings on how to integrate peace education into the curriculum and as a result, it can be viewed as a separate subject from other items on the syllabus. Many teachers already struggle to tackle the entire syllabus, so to add a new element to lessons can be particularly challenging. According to Stephen Marks, though some teachers are very committed to peace education, “they already find it difficult to cover the required curriculum. Overcrowding that curriculum with two, three, four or five new 'educations' seems to be unrealistic. Furthermore, new 'educations' are proposed for all levels and all parts of the world, sometimes without taking into account the incredible variety of educational systems and centres of decision-making” (1983). Therefore even with partial integration of peace education into the curriculum in Gulu municipality, it is important to utilize other resources for peace education within the community.

Voices from the community of Gulu municipality seem to feel that schools are well-intentioned but face many challenges. UPE has been a major achievement of the current government. Yet, as pointed out by one NGO worker, it is questionable as to what students are supposed to do once they complete primary six (Interview with Jessica Huber, 28/4/2009). Schools must operate with school fees, but not all students can afford to remain in school past UPE age. Interviewees emphasized that peace education

should be taught to children from a young age until they are at least sixteen (interview with Martin Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009; Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009), but for those who cannot attend school past primary six, peace education in schools may no longer be available to them. Beyond the issue of physical presence at school for peace education, the issue of curriculum is a major dilemma. The agenda of peace education was raised by the government through the REPLICA program, but where do the syllabi come from? Which outside countries are supporting the implementation of peace education programs?

The concept of peace education is often administered within the context of schools in the United States. Thus, programs instituted in Northern Uganda using the ideas and techniques of peace education as written in previous texts may impose culturally unrelated theories and practices on a generation that is not from the United States or necessarily in school. If peace education is to be applied in the context of Northern Uganda, community members must be involved in designing programs. Members of the community have complained about the addition of human rights education to the curriculum in schools without consultation of the people who live in Gulu municipality (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). Human rights education is sometimes categorized as peace education (Cardenas, 2005) so it is also considered by some to be relevant for youth in Gulu municipality to learn.

The well-intentioned UNESCO is one of the major players in encouraging schools to adopt the human rights education program. As Jo-han Galtung, the man who designed peace education, once said, “Everyone has to develop his own format; there is no standard format that should be adhered to. That would be con-trary to the whole idea” (1975). The format of human rights education now being taught in schools in Gulu municipality exemplifies Galtung's statement. As Mr. Snowdon of ARLPI explained that the Rights of the Child was introduced to youth in Gulu without cultural sensitivity to the context. They did not introduce it as the “Rights and Responsibilities of the Child” so it has simply become an excuse for young people to excuse themselves from culturally acceptable and required behavior of a child for this region. An example given by Mr. Snowdon was the right of the child not to carry heavy loads. In the context of Northern Uganda, a child may be required by his or her family to help with chores that would require carrying heavy loads, but the declaration that they are not required to do so may be harmful to the Acholi concept of work ethic and to roles in the household including assisting the mother. There may need to be other means to teaching peace if programs currently prescribed

interfere with other aspects of local culture.

### *Theater*

Though in the majority of writings on peace education, the medium of instruction is the classroom, there are many subtler ways to teach peace that are currently utilized in Gulu municipality. One development that has proved to be very successful is the use of theater. Justin Oryema, a member of a theater group in Gulu explained that, “theater...is a true reflection of the way life is. Of course there is need for conflict but they can be peaceful conflicts. The people (audience) realize there is need to work together. At the end (of the performance), people watching realize...it can be resolved peacefully” (20/4/2009). More specifically, forum theater is a form of theater that is meant to encourage community dialogue for conflict resolution. Mr. Oryema felt that forum theater could be used in schools as a way to teach peace because it presents the opportunity to think from another person's perspective. Furthermore, by teaching youth to consider the views of others from an early age, it can become a skill that they retain throughout life.

Theater is often successful as a teaching technique because it is so engaging. In a general sense, participants and audience members learn to think from different perspectives, but there is also a larger outcome. Theater is also a form of expression, more specifically, a way of expressing views and opinions in a non-threatening space. Acholi culture is one of forgiveness, but not necessarily forgetfulness (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). Though two people can fight one day and be friends the next day, the issues that are the root cause of the problems may not have been addressed (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). This is true of many level conflicts in Acholi land, possibly leaving a fair amount of tension present amongst society. Through theater, people can address conflicts and troublesome situations without much risk of offending others.

### *Music*

Similarly, music has the potential to open channels of communication between individuals or larger groups involved in conflict. Music is often described as a universal language because it has the power to transcend human languages. Two people may not understand each other when speaking, but they can still hear the sound of a bee buzzing and know what creature makes the sound. (Interview with Justin Oryema, 20/4/2009). People can make music together without using words and still convey a message

to one another.

A few years ago, the African music that was played on the radio in Northern Uganda came from the south of the country or other parts of Africa. The many Acholi musicians today are a new phenomenon (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). The style of music ranges from local to reggae to hip hop and more (Observation at performance 25/4/2009), but what is very apparent about the surge in new musicians from Northern Uganda is that they are all young. Some are even in secondary school, but find the time to write and perform their own music (Observation at performance 25/4/2009). If there were not many popular Acholi musicians just a few years ago, what changed to encourage music?

A possible explanation is the influence of peace clubs. In many interviews, people felt strongly that the best way to teach peace to youth is to have them socialize (Interview with Moses Abonga, 23/4/2009; Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). Mr. Acire Jose Jola explained, “I believe...anything that can bring the youth together would foster peace building” (22/4/2009). It can be inferred that by bringing youth together, they are better able to express themselves to each other and discuss similar challenges that they are facing thereby building confidence and camaraderie. “Youth tend to be the people who react more quickly to violence,” explained Mr. Wade Snowdon of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative. If they have each other for support to understand that the problems they face—be they the result of conflict, issues at home or in the community, or challenges of being young—are the similar to the problems that their peers are dealing with as well. It can also be inferred that youth violence stems from a place of insecurity, frustration, or feeling misunderstood. With the comfort of having peers who understand the struggles of being young and support each other in peace clubs, it should not be surprising that creativity is brought out to express those feelings.

One key similarity between many musicians from Northern Uganda is the message of peace in their lyrics. Some musicians in Gulu municipality dress in the fashion of rap stars from the United States who preach about money and speak about women in a derogatory manner. Their lyrics, however, are often about peace. Some even focus on social messages such as issues of HIV. (Observation at performance, 25/4/2009; Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). Music, like theater, is a form of sensitization for many topics that might otherwise be unacceptable to discuss publicly.

### *Dance*

As previously discussed, traditional dance held an important place in society in the past. Courtship dances brought people together from all over Northern Uganda to celebrate talents, similarities and differences. Though the focus was marriage, the events were also an opportunity to teach about different clans. People could meet, learn about different groups, share each other's company and gain new respect and understanding of each other (Interview with Mapenduzi, 18/4/2009). Today the tradition is less common, but people are finding new ways utilize music for the purpose of building peace. In particular, there are many groups of young people who get together to learn traditional dances. This occurs through peace clubs and different organizations, but there are several positive end results. First, young people are learning about their tradition and thus identity. By respecting their own past, they may feel more secure about themselves because understanding one's own culture has the potential to be a form of security. Second, with dance and performance in common, the youth involved have a group of peers who they have shared something with and thus have people close to their own age who they can confide in. Third, the community also benefits because they have positive entertainment from the groups, a reminder of their own tradition, a sense of unity, and young people who are actively participating in healthy behavior.

