

COPING WITH DISPLACEMENT
THE CASE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN JINJA, UGANDA

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

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I. Introduction

Even though Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are “among the most vulnerable victims of conflict, and constitute arguably the largest at-risk population in the world,” the Global IDP Project has noted that research on the numbers and needs of this population is limited. In many war-affected countries, IDPs are “reduced to the role of silent victims, as they have little opportunity to...simply voice their concerns to the authorities.”¹ As such, understanding the strategies IDPs have developed to voice their concerns to authorities and integrate into urban communities will allow for a broader understanding of IDP experiences and coping strategies.

Broadening our understanding of this population is essential given the scale and scope of internal displacement. 2005 statistics from the Global IDP Project indicate that of the 23.7 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in at least 50 countries, Africa is the worst-affected continent with 12.1 million IDPs in 20 countries.² Most of the information that is published has focused on IDPs who remain in camps. Very little information is available about IDPs who live in urban areas without international or government protection and assistance. With specific reference to Uganda, Bernstein suggested in a 2005 publication that “the experience of IDPs in urban centers is another area in need of research.”³

Drawing on field research conducted in June and July of 2005 in Uganda, the country with the third largest displaced population, this thesis will explore how belonging to a social network, neighborhood

¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. *Internal Displacement. Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2005*. (Global IDP Project, Geneva. 2005), 6, 17, 34 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/895B48136F55F562C12571380046BDB1/\\$file/Global%20Overview05%20low.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/895B48136F55F562C12571380046BDB1/$file/Global%20Overview05%20low.pdf)

² Ibid.

³ Jesse Bernstein. “A Drop in the Ocean: Assistance and Protection for Forced Migrants in Kampala” *Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 16* (2005) Accessed March 13, 2006 from <http://www.refugeelawproject.org/papers/workingpapers/RLP.WP16.pdf>

association, or group enhances the experiences of Acholi IDPs in Jinja, the second-largest city in Uganda. I will investigate three ways in which IDPs in Jinja were found to access resources:

1. Aligning with internal networks: neighborhood associations;
2. Pursuing individual livelihood strategies;
3. Aligning with external networks: NGOs and/or CBOs.

My hypothesis is that IDPs who work in groups and align with internal and external networks, are better able to cope with displacement than IDPs who work alone to pursue individual livelihoods.

Those who work in groups and align themselves with networks find employment and gain protection from threats more easily than those working alone. Networks also give members access to assets, services, livelihoods, shelter, and education and promote positive mental health and well-being.

Membership in a network or alignment with an association also promotes peaceful co-existence with the indigenous population. Hence, IDPs who align themselves with networks are more successful at integrating into their urban communities than those who work alone.

Using the case study of Jinja, Uganda, this research will contribute to our understanding of how urban IDPs respond to crises. While a recent publication by Sorensen and Vincent⁴ does document how IDPs respond to and experience displacement, much about how urban IDPs cope with displacement still remains unexplored and not well understood. This research responds to the limitations Sorensen highlighted in a 2001 report⁵ by looking at IDPs as active members of their communities and not as victims or beneficiaries. It explores the difference between how IDPs and indigenous populations in

⁴ Marc Vincent. "Introduction and Background." In *Caught between Borders. Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced*. eds. Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sørensen (Pluto Press, London/Norwegian Refugee Council, Oslo, 2001), 1-14.

⁵ Norwegian Refugee Council *Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced: Changing the Humanitarian Lens Report of a Seminar held in Oslo, Norway*, 9 November 2001

urban areas experience poverty. It explores individual agency in making decisions about whether to flee, where to flee to, and how to recreate important social, economic, and cultural aspects of their lives. This research looks at the patterns of displacement to urban areas and the ways in which IDPs access resources through social networks.