Drawing from the combined positive effects of dance and performance, the groups can also function on a much larger scale. In Uganda, where there are issues of stereotyping between nearly every group in the country, physical peace may be present, but there are major tensions that prevent national unity. One possible way to change the negative dynamic between regions and groups in the country is to use ceremonies similar to the traditions of the Acholi courtship dances on a grander scale. The idea may work best for youth who are more likely to be open minded about learning new things from other groups. By bringing traditional dancing groups from different parts of the country together to perform for one another, they can learn about each others' cultures. If the groups gather with no competition involved in the performance, but instead simply the goal of learning and understanding and breaking down boundaries, young people may learn that Ugandans are more similar than they are different and find common ground that brings them together. In addition, participants can then share their new understanding of people from other parts of the country with community members at home to help spread mutual respect.

In this way, peace education does not have to be a specific curriculum, but can manifest in many forms. The format of peace education may also depend on a particular subject. One example, as previously mentioned, is debate clubs. Though little information was provided on the details of debate clubs, one interviewee, Wade, from the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative put great emphasis on the idea of discussion. However, he explained that the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative does not have specific programs for youth but incorporates the group into discussions with other groups in society to ensure that voices of different parties are heard. He also stated that it is not always the choice of an NGO as to the subject of their focus. For the ARLPI, The majority of funding for programs and activities directed toward youth comes from non-governmental organizations (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009).

Jessica Huber, the project director of Uganda Fund and a person very well acquainted with NGOs in Gulu municipality stated that “everyone sees it (youth assistance) as a priority, but effectiveness also needs to be a priority” (28/4/2009). The intentions of NGOs are positive, but what is it that makes programs effective? One major issue is that donor funding heavily influences the direction of NGOs (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). Wade was clear though that ARLPI has turned down donor programs (and their money) if ARLPI does not have the capacity or training to carry out a program appropriately (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). One local politician described the process of NGO program implementation in Gulu municipality as sometimes a “top-down” approach. Particularly in the case of education, whether in schools or through other means, the approach must be bottom-up if there is to be true success for the community.

“The government has started coming in interesting the NGOs who come in to provide the communities with some...materials or the facilities for their resettlement...that was not enough really” (Interview with Navigator, 28/4/2009), said one member of a youth focus group. It becomes challenging to recommend alternatives when it is the NGOs who are providing much of the funding for the youth-based activities in Gulu municipality. Regardless of how much they have done, they have been responsible for some support of peace clubs and other organizations, without which, there may have been little or no support available. It is possible that the statement by Navigator was the result of frustration. Other participants went on to explain that even if a group can write a strong proposal for funding to present to NGOs, they are likely to be rejected. This group in particular had been rejected by

NGOs for funding and were unable to purchase uniforms for dance performances, so they were, not surprisingly, disgruntled by the lack of support. The group was fairly certain that the NGOs fund groups that have many members. This group had only twelve. The dilemma for them was that they had no way to gaining new members without first gaining more attention. Without money for dance uniforms, they were unable to do the traditional dance performances that they were planning to do in the community. They explained that dance could benefit the community as a whole, but were stuck in a bind because of the lack of funding.

One factor in common with many programs and activities for youth peace building is the creation of safe spaces in which to approach issues. Part of the reason why conflict can be such a problem is simply that issues are not addressed. The many venues of peace education discussed in interviews including theater, music, dance, drama, peace clubs, and classroom discussion all establish a safe haven to access issues without necessarily personalizing them, thereby showing that they are social issues. While de-stigmatizing the discussion of said issues, these forms of peace education act as a voice to the youth to express their world views to other groups in society. One major tension is between the youth and the elders (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009).

In the past, elders were the main sources of peace education to youth. Many societal changes occurred because of the conflict in the North—one of which is the role of elders in educating youth. Today, there is a great deal of resentment on behalf of elders towards the youth (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009). The focus in Gulu municipality on youth programs is successful in many ways, but it can also be excluding to more traditional aspects of Acholi culture. One organization that is working to reconcile youth and elders is the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI). They do so by including representatives from all parts of the community in discussion and focus groups on numerous subjects. The ARLPI used focus groups with facilitators because they “wanted to make sure that the youth didn't feel in any way hindered from talking” (Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009).

### *Athletics*

While communication may be key to peace building, it does not need to be focused on the topic of conflict. Mr. Abongo Moses, the Local Councilperson of Laroo division, was personally of the opinion that sports are another outlet to the tensions of being young. He explained, “it makes them fresh, clear

in the mind, physically fit, and (helps them to) make friends” (23/4/2009). He also viewed sports as a way to bring young people together from different parts of the district to remind them that “there's better life somewhere where people interact” (23/4/2009). From his statement, it is evident that there is a concern about the opportunities youth have to interact. Sports, like theater, music, and dance, can be a healthy way to express oneself and release tension. It may be particularly helpful to young people who express themselves in a physically competitive way. Sports also have the capacity to teach team work, work ethic, determination and more, but ultimately, they serve to release the physical and emotional tension that young people are prone to feeling. As assessed by Heather Johnston Nicholson et. al., sports have a multitude of positive effects on young people. “Teamwork, fairness and mutual respect” (2004) are just a few of the potential benefits of athletics. Depending on the program, the focus can also be on gender equality (Interview with youth focus group, 28/4/2009), but for any positive lesson, the field can act as a practice for real life.

Another possible venue for positive life skills for peace is religion. The majority of Northern Uganda is Christian,(Interview with Wade Snowdon, 25/4/2009) so often Christianity is the main discussion piece when the religion is related to peace. Irene, a twenty-year-old member of a peace club emphasized the benefits of church choir and church activities saying, “ it can also make their mind centered and that one they can think of peace also, participate also in fellowship. And they should be fully sensitized to how peace can be brought in society and how they can bring peace” (28/4/2009). Beyond being mentally centered from the stability of religious beliefs, the sense of belonging that comes from participation in religious groups and activities has the capacity to build community. If youth attend church every Sunday, they also become part of a group of people who see each other on a regular basis. This may in turn open up opportunities to make new friends, discuss issues and provide support.

With many ways of teaching peace, it is also important to consider the content that is taught through different methods and activities. It is apparent that one mechanism of peace education cannot teach all aspects of peace. Thus, through a variety of programs, locations, and groups, youth can find a more holistic approach to their own understanding of peace. Some issues that interviewees mentioned included gender based violence, HIV and AIDS and land ownership. Thus, the many different activities previously discussed fill in the holes that exist in western education strategies to teaching peace.

### *The Challenges*

The challenges of youth peace building programs are many. The greatest issue as assessed by participants in the study was funding. Like the peace club interviewed as a focus group, many programs are stuck in a position where they cannot add more members or activities without funding. But with limited funding available, groups often dwindle to nonexistence. Groups often turn to local government for financial support. A local councilperson explained that “there were many groups (but)...financing them is hard for us. Sometimes we connect them to NGOs but NGOs are phasing out and the clubs just die out” (23/04/09). The reality of the situation is difficult to overcome. One recurring theme in interviews was the community's reliance on NGOs. One solution to the issue is to come up with creative ways to run programs without large expenses.

Some ideas are already being utilized or considered. One such solution is to supplement program costs with income generating activities (IGA). IGA could serve to support program activity fees, school fees for those involved, and build a sense of teamwork between members. Some examples of IGA listed by interviewees included agriculture and craft making. One other possible way to supplement expenses for peace clubs that focus in music, dance, or theater could be to charge a small entrance fee for certain performances while also retaining free performances for community members who are unable to pay. That way, the group is serving the community while also gaining funding in order to continue having a voice in the community. However, even if groups are able to use this strategy, they may still face the dilemma of competing with other groups who do similar activities. Because there are countless difficulties for peace clubs and mainly-youth-led groups, discussion among the group is also necessary.

The idea of “discussion” sounds vague, but youth are often very creative. Through frequent creative brainstorming sessions and a set of important questions to focus on, a group of young people can overcome many challenges. Though from the context of the United States, Calvin Morrill et. al. argues that, “adult-centered solutions to youth conflict and violence dominate contemporary public discourse about adolescents, and a wide range of political and professional interests have called for interventions to better control adolescents” (2000). In Gulu municipality, many community members and NGOs are working towards finding youth-centered solutions to youth conflict and violence. There are yet to be clear impacts of the shift, but as evinced by the youth involved in the study, they want to take on leadership roles. With greater leadership comes greater responsibility in these circumstances.

Youth can also play a more practical role in peace building in the context of Northern Uganda. When asked what role youth can play in peace building, the young people in one peace club presented the need for youth involvement in the Juba Peace talks<sup>6</sup>. Youth often perceive themselves as marginalized in society. One way that this group resolved to aid the issue was by calling for greater political involvement. When asked to elaborate on the meaning of involvement, one young man asserted that he wanted youth to have the option of actively running for political positions. Politicians are likely to target youth in their campaigns because they understand that “the active age is the youthful age...They (youth) are able do a lot of things” (Interview with Acire Jose Jola, 22/4/2009). Politicians seem to acknowledge that the youth want their voices heard and the youth are happy to participate if they are being listened to.

Many participants in the research also spoke of the methods of peace education in the past. Very few discussed possible ways to utilize the equally valid systems of the past today. Without forcing the past to be the present, it is still possible to use the general ideas or goals of past methods in order to integrate tradition into the present. Some peace clubs do utilize traditional music in their programs, but it is unclear how large a scale it is upon which they function. As previously discussed, the traditional courtship dance mentioned by Mr. Mapenduzi can be re-established for widely spread use throughout Uganda to build understanding.

As stated by Wade of the ARLPI, Wang-o, the community bonfire-esque teaching mechanism is no longer readily used in Northern Uganda. While this research has found that youth programs are important for all of society, it is also pertinent that all factions of a locale be involved in peace building so that the process it is a joint effort. A reinstatement of wang-o or an equivalent in several places throughout each division of the municipality could ensure the inclusion of the community. In addition, it could act as an opportunity for discussion and a forum for concerns or the resolving of disputes. By involving the community in peace building and discussion on the role of youth in post-armed conflict peace building, there is likely to be less tension between youth and the elderly and more creation of ideas and solutions to problems specific to that area.

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<sup>6</sup> “The Juba Peace Talks began summer of 2006 and laid out a framework for both ending active violence between the Government and the rebel army as well as addressing the root causes of the war” (<http://www.resolveuganda.org>).

### *The Impacts*

From lectures, conversations, and programs, it can be observed that many people discuss the success of sensitization on different topics. Youth are responsible for much more than the political or physical peace of having no war. They must work toward establishing methods of attaining peace in more localized issues and social issues as well. Most importantly, there is an apparent desire for youth self-expression. As discussed in the research, there are many different ways of expressing oneself that youth are utilizing to build peace for their communities and the future. Self expression also demands inclusion in society, but this does not necessitate the exclusion of the rest of the community. Without clear impacts thus far, it can be inferred that if programs integrate community perspectives, the job of building peace can become integrated into daily life.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Conclusion**

From the findings, it is apparent that Acholi culture does not focus solely on youth. Many of the programs for youth seem to benefit other community members, but may also alienate other age groups in society when the ultimate goal is to work as a whole to build peace in the region. Upon further study, it would be of great value to examine mechanisms of peace building that are inclusive to youth yet work with many groups in society with the aim of peace building. It would also be beneficial to bring youth into discussion about their role in peace building while in a focus group with other important members of the community.

With the little time that was allotted to the research, very few interviews were conducted. A further study would greatly benefit from a longer time period and a greater number of interviews with different members of society because the key questions of the investigation rely heavily on a variety of opinions. In particular, given more time it would improve the study to utilize a greater sampling of youth voices from different groups in the municipality. Similarly, the research explores a broad spectrum of programs and ideas about how to teach peace education. Each type of program is therefore analyzed fairly shallowly and could be better analyzed through observations of the activities. It would also be a great help for a person from outside the community of Gulu municipality researching peace education

to utilize a local person with some experience in peace education or youth peace building to act as a research assistant and translator. This could provide a wider range of views from interviewees and a greater focus on the present rather than the recounting of the conflict itself.

The initial research argument was that the youth are the future. The idea is correct, however it may be lacking in its essentialness. Youth are the future, but every person in the community is the present. The society does not function as youth alone, nor do youth function without the community. With this in mind, peace education—when utilized in the appropriate context—can provide young people a base upon which they can learn to behave as mediators in society. Currently, there are still major splits in Gulu municipality between different providers of peace education. Teachers, administrators, politicians, religious leaders, NGO workers, donors, families, communities, elders, and youth must all work together to achieve means of working towards peace. Until they do, there will be gaps, repetitions, a lack of funding where it is most needed, and silenced voices in Gulu municipality.

If these different groups choose to work together to build peace education and learn to listen to one another, peace education has the potential to make serious impact on the community. Many people in Gulu municipality have strong, creative ideas about how to teach peace, but the study did not find that there is a clear place to voice those ideas. As exploratory research, there is still much more to analyze about the role of youth in peace building in Gulu municipality during a time of post-armed conflict transformation. For follow-up research, it would be practical to utilize the findings from this study in order to select one method of peace education in which the researcher can explore and analyze more deeply. At this time, it is still crucial to examine the role of youth in the context and the role of peace education in shaping long-lasting peace Gulu municipality.

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## Annexes

### A. Semi-Structured Interview Questions:

1. What do you understand by the term “peace”?
2. What does peace education mean to you in the context of Northern Uganda
- 3a. Do you have any experience with peace education?
- 4b. What approaches to peace education are you familiar with?
5. Do you think youth have a role to play in peace building?
- 6a. If so, what role?
- 7b. If not, why not?
8. What is your view on the role of the arts in peace education and peace building?
9. What arts or other activities would you recommend to be used in peace education and how specifically could they be used in programs, activities, etc?
10. If you were to develop your own peace education curriculum or program for youth, what would be your main emphasis?
11. In your view, what would you consider an effective approach to peace education and why?
12. Please list the approaches to peace education that you would consider effective.
13. Specifically in the context of Gulu municipality, do you have any key stakeholders you consider most active in the promotion of peace education and peace building?
14. How has peace education and peace building impacted Gulu municipality and its inhabitants?
15. Do you have any comments or recommendations?