II. Coping Strategies: A Review of Existing Literature

Theoretical Background to Coping

In the context of IDPs in Jinja, Uganda, my working definition of coping strategies involves the series of activities that IDPs have developed to access resources, promote their interests and protect themselves from threats. However, before fully exploring how IDPs in Jinja cope with displacement, it is important to review the theories that various scholars have developed about coping. The existing theories about and definitions of coping will enable me to look at IDPs as active agents who make deliberate decisions about how to respond to and cope with displacement. The theories will help frame the discussion about how IDPs respond to displacement, pursue livelihoods and align with networks and associations. These theories will also help to differentiate between the strategies developed by IDPs who work alone to access resources and by those who align with networks and associations.

The coping strategies that this thesis focuses on are based, in part, on the model Carver Scheier and Weintraub have developed. They have built upon initial theories other scholars, such as Lazarus,⁶ developed about coping. Lazarus define coping as the process of perceiving a potential response to a threat and executing the response. His work is based on two distinct theories about the ways in which people cope. The first, *problem-focused coping* is focused on doing something to change the source of stress. This occurs among people who feel they can do something constructive to minimize stress. The second, *emotional-focused coping*, manages or reduces the emotional distress that results from the

⁶ R.S Lazarus. *Psychological stress and the coping process*. New York: McGraw-Hill (1966).

stressful situation. This occurs amongst those who feel they must endure the situation that brings on stress. However, Carver et al., argue that these two theories, though useful to enhancing our understanding of how people cope, are simplistic and do not offer a broad enough understanding of how people cope.⁷

Carver et al posit that coping involves a more complex series of steps and thought processes than the two dimensional model described above. Their analysis of the potential coping strategies that people develop forms the basis upon which to operationalize my working definition of coping strategies. Adaptive and restraint coping allow IDPs to develop ways in which to protect themselves from threats. They start with *adaptive coping* which goes beyond the theory of problem-focused coping because it emphasizes that this requires initiating a direct action to minimize or remove the effects of the stressor and executing each attempt in a systematic manner. *Restraint coping* involves exercising deliberate restraint and waiting until the appropriate opportunity arises before taking a step. These theories can help broaden our understanding about how and when IDPs make the decision to flee from conflict.

Similarly, emotional-focused coping, involves the ability to seek support from others, suppress distracting activities, accept the stressor and turn to religion for strength. *Seeking social support for instrumental reasons* and *seeking social support for emotional reasons*, both involve getting assistance, information or advice, and seeking sympathy, moral support and understanding before problem-solving occurs. The networks IDPs develop or take advantage of are instrumental in their ability to cope with displacement. People who believe they can do little to deal with the source of stress suffer from behavioral disengagement. Those who are overly focused on the source of distress may not develop active coping strategies that allow them to move out of distress. They describe *acceptance* of

⁷ Charles V. Carver, Michael F. Scheier, and Jagdish K. Weintraub. "Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Volume 56, No. 2, 267-283 (1989), 267-268 Accessed from <http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/ccarver/p89COPE.pdf>

the stressor and *turning to religion* as two additional coping strategies people develop. In the case of forced migrants these might enhance individual capacity to understand and deal with displacement. Finally, *suppression of competing activities* allows individuals to cope by suppressing competing channels of information and focusing on the challenge that is at hand. The goal is to avoid distraction and let things slide in order to deal with the stressor.⁸ Together, these processes enable IDPs to access resources and promote their interests and well-being.

Response Strategies

Other scholars highlight what they term ‘response strategies’ over coping, survival, or self-help strategies. This is significant because response strategies, Vincent and Sorensen posit, account for more than just physical survival and include issues such as social standing and dignity. They stress the motivation of IDPs who have to develop ways in which to respond to displacement. IDP responses reflect their understanding of the options that are available, the position or situation they are in, and are manifested by decisions that are executed in a creative and comprehensive manner.⁹

For urban IDPs, displacement may be exacerbated by the additional hardship of adapting to congested urban slums where public services do not exist or are underdeveloped and where IDPs feel they cannot access local authorities for assistance. Looking at IDPs as victims rather than active human beings with agency, resources, ambition, and history makes it possible to overlook the resourcefulness of IDPs and underestimate their ability to respond to the crises of displacement.¹⁰ Taking into account the process