## **B. Interviews and Observation**

### **Interview with Honorable Ojara Martin Mapenduzi, 29 District Council Speaker 18 April 2009**

Q: What does “peace” mean to you?

A: To me, peace...I look at peace in a much broader perspective. To me, peace means having a stable mind where a person or people live in safety...where the safety is guaranteed, where the rights of people are not violated...where there is freedom of association, freedom of experience, freedom of movement...basically that is my broader perspective of peace. Peace is all about safety and security economically, physically and people have to have sound minds. Peace means people feel secure about tomorrow. Also, peace means to me...people are respected and listened to...that means their rights are not violated and they're involved...they are confident...people are confident of the neighbors, of the leadership they have...to serve the interests of the people.

Q: Can peace be taught?

A: Peace building is a process. Having a peaceful environment needs time. When we are talking about teaching people it means it should be more of an informed teaching—not a classroom setting. At home you should teach your children to love your neighbors, to associate freely. As a father, you teach children by example. When you are a violent person, your children will grow up to be violent. Children learn from what they see. The best way to teach peace is to be exemplary. Yes it can be taught, but it should mostly be done at the informal or family level. It can also be taught at community level. We have a very strong culture (ex. No child should fight at the water point or other community resources).  
-Peace created through traditional teaching about community and sharing  
-Threats of provoking the gods  
Another thing, our parents used to teach us to live peaceful through folktales which are very scary.

They shape moral uprightness. As a child you feel you need one another.

-Instill fear in people with bad behaviors so that in you know, in this world, you need one another.

-Our model: “Rebe eye tero”= “Unity is strength”

In many ways, people are directly or indirectly taught to live peacefully with one another. When you have a boy and girl, the boy is not supposed to fight the girl. (Ex. German peace education). We can have a curriculum designed where...all the schools in Gulu are encouraged to have peace clubs and children are encouraged to do charity work. They learn how important it is to help each other instead of (causing) conflict.

Q: Can youth play a role in peace building?

A: I think if we want to have a long lasting peace, we should take children and youth as our key targets...because when you teach a child...from my experience when you look at the conflict in Northern Uganda, the most affected group...they should be involved. Three quarters of the LRA and about one half of the UPDF fall within the youth bracket (12-35). That's why it's important to engage the youth in peace building. These are the people who will lead the world tomorrow so they'll grow up and be very peaceful. “Every seed that you plant will germinate the way you want” (can you force a seed to be the plant you want?) You are indirectly planting the seed of peace (when you focus on youth).

Right now we have a lot of land conflict. The people involved are not the old people. It is important to have total involvement of youth in peace building. Our culture has a way of bringing up youth in a way that promotes peace (Ex. Digging). Fighting selfishness...selfishness is an enemy of peace.

Greed...human feeling and unity.

-(in school) we were encouraged to have a sense of ownership

The youth of today are becoming more destructive to the environment. We are not catching up with changes of the world to affect youth positively.

Q: What role do can the arts play in peace education?

A: I know that it is international believed that games and sports bring together different parties. People meet and share talents. It make people very competitive but on a positive note.

-Traditional dances: courtship dance ? promotes peace because intermarriage between clans and regions, but \*\*only LUO\*\*

-Get to know one another's culture from marriage/meeting at ceremonies: understand each other

-Discourages laziness, encourages talent: people show best of selves, see best in each others' groups.

-Now less common, but starting again with ceremonies: building peace through sharing: promoting culture, talent and building peace.

-We learn from music, games and sports

Q: If you could design your own curriculum or program in peace building, who would it serve and what would be the main focus?

A: It would be much better to design a curriculum that focuses at children at elementary level. It is important to make children involved in peace building at a very early stage—must cover primary level and secondary level from p1 to p7 and s1-s4, so ages 6 to 17...or 18 to 6.  
that is the best stage that they learn things that remain with them

My curriculum would look at building peace at the community level and family level (smallest unit of society)

- Emphasize discipline at home, school, and moral values (like what?), community participation, voluntarism, reconciliation and mediation.
- Should look at training children to be mediators (example of what Joseph Kony missed). Northern Uganda's never been peaceful. That is the environment we've had.
- Environment that teaches peace as an asset—severe punishment for those who act contrary
- Encourage strong rules/regulations at school
- It should fit any situation (ex. Today LRA, tomorrow land); bridge the gap between two or more parties
- To make meaningful peace, use children because many adults have been part of the problem
- Need to make it a “culture of peace.”

**Interview with Justin Oryema, about 35**  
**Mega FM**  
**20 April 2009**

Q: What is your experience with peace education or peace building?

A:

- involved in process since early in education years (primary and secondary) as a school prefect
- Prefect: responsible for linking pupils and teachers...making peace through a leadership role
- You have to resolve conflicts as a prefect...
  - mediation
- Joined theater industry: “My plays mainly tackle issues of not only peace building but other social issues”
- Role of the media: bridge the gaps between audience and the government
- Founder of Amele Theater group: based in Gulu but reaches entire North of Uganda
- Also uses the radio to air plays

Q: How did you first become interested in theater?

A:

- Through exposure when young at school: father was responsible for choosing groups. Many artists came to visit the home...some special artists came to dress from (my) home
- In secondary school, interested in theater but difficult (to join)
- A professor came from the USA to teach drama
  - trained as a performer; studied music, dance, and drama at Makerere University

On music and dance:

- “the biggest tool to teach peace or peace building” (example of bee: people can speak different languages but they can still hear the bee and recognize that it is a bee)
- helps to find something in common to share

On theater:

-a display of human emotion

“The language of acting is the same universally”

Q: How would you define the word “peace”?

A: “It depends how you perceive it”

Of course it does not mean...you can have chaos everywhere but the way how you maneuver. You're not so much stressed...even the neighbors...(?) ...your environment is good enough to stay and relax. You wake up and you are not so much worried.

-Lack of tension...”you are calm in the heart. You may have nothing materially...but...in your heart you know that...my heart is calm”

Q: Can peace be taught?

A: “peace can be taught. Right from the womb, peace can be taught. Even how a father treats a mother when she's pregnant...the baby will know. After birth, the way the mother and father stay reflects...teaches that it's good to stay in harmony, share, etc....the child learns not to infringe on others' rights. The other side too...(child can learn bad behavior).

You can also encourage the child to do what is right. Home is one of the most vital places to teach peace. Of course it is also important in schools...(they) should draw from the family perspective. (who?) should have similar norms of upbringing, not contrary to what is learned at home. (Children are) also tested within peer groups.”

Q: Can the arts play a role in peace education?

A: “I think (the arts) plays the biggest role. You cannot even see...” (ex. Physical education)

“Theater...it is a true reflection of the way life is. Of course there is need for conflict but they can be peaceful conflicts. The people (audience) realize there is need to work together. At the end, people watching realize....it can be resolved peacefully”

Q: How should the arts be used for peace education?

A:

-In Uganda, part of physical education

“The way they do it, I'm not so happy about it...from day one they should include it as a lesson plan. I would love to see...exercise books and text books...also includes music, dance, acting...it's not just a matter of story telling.”

Q: What role do you play in youth peace building?

A:

-You involved in Justin's theater group in Gulu...some small money comes to help pay for school fees

-Has not yet been to schools to get them involved

Q: Can youth be a vehicle for peace?

A: "Youth are the most stubborn people and can be easily provoked emotionally."

-keep them involved in programs that promote peace. Challenge them to come up with creative ideas...challenge them to come up with ways to solve conflicts in the community"

Forum Theater:

A piece is acted, then spectators get involved (switch in)

-Should be used in schools

-participants get a sense of what it's like to be in different roles (ex. How challenging it is to be prefect)

Makes people think: "If I was the one, how would I act?"

-Teaches people to consider others' views

(If practiced when young, potential to prevent conflicts later?)

Q: If you could design your own program or curriculum, what would the focus be and what age group would you target?

A: The focus would be...starting from primary education...age of 7 to 9 or so. The focus would also stretch down to family members. Since there is need to make a solid base and look at root causes of when a family is acting like this"

"There should be a deliberate effort for teachers to visit each child at home. The family of the child...(teachers) share with them...look at the way they live..."

"In community, you want everyone to be united, to be one...maybe at home, fighting is normal (mentioned also in LC III's interview. Though many say family is where people should learn peace, it is also the example of where there may not be peace. How can families be trained to provide a peaceful environment? How can young people grow up to be peace parents?), but here you want everyone's views respected. There may be no democracy at home...by observing..."

-Keep advancing (the program) maybe seven years...they become a class who understand what peace is. They come from different primary schools, but all had the same program when young.

-Utilize forum theater, stories, visits (exchange)

Q: Anything else you would like to add?

A: Peace is not just a one-person effort. It should be a collective effort. Each person should be a guard...if peace is to escape, someone will catch it. (USE THIS QUOTE!) Be a police for peace...no peace police corruption.

**Interview with Acire Jose Jola, about 50  
Principal Education Officer  
22 April 2009**

Q: What do you understand by the term peace?

A:

-More conceptual

It is a concept of do with freedom of mind, and freedom to do what you want as a human being.

-To socialize, not really security, but a situation where you feel your mind is free. You feel you have your rights as a human. It's something you feel inside you.

Q: How do you see peace education in the context of northern Uganda?

A: In Northern Uganda where war has been for so many years, peace is suppressed because in the situation of war or insurgency or insecurity, peace cannot prevail. The fact that war has lasted so long...there are so many young which have been born and lived within this period so they grow up in this situation where they have not grown in peace. So it is important that some learning framework be provided. So they know how it is to live in peace because my own thinking...this war started in '86...and '05 or '06 when it started cooling down...so all the children in primary and secondary...their mind is not really open to peace. In the municipality...there was not insecurity but there was not peace. Many things were suppressing people. They really need that framework. What peace is...it really needs going through a learning process.

-Peace education is very necessary. Because apart from the situation...I feel there are many other things that suppress people in the minds of human beings.

-Lifestyle ? can affect peaceful mind

It would be good to have peace education to support other learning programs. Municipal education now called "unity program"

-REPLICA: Revitalization of Education and Participation in Learning in Conflict Areas:

Compound messages at schools: peace education and life skills

Q: What experience do you have with peace education?

A:

REPLICA: initiated through government by municipal education for Northern Uganda (implemented)

-Children formed peace clubs and other clubs that enhance the promotion of peace

Goal: to build and help children to live with others in a friendly manner

-Thought children learned aggressive behavior during war.

Q: Do youth have a role to play in peace building?

A: I believe very strongly (that youth have a role to play). They are the very active group in society and things to do with conflict...if peace education targets them, it will go a long way.

Q: What is their role?

A: The elderly people are more peaceful people because they have experiences. They have already internally resolved those things that can cause conflict. When you look at very young, they lack those abilities. They are less tolerant from lack of experience. If they are targeted by peace education, they can control themselves. If they can control themselves, the rest of society will be okay. You see, even the politicians target youth. As educators, we know the active age is the youthful age. They are able to do a lot of things.

Q: Can the arts be used in peace education?

A: Yes. Arts like music and so on...They discern a lot of messages and then they provide opportunities to release stress. It provides the opportunity for socializing. Sometimes it can have negative impacts in the sense that it can...conflict situations can arise in social situations.

-can promote peace through: messages, opportunities, and help reduce stress.

Under REPLICA:

-promotion of school clubs which target many things: main goal to bring people together.

I want to be very specific...here there are so many musicians...they weren't here (from elsewhere in the past). Music has done a lot. Football also. Our youth now prefer to watch on the screen instead of see it here. Cultural dances...our youth now go to disco halls: almost loses the objective. Also debating clubs at schools and also religious clubs (YCS-Young Christian Society and Scripture Union). I believe anything that can bring the youth together would foster peace building. Some economic objectives also:

-bricklaying etc.

Q: If you could design your own curriculum or program in peace education, what would it include and what age would be the recipients?

A: My curriculum would include classroom experiences where we'd be talking about peace like the definition of peace...just to learn about aspects of peace theoretically in the classroom. The other could come through demonstrations using examples (both local and outside) to illustrate and explain the concept of peace. The third part would be practical experiences through performance like in drama or plays, excursions to areas which are relevant to learning about the concept of peace. Like other parts of Uganda could come to Northern Uganda. Also, how people locally resolve conflicts.

-Teach traditional forms like moto oput and other cultural mechanisms from outside in curriculum.

Our children are...a bit late...different from developed countries. The age group relevant for this curriculum would start from 9 or 10 until about age 18. By 18, it could be integrated with other studies like history, religious studies, geography.

-Emphasis on post-conflict history outside Uganda so students know war can be there but its not the end of everything. People can still live peacefully.

Q: What do you consider a effective approach to peace education and why?

A:

- 1.learning concept
- 2.Provide examples

### 3. performance/visits

Effective education: the practical such as drama and field trips and examples to illustrate.

- Starts from the individual and then projects outside
- Learn by performing or seeing—exposure to different situations

Q: In Gulu municipality, do you think there are any key stakeholders most active in promoting peace education?

A: The problem we have here is many people think that things are done through programs by government or NGOs but in my own imagination, the way I see it, in a normal situation, teachers would be the key role players, but the problem now is our teachers tend to concentrate on the subject syllabus so that, even the programs of peace education like REPLICA, they see it as a separate thing instead of integrating it into their normal work. So maybe...World Vision—they train some teachers to promote these things. Also, YSA and other NGOs. You would think NGOs are doing more but teachers are the ones to do much more with peace education (on the ground).

Q: What has been the impact of peace education on Gulu municipality?

A: Somehow, I think we are able to see some change in the pupils, especially in primary because the kind of behavior we used to experience at the time of insurgency, we are no longer experiencing. I attribute it to peace education. I have been seeing when we used to organize in games and sports, when they lose, there used to be a lot of fighting. The trend is going down. Human beings behave differently in different situations. Now that that situations (insurgency) is not there, people changed but if the peace education didn't exist, even with insurgency over, would students still act as they did? In schools children sing songs about peace...probably it would help. Even local musicians sing about peace and the children understand it.

Q: Do you have any comments or recommendations?

A:

- broader: think about youth out of school
  - speak with community development workers
- (due to lack of time, unable to meet with a community development worker)

**Interview with Mr. Abonga Moses, 39,  
Local Councilperson (LC) III Chairman of Laroo**

**23 April 2009**

Q: What do you understand by the term “peace”?

A: It (peace) is a situation where people are free to do what they feel like...but it will not infringe on another person's feeling.