⁸ Charles V. Carver, Michael F. Scheier, and Jagdish K. Weintraub. “Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Volume 56, No. 2, 267-283 (1989), p. 269 Accessed from <http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/ccarver/p89COPE.pdf>

⁹ Marc Vincent. “Introduction and Background.” In *Caught between Borders. Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced*. eds. Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sørensen (Pluto Press, London/Norwegian Refugee Council, Oslo, 2001), 1-14.

¹⁰ Vincent, Marc. “Response Strategies: the Need to Involve the Displaced.” In Norwegian Refugee Council *Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced: Changing the Humanitarian Lens Report of a Seminar held in Oslo, Norway*, 9 November 2001

of coping that Carver et al describe above, I would argue that coping strategies, like response strategies, encompass the full range of actions and processes that IDPs go through when responding to displacement. This research will therefore refer to both the coping and response strategies that IDPs in Jinja have developed.

Coping Strategies

The Livelihoods Approach

Securing livelihoods, the “means used to maintain and sustain life,” is essential to enabling IDPs working in groups or alone to cope with displacement. “Livelihoods,” Jacobsen notes, “comprise how people access and utilize resources enabling them to increase their economic security, thereby reducing the vulnerability created and exacerbated by conflict, and how they pursue goals necessary for survival and possible return.”¹¹ In their pursuit of livelihoods, displaced populations must consider the *resources* that are available to them, develop *strategies* to mobilize and access these resources, and define their *goals* and priorities.

While this approach was used within the context of refugees, it has principles that are applicable to the IDP context. The *goals* to which Jacobsen refers include minimizing food insecurity and economic vulnerability and deciding upon where to settle. The *resources* available to displaced populations might include social networks and institutions, household assets and social, cultural and economic resources. Finally, the *strategies* employed encompass the set of activities that displaced populations must employ to gain access to or mobilize resources.¹²

¹¹ Karen Jacobsen. “Livelihoods in Conflict: The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on the Human Security of Host Communities.” *International Migration* Volume 40, Number 5, Special Issue 2, 95-123 (2002), p98 Accessed from <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1468-2435.00213#article>

¹² Ibid., 100

Aligning with Networks: Friends and Family

Braun notes that designation as an IDP can itself serve to separate forced migrants from the indigenous population and can exacerbate, rather than dissipate, tension between the two. She draws from the example of Sri Lanka where IDPs are not regarded as full citizens of their new communities and have been excluded from accessing resources.¹³ The better IDPs are able to integrate with their hosts, and acquire citizenship in these communities, the stronger their ability to gain entrance into the local community. As Jacobsen's research on refugees has also shown, integration of outsiders into a local community depends on the extent to which they are welcomed by their local hosts and not perceived as threats or burdens.¹⁴

Evidence from a joint International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and World Food Program (WFP) evaluation of IDPs shows that among urban Colombian IDPs, informal networks of family and friends serve the important function of enhancing access to food, shelter, and basic needs upon arrival in urban areas. Since many of these conflict-affected individuals, families, and groups leave behind their possessions and sources of livelihood, these networks serve an important function of providing goods and services to which displaced households would not otherwise have access.¹⁵

As Data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) demonstrates, the process of adjusting to urban life can be further aggravated when IDPs "lack the solidarity and even experience

¹³ Cathrine Brun. "Local Citizens or Internally Displaced Persons? Dilemmas of Long Term Displacement in Sri Lanka." *Journal of Refugee Studies* Volume 16, No 4 (2003), 376-397; doi:10.1093/jrs/16.4.376 Accessed from <http://jrs.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/16/4/376>

¹⁴ Karen Jacobsen. "The forgotten solution: local integration for refugees in developing countries." *New Issues in Refugee Research* Working Paper No. 45 p19, 23 Accessed from <http://www.jha.ac/articles/u045.pdf>

¹⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross *IDPs in Colombia: A Joint Needs Assessment By the ICRC and the World Food Programme* April 2005

the rejection of people and authorities from where they arrived to.”¹⁶ Informal networks are therefore essential in helping IDPs who are targeted by government agents or discriminated against by the indigenous local population to mitigate the risks they face. However, while the literature on IDPs in urban areas underscores the importance of these networks of family and friends in helping IDPs integrate into urban environments, there is little information available on the role of formalized support group or associations that IDPs have created in their new environments.

Aligning with Associations

Jacobsen, Lautze, and Osman’s work on IDPs in camps in Khartoum, Sudan has documented how chiefs, elders, and community associations have organized networks that serve some important functions. Their role includes providing vital information to IDPs, mediating between the government and the IDP population, and working with other ethnic groups to promote social co-existence.¹⁷ In her work on refugees, Jacobsen has noted that these new forms of networks and organizations emerge as a consequence of having to cope with flight-related trauma, loss, and antagonism from the host community and local authorities.¹⁸ Understanding how these associations and formal networks are formed, how leaders are selected, and the boundaries within which these associations work, is essential to broadening our knowledge about the coping strategies of IDPs in urban areas.

¹⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center *Profile of Internal Displacement: Columbia Compilation of the Information Available in the Global IDP Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council* (as of 27, May 2005) p. 108 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/D96C087614B5073D802570BA005448F8/\\$file/Columbia+-May+2005.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/D96C087614B5073D802570BA005448F8/$file/Columbia+-May+2005.pdf)

¹⁷ Karen Jacobsen, Sue Lautze, and Abdal Monim Kheider Osman. “The Sudan: The Unique Challenges of Internal Displacement in Khartoum.” Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sørensen (eds.) *Caught between borders. Response strategies of the internally displaced*. (Pluto Press, London/Norwegian Refugee Council, Oslo, 2001), 78-98.

¹⁸ Karen Jacobsen. “Livelihoods in Conflict: The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on the Human Security of Host Communities.” *International Migration* Volume 40, Number 5, Special Issue 2, 95-123 (2002), 99 Accessed from <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1468-2435.00213#article>

This network phenomenon has also been documented in some detail among migrants and the urban poor in developing countries, particularly in Africa and Asia. In their work on the urban poor in Africa and Asia, Nelson and Huntington have found that ethnic ties among migrants and the urban poor, in general, have formed the framework within which migrants chose their place of residence, find emergency assistance and employment opportunities and spread or share information. More importantly, some urban poor have organized politically into small-scale special interest groups that serve the needs of its members.¹⁹

Likewise, Adetula's research on ethnic associations in Nigeria points to the fact that in African cities, individuals who belong to ethnic-based organizations adjust to the urban environment much better than those who do not belong to ethnic associations. These associations are critical because they provide their members with information about how to access the resources that are available in the city. As Adetula goes on to note, "supporting kinsmen through a host of welfare activities is usually the trademark of ethnic associations." The range of activities in which associations are involved include mutual self help, providing assistance during burials and other important ceremonies, and developing 'home' communities. The primary goal of these associations is to help members cope with the difficulties of life.²⁰

By paying attention to the role of more formalized internal associational networks in enabling poor urban migrants to access resources, the work of Nelson, Adetula and Huntington fills a gap in the existing literature on IDPs. They demonstrate that when individuals are able to vertically mobilize

¹⁹ Samuel Huntington and Joan Nelson. *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries* (Harvard University Press 1975), 140

²⁰ Victor Adetula. "Ethnicity and the Dynamics of City Politics: The Case of Jos," in *Urban African Changing Contours of Survival in the City*, eds. Simone, AbdouMaliq and Abouhani, Abdelghani Zed Books Ltd 2005 p206, 209, 210, 213

members of the community to participate in small interest groups or associations, marginalized or at-risk groups can influence the actions of the government and mitigate risk.²¹

Individual Strategies

The marginalization, food insecurity, joblessness, landlessness, impoverishment, and social disintegration that displaced populations face have been well documented.²² In their new homes, the IDPs lack basic necessities such as food and shelter. Particularly when networks are under severe strain or when IDPs do not have access to special interest groups, they have difficulty accessing educational, health services, and employment opportunities. Evidence from the IDMC shows that in their search for resources and assistance, Colombians who have been forced to flee from conflict-affected rural areas end up living in urban slum areas.