Q: What does peace education mean to you in the context of Northern Uganda?

A: To me, peace education in Northern Uganda...given the background of conflict, is educating us to get out of the kind of living we're in...pulling us out of the trauma we have been living in. Normally we know, given the background, we are getting a lot of problems from the community...homes attacking other homes...even fights in the home(*reasons? Common topics?*). Everyone thinks he can control everything. We tell them how to respect the law. We need to change...we cannot stay in that kind of life. The law has not been so strict because of the conflict. (*the conflict or poor pay for law? What are the reasons for not trusting the law?*)

-encouraging people to go report to the LC or court; get mediation; often assemble community by lowest level of community division (sub-wards) to talk to them, give them the time to raise problems they have and try to find solutions to those problems (example: land issue at Gulu University and Laroo community)

Q: Do you have any experience with peace education?

A: Mostly, we want them (youth) to socialize. We give them balls so that they interact and create friendship.

Q: What other approaches to peace education are you familiar with?

A: There are also drama groups. There were many groups...financing them is hard for us. Sometimes we connect them to NGOs but NGOs are fading out and the clubs just die out.

Q: What activities would you recommend for peace education and why?

A: Sporting activities and drama will encourage them so much. They've made a lot of changes. Drama...(there are) some that relate purely on forgiveness.

-Parishes compete...so they meet people even at the district level. They get exposed because some are always in their homes and they fail to know that there's better life somewhere where people interact.

Q: If you could design your own program or curriculum, what would be the main focus and what age group would be involved?

A: I would target from about the age of 9 or 10 to 18; personally I always like sports...it makes them fresh, clear in the mind, physically fit and (helps them) make friends.

-use various kinds of sports

At times in clubs, they tend to not be so committed like (for example) in drama clubs...There's two

things...sporting activities and something they can do to raise money...even farming. (Income Generating Activities)

-also to get school fees; they can buy supplies with their own money

Q: What do you consider an effective approach to youth peace-building?

A: That thing which can make them come together for me...it's the sports.

Q: In Gulu municipality, do you think there are any key stakeholders most active in promoting peace education?

A: Definitely we as local leaders. We are key in this. Also youth...another influential community is the women...if these three could work hand in hand...(could be successful). These women begin the promotion (of peace) in their house.

Q: How do you think peace education has impacted Gulu municipality and its inhabitants?

A: They've changed. My most vivid example is people who came from the bush...the returnees...they did a lot of dramas. They were seen as outcasts...this thing has fought that. (shown that they didn't choose to go)...they are free in the community now.

Q: Do you have any comments or recommendations?

A:

-use sports for wild youth who are arrested

-get donors to sponsor youth activities

-NGOs impose a top bottom approach, but need to consult community first and use bottom top approach.

Other:

Population of Laroo?

-As of 2002, 20,971: 10,193 men and 10,778 women

-Much of population increase from during the conflict: not returning home now

-Gulu University also adds large population (and land issues)

-Next census in 2012

**Interview with Helen Nyeko, about 55**

**Municipal Inspector of Schools**

**24 April 2009**

\*The following interview was answered in writing by the interviewee

Q: What do you understand by the term peace?

A: Peace refers to living in happiness without anything troubling the mind, body and soul.

Q: What does peace education mean to you in the context of Northern Uganda?

A: Northern Uganda has undergone insurgency for over 20 years and the people have undergone a lot of trauma because of killing, abduction, displacement and hunger to mention but a few hence they are psychologically greatly affected. It is on this ground that there is great need for peace education.

Q: What is your personal experience with peace education

A: very limited experience with peace education

Q: What approaches to peace education are you familiar with?

A: In schools we have peace clubs but their activities I am not familiar with although there is the element of MDD (Music, Dance, and Drama). However, outside the schools, people (local musicians) have been advocating for peace through composing songs on peace. Some approaches apart from MDD could be games or fine art.

Q: Do you think youth have a role to play in peace building?

(\*\*MISUNDERSTOOD QUESTION TO READ: "Do you think YOU have a role to play in peace building?")

A: Definitely yes. First as a parent I should help my family to live in harmony and happiness with each other. Secondly as a school inspector, I should ensure that peace exists in schools. The teachers, pupils, parents, community and all stakeholders relate well with one another.

Q: What is your view on the arts in peace education?

A: The arts are not very clearly brought out as peace education does not stand out clearly on the curriculum. Peace is integrated into all the subjects. (so it is not clearly defined as to what "peace education" is within the syllabus)

Q: What arts would you recommend in peace education?

A: I would still recommend MDD and other would be games, physical education, fine arts, guidance and counseling.

Q: Why?

A: They are outlets to anger, violence.

Q: If you were to develop your own curriculum, what would be the focus?

A: MDD would be ideal...they (the activities) make you very active. You can also use songs concerning peace.

-games like playing football. We have local games also.

-These relieve all the anger and tension

-It should not be limited only to schools. It would be good to focus on youth, particularly adolescents.

Q: What would you consider an effective approach to peace education and why? Please list.

A:

-Making friends

-Working together

-Listening to other people's views

-Helping those in problems

-Providing guidance and counseling services

-Being honest, kind, transparent, etc.

-Respecting rules, regulations, laws

-Avoiding revenge.

-Saying sorry for any wrong done

(Helen's views are on a personal level, but could also be utilized in programs or classroom setting)

Q: In Gulu municipality do you think there are any key stakeholders most active in promoting peace education?

A: The work of promoting peace education is mostly left in the hands of Schools, Non Governmental Organizations such as GUSCO, ACORD, CARE, Mass Media, Traditional Chiefs, the Religious.

Q: Do you think peace education has impacted Gulu municipality and its inhabitants?

A: First and foremost the Acholis (does this suggest that other groups in the country are not?) are peace loving people. This manifests itself in the manner in which they relate with other people. They have composed local songs to end the war, etc, but peace education has not fully impacted positively for the following reasons;

1Fights over land rights

2Defilement/rape

3Robbery

However it is reducing.

Q: Any comments or recommendations?

A: Conflict and Conflict management should be taught in schools. The government should include it in the syllabus.

-also the experience of African Politics...depends on where president comes from

-by incorporating peace education in the syllabus, people will change (from the dominance and

retaliation between groups in charge of the country)

-Social studies class includes civic education and history and works towards national unity in Uganda

-Also teach nationalism by hanging Ugandan flag in schools, with the school anthem sung in all schools, and school prayers

\*\*issue of gender in peace education

**Interview with Wade George Snowdon, 29  
Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative:  
Research and Documentation Programme Officer  
25 April 2009**

Q: How do you define youth?

A: ages 18 to 35 according to Uganda

Q: How are Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) working with youth?

A:

- often funded through Catholic Relief Services
- Currently, programs in HIV awareness and Sensitization
  - 1 Identify already respected youth leaders from the community
  - 2 Train them in conflict/resolution
- Must rely on donor funds and therefore donor demands
- assist already existing groups to develop programs (like drama)
- look for main conflicts in each community (ex. Gender based violence)
- In focus groups and trainings, they identify youth leaders
- “That way, the youth voices are being heard”
- youth in camps: broke down leadership to youth versus elders
- make sure there's no isolation between youth and elders and other groups (ex. Land conflict)
- currently: mediation on land conflict: involve youth in talks

Q: How do donor demands affect the programs provided by ARLPI?