Many of these IDPs find themselves economically marginalized for various reasons. First, they arrive in urban areas after abandoning their assets which often include land, livestock, and housing. Second, for many of these IDPs whose skills were primarily agriculturally-based, it becomes difficult to use these skills to pursue livelihoods in urban areas. Yet their labor, skills and any cash or valuables they might have brought with them are valuable assets that allow the individual to provide food, housing, education, and other basic necessities.²³ Third, Braun provides evidence that in an effort to secure their own livelihoods, local populations in Sri Lanka protect their scarce resources from IDPs. This effectively makes it even more difficult for IDPs to secure livelihoods.²⁴

²¹ Joan M. Nelson. *Access to Power : Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations* (Princeton, University Press, 1979), 168

²² Desire Timngum. "The IDP Problem-Solution Model: Perspectives on the Double Standards of Policy and International Humanitarian Regime" Conference Paper *Researching internal displacement, Trondheim NTNU 7-8 February 2003*, 2

²³ International Committee of the Red Cross *IDPs in Colombia: A Joint Needs Assessment By the ICRC and the World Food Programme* (April 2005) 3

²⁴ Cathrine Brun. "Local Citizens or Internally Displaced Persons? Dilemmas of Long Term Displacement in Sri Lanka" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Volume 16, No 4 (2003), 376-397; doi:10.1093/jrs/16.4.376 Accessed from <http://jrs.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/16/4/376>

Boutin and Nkurunziza have also documented strategies that individual IDPs in Burundi have pursued to enhance their economic survival. While most of their work is dedicated to studying IDPs in camps, they note that for urban IDPs, subsistence remains a concern. As such, searching for paid employment in the city, turning to prostitution, and engaging in small businesses or trading in the informal sector are ways in which IDPs working alone attempt to become self-reliant.²⁵ As Boutin et al. have demonstrated IDPs who pursue individual strategies to access resources face greater difficulties than IDPs working with networks and associations.

Relevance of the Literature

This thesis draws from two patterns that have emerged from the existing literature about how IDPs respond to and cope with displacement. One is that IDPs, who live in communities under immense strain, or in locations where they cannot avail themselves of networks, are left to their own devices. They must find ways of using their wit to pursue livelihoods and cope with displacement. Second, IDPs have utilized a myriad of networks, such as community associations, to gain entrance into urban communities, assimilate with their neighbors, protect themselves from threats and access resources. This body of literature, which draws on the experiences of urban migrants, highlights the gaps in the literature on urban IDPs and can help expand our understanding of the internal networks upon which they rely. Given the importance of internal networks, it is critical to raise the question of why they are present in some IDP communities and not others.

While these internal networks exist among urban IDP communities, documentation about their evolution, day-to-day activities, and contribution to IDP clusters in heterogeneous communities is

²⁵ Genevieve Boutin and Salvatore Nkurunziza. "Burundi: Developing Strategies for Self-Reliance. A Study of Displacement in Four Provinces." in *Caught between borders. Response strategies of the internally displaced*. eds. Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sørensen (Pluto Press, London/Norwegian Refugee Council, Oslo, 2001), 48-77.

limited. My research will attempt to fill this gap by highlighting the role of internal networks, such as associations, play in the lives of urban IDPs in some Jinja communities. My research will underscore the important role that IDP associations play in providing their members with legitimacy. The research found that Acholis who first came to Jinja in the early 1980's, were targeted for attack because of their ethnic background. However, a community association was able to ward off harassment by documenting the arrival of each Acholi in Jinja with local government officials. As this research will show, this documentation not only facilitated the movement of IDPs in the community but also enhanced the relationship between the IDPs and government officials as well as with their neighbors.