A:

- heavily influenced by donors
- many organizations had to cut back 20-30% of funds
- Sometimes asked to work with bigger NGOs; occasionally refuse if it goes against ARLPI goals or plans; ARLPI does not often do programs if they cannot do them very well
- top religious leaders are volunteers
- most money comes from international NGOs

Q: Can you speak more to youth programs that ARLPI has done in the past or is planning?

A:

- Peace center: conference center, library, internet, lodging, peace and conflict resolution center
- No specific youth program but incorporate youth into many programs:
  - trainings on land rights, bringing different organizations together to make sure they are working the same way
  - “people here our age (18-35) have never seen peace”
  - “Youth...tend to be the people who react more quickly to violence”

Q: What are your means of involving youth?

A:

- used focus group discussions with youth: “we wanted to make sure that the youth didn't feel in any way hindered from talking” “there's not a lot of respect between youth and elders”
- try to mend these relationships with baseline surveys and focus groups

“Wang-o”: entire families gather at night for stories, teachings, cultural lessons for youth...bring mutual

respect (similar to a bonfire); with war, these practices ended

1 Role of Christianity

2 The war

3??

4 Impact of International Community

-Loss of respect for culture; also culture of shame to Acholi from outside because of major cultural shifts

Tradition:

- Moto oput: Many youth unaware of these practices
- conflicts with Christianity and traditional practices

Q: Who should receive peace education? What should the focus be?

A:

- Focus: role plays, group discussions; facilitators ensure that everyone has a voice
- We (ARLPI) don't believe in cookie-cutter programs...each community has different issues...address needs on the ground.
- Address issues currently going on...depends where...Land, GBV...

In general, ARLPI: everything done from an interfaith position

In activities and discussions, try to ask how this relates to a person's religion.

Q: What are other issues relating to youth and peace building?

A: \*\*Human rights education:

-Rights of the Child introduced to youth in Gulu without cultural sensitivity (who introduced it?)

-Donors don't provide time:

“you really have to fine tune programs and do a lot of research...you can't go in expecting to teach everything”

- making sure they have a background
- wasn't “holistic” (human rights education)
- People try to pack a lot into one day workshops (and the like)

Q: How could it be improved?

A:

- Primarily, it's an oral culture and a visual culture, incorporating things like music, drama, role plays...we make sure these things are incorporated in our programs...we support some drama groups
  - “It's not easy for people to talk about things...symbolism allows people to give a voice to things that are silent within you”
- people here can physically fight and be back together the next day as if nothing happened, but

conflicts are not resolved; even if people are able to forgive, root cause not addressed

-try to talk about wrongs in non-threatening way:

ex. ceremonies of reintegration provide accountability; demonstrate the value of community and allow people to express their desire to return to the community

Sports:

-end of year peace prayers: rallies to oppose war, bike rallies split for men and for women, soccer match chosen by teams who play peacefully

On soccer: "As you're with people, you're able to gain trust" (of formerly abducted)

-also essay competitions, poetry, peace debates:

"Trying to tap into different giftings"

**Observation: 25/4/2009**

**Location: local hip-hop concert in Gulu municipality**

- Many opening groups
- Informed by friend that they are all in high school
- Lyrics: many about peace
- Music style: reggae and hip hop

**Interview with Jessica Huber, 34**

**Project Director of Uganda Fund**

**28 April 2009**

Q: What is your experience with youth peace building?

A:

-Project Director of Uganda Fund:

Interventions, supporting youth group activities, help local organizations, support youth community (Income Generating Activities)

Pader Girls' Academy: supports girls with babies, teen pregnancy programs

Gulu University: information, communication, technologies; support most vulnerable with scholarships/ University scholarships.

“When you lose a generation of youth...”

SPRING (USAID program):

-grant to Athletes for Africa

-work with youth groups through sports, culture, agriculture, peace, mediation , etc.

Gulu University: Great concept, not there yet. Need to develop infrastructure.

Q: What are the greatest challenges of youth peace building programs?

A:

-Carol B. of UNICEF

-Night Commuting

(it is a) “conflict that was extraordinary in the affects on youth”

Of course youth want to be involved in recovery and they need support so any effort...

-Remember the context of history: “They are the centerpiece of the conflict...They are the ones that will prevent a future war.”

–“No longer an emergency situation...it's about empowering...youth in particular to take over the helm of recovery”

Problem: “People dump money without accompanying youth to get things done”

Q: How could programs improve?

A:Ask anyone...what is the most important thing?: sending kids to school

-The largest youth population (in Africa?) is in Uganda

-The local government and central government all recognize the problem

-Effectiveness? Systemic problems in education: UPE (universal primary education), but what happens after p7? Local and central government not lined up.

-Everyone sees it as a priority but effectiveness also needs to be a priority.

-Camp life has eroded the way in which community works. The elderly are pissed because youth done want to dig

-Interviewee did protection training with teachers

-training and understanding of how this war has effected youth and change the way we interact with them to be more productive.

**Youth Focus Group, Ages 18-23**

**Anonymous Peace Club**

**28 April 2009**

\*\*Jaqueline, 20

\*\*Ocaya, 22

\*Abenya, 23

\_\_Okello, 22

\_\_Evan, 20

\*\*Irene, 20

\_\_Joyce, 18

\*Maurine, 18  
 \_\_Oscar, 21  
 \*\*Navigator, 20  
 \*\*Geoffrey, 22

\_\_=**never spoke**  
 \*=**spoke once or twice**  
 \*\*=**Spoke often**

*I first started by introducing myself, the project, and sharing the ethics statement. Next, I asked if it was okay to record the discussion. Each member of the group agreed that it was okay. I began recording, first asking everyone's real name, name they will be called for the research, and age. Then, one of the group leaders read the first question off of my paper and told the group that they could answer in Acholi or English and he can translate.*

Geoffrey leading...1<sup>st</sup> question  
 G: How do you understand the term peace?  
 You can speak in any language

A: according to my understanding...(too quiet) I hope that peace is living in an area without conflict among each other. That is all...

Oc: right. For me I understand, but not all. I think peace is mean...to be organized with somebody or with your friends and even peace means if you can help one another that is I think peace. For me, i'm not talking to much...but that is my knowledge

G: any other person?? any idea of peace?

J: So I think this is a situation when people are free from war and conflicts.

I: For me I think is a period free of war...peace of mind

G: What I can say...peace is just a state of living in harmony. Especially when there's no war, there's no interference from individuals. Just living in a state of harmony.

Me: Anyone else?...You're free. Feel free. Anything you want to say.

N: Ok peace...peace...yeah...the word peace...its not something that's too new. Many people are acquainted with the word peace. To be called...the community that is really a peaceful community, there should be some factors that should be....there should be freedoms of speech. There should not be any violations of people's rights....TRUCK....(SOUND CUT OFF)

Me: Is that everyone that has something?  
 Does anyone have any experience with peace education? Either in school...or...clubs...or activities?  
 Or with peace building?

G: Anybody who has gone through things like Mato oput? Who knows moto oput?

N: okay moto oput...according to my experience...it is when two parties come together to reconcile -end tensions

I had a group that have been trained on reconciliation and reintegration as far as peace is concerned...so we could do some bit of composing dramas on reconciliation and reintegration. So reconciliation is just moto oput as I said, and reintegration is bringing the two parties together as one so that you don't have the sense of stigmatizing of the particular persons who have done bad to you. So, we could play...on things concerning reconciliation where one parties who could...misbehave in that...they would go and provoke the other parties. So there will come...a society will come in to bring the two parties together as the other has provoked his fellow so that they will sit down at a round table and discuss on what's the root cause of that particular provocations. So that's basically what I can say briefly.

G: Another person.

Me: also you mentioned drama...are there any activities like that that people have done? Or even if you've just heard of that...that...sound like they might be helpful?

G: Other programs apart from dramas?

N: K...yah, talk of traditional dance...just like in Acholi, we have the courtship dance. So that's the raka raka...we call it the raka raka (Spelling?). The courtship dance also is a way of building peace in the community and in the what?--the society that could have been traumatized for a period of time. Take for instance Gulu here. So through that cultural dance activity, it really makes the people who are living in that particular society reflect their cultural (word?). Because we are now in the modern world and most of the kids...the younger ones...are not really reflecting back on those traditional customs. So through that one, we bring that tension, that's really...our culture...we're supposed to portray, but not in this modern way...

So beside the traditional dance, we can also participate in...poems. The poem...the other poem he talked about was...uh.... "You are My Society." Here it was saying that the person who was in the bush came back into the society, but at least, the person has been..I mean...stigmatized by the community. So the person's appealing to the community: "why should I do that? I'm your what?--person. So why should you think of me as whatever thing.." So anyway, that is a way peace and reconciliation must be used. Through poem. And then also there is what we call a "solo" (?). ....(explanation of solo) 17:05

And then think about it...the people will see that they are not living in a peaceful world. So what is the next step to the girl's speech or the song she has come up with? So they have to reflect on that and then there's building peace capacity.

Me: Has anyone done those kinds of programs...or...heard of them? (17:40)

....(silence)...Well maybe I can go to the next question. Do you think that youth have a role to play in peace building in the community?

Group: Yes. (from many voices)

Me: yes? So what role can they play?

Oc: They can...(sound cut off)...and also they can mobilize community...

Me: How do they do that?

Oc: They can mobilize like....like what you said...peace building...(?)...drama....(?)...

J: Yeah youth can also build peace through opening up an organization which can bring the youth together and help them relate among themselves.

I: For me I think they can also participate in Gulu...the community...but they can also promote peace in the society.

**Note that females in group often speak around the same time.**

Me: How do you think it's best that they do it?

I: That is...I think also part of it. They can participate through...forming their groups and...in...having some organizations...In fact, they can go to other places to sensitize people about peace and to make them know how...

G: Me I can also say that uh...one way how youth should also bring the peace or at least how we can bring peace...i think like the case of Northern Uganda where war has been so rampant, we can say that at least youth must also participate in...the peace agreements which is about...or I think...which will soon be signed. At least there's also youth participation in those kinds of conferences. Another thing also...many youth also bring peace...it can also be through participating in national conferences like if they're organizing some youth fairs...we had one in Pece here. ...at least having some conference with their political ideas and share issues of peace...we can get some youth who can at least seminate messages.

A: Added onto that...bringing peace to some area means...i think given some training...to other areas which there is forming a group...even there is the what? The youth fairs to take some training from there to convey the peace to the others. That is....

Me: so sharing ideas??

A: yeah....

N: so what they have mentioned. I think at the beginning when these Juba peace talks started...the youth were not given full participation...but probably the youth could have been engaged...after they realized the youth could participate that's when they started bringing the youth in to deal with peace building. 23:10 Honestly, there are also various ways that they can participate in peace building like uh...like some activities that (sound lost)...expeditions...So they foot.....(sound lost) So peace building, as far as the role that the youth can play...is that they can participate fully in some of these ...(sound lost)...or groups or organizations that people have talked about. Take for instance like --- (organization name withheld for purposes of keeping identity hidden). Their basic role is to empower the youth with skills and knowledge. You see? So thats a way forward. When the youth come in and get a skill and knowledge, then we give them time to participate fully in their personal activities...rather than staying idle and participating in...something bad...like stealing or those kinds of things...(sound cut off)

G: ...In the case of Northern Uganda there has been youth....doing it there...performing it through some...some musics. Yah....because there's some music that demands for peace. It's inspired our community...at least relieved them selves from that instability.

N: Now, let's not see Uganda as a war, but let's see it from the deep ground of society. Now in the community or the family where you live, there could be some tension. Now okay, the youth they participate fully. So what happens (sound lost) is that he sits down or communicates to the victim who caused that problem. So that they resolve that problem they ? and come together to make peace in the community where they have voice to say (sound lost).

Me: So then, if there can be conflicts even in a household or in a community, not only a big war, where do you think that people learn peace? Is it from family? Community? From friends? School? Or all of them?...

G: Peace...that only implies that political peace. But peace generally, it means some tension generally...from home, anywhere that you feel there's at least some tension. Or there's no peace, because in the first place your mind may be disrupted, you won't have that peace of mind. So we should just go ahead and say, there's no peace.

Me: Okay so maybe conflict management. Where can people learn conflict management or mediation?

G: Can't everybody can perform that?

N: So peace...you know...when you talk of peace....even the young baby when (same idea as Justin Oryema that children can learn peace from before birth and when very very young from parents). 27:17 Peace starts from the root ground and then goes upright so there are areas where peace is needed to be revealed like political issues when people are in political war like Northern Uganda which has taken twenty years. And then when we talk of the peace being reviewed as our personal peace, you could be disappointed by somebody or disgusted then you need also peace through (word lost) because also some persons...example of HIV test found positive; need for counseling (28 min).

G: I think he brought in one point...the role of youth in counseling and guidance. As he has been saying, lack of peace of mind causes conflict. This war here in Northern Uganda was caused by a disturbance...because of some commander called something like John and Kony himself. Because of that disturbance, they started now fighting amongst themselves. Because of that lack of peace of mind among themselves...and that's also how the Ugandan soldiers also came in to what? Fighting these other...the rebel group. So that's why we say the war started...it was just because of lack of mind. So i'm very sure if there's peace of mind I don't think you can think of anything that can bring conflict.

Me: so maybe...if I could hear from some of the ladies....If you could design your own program, in peace education or peace building, what would you include? What kinds of things would people do in the program?

G: I think some things have already been mentioned here like the counseling, the dramas, the poems, and carrying out those ones of moto oput, eh?

J: There's also playing games...

Me: Like football?

J: Netball or football...

Me: Do you think just boys? Just girls? Both?

J: Both.

M: Both girls and boys.

I: According to me I think creating jobs to create a source of survival because if they're idle, nothing can be peaceful...(sound lost). And involving them in some active activities. And if possible, to make them join also...like...church choirs yeah...to know at least something about God. That one will also...it can also make their mind centered and that one they can think of peace also, participate also in fellowship. And they should be fully sensitized to how peace can be brought in society and how they can bring peace and how they should settle when there is no peace and (word lost) themselves.

G: What do they say? The idle man is the devil worshiper?...

I: And they can be taught to know that there's no one above the law like for example these days, there are rapes, defilements...those are done by youth. So they should be taught how to handle...their....

G: sexuality.

(laughter amongst group)

33:14

\*\*Sound lost after this point