III. Methodology

The focus of this fieldwork was to understand how IDPs in Jinja, Uganda cope with displacement. The communities upon which this study is focused were selected by Friends of Orphans (FRO). FRO is a Ugandan-based CBO that works with displaced ethnic Acholis. The settlement communities they serve in Jinja District include Nairo Village in Karkira Sub-County, Masese I Parish, and Masese III Village in, Jinja District. FRO invited the interns to Uganda as part of the Tufts-Uganda Internship Program to document the life histories and coping strategies of the displaced Acholis and conduct an assessment of the resources available in these communities. This information was essential to helping FRO create a record of the living conditions in the communities and identify ways in which to make interventions.

The field interviews were therefore designed to enable a team of six student researchers, of which I was the lead researcher, to better understand the history and three central characteristics of this displaced population. First, we wanted to understand IDP living conditions in hometowns or camps, why the IDPs came to Jinja, and what resources they accessed en route to Jinja. Second, we wanted to understand the risks and opportunities IDPs faced on a daily basis in Jinja. Finally, the research sought to understand the networks IDPs used to access the limited resources available to them. We also

gathered information on income level, number of occupants per household, occupation, educational level, monthly rent, and health concerns to enhance our understanding of the living conditions in the Jinja communities.

The research was conducted from mid-June to the end of July, 2005. The research questionnaire was designed in partnership with Friends of Orphans (FRO), our partner organization. Since the IDPs lived in ethnically-mixed communities, we relied on FRO and community leaders to mobilize their Acholi constituents for interviews. The team of six American researchers and six translators conducted interviews with 61 members of the communities. I conducted 15 of these interviews. In the first week, two researchers paired up to conduct each interview and compared interview notes to ensure that information was collected and recorded accurately. The questions are included in Appendix I. We tested our questions on our translators and modified our questions based on their feedback before interviewing the research population. Questions were asked and responses given in Luo, the local language, and then translated into English. Interviews were held in various locations including homes, communal and meeting spaces in the communities of Masese I, III and in Nairo Village.

Constraints

The researchers did not include other ethnically-displaced populations or local indigenous community members in the sample, so our ability to draw comparisons across different ethnic groups is limited. Information about these non-Acholi populations was drawn from interviews with Acholis, with Local Council Chairs, elected representatives of local government, and from data published by the Government of Uganda. Additionally, our findings on living conditions in Jinja, the hardships endured and how groups and individuals access resources is neither exhaustive nor fully representative of the communities. The research does, however, offer some insight into the problems ethnic Acholi IDPs in Jinja face and the strategies they utilize to access resources.

In collaboration with community members, FRO helped identify the pool of translators. The number of translators available was limited to the few individuals who were fluent in English. Each translator received Ush 1,000, roughly equivalent to what they might have earned for a full-day's work. In July 2005, US \$1 was equivalent to Ush 1,735. While we did not provide financial compensation to individuals or groups who participated in this research, we did offer light refreshments to participants during the interviews. Since those who interviewed with us on weekdays were unable to earn a wage, our population sample was limited to individuals willing to forgo a day of work or to those who could not find work for the day.

Acholis who participated in the research were not identified as part of a random sample. Since the IDPs live in ethnically-mixed communities, we relied on FRO and community leaders to mobilize their Acholi constituents for interviews.²⁶ Given the sample selection process, together with the difficulties determining the exact number of Acholi IDPs in Jinja, and the limited time-frame and resources allocated for data collection, the research findings should be considered as suggestive and not representative of the experiences of the entire Acholi IDP population in these three communities.

Finally, to better understand the resources available to Acholis and non-Acholis, the researchers, led by another lead researcher, documented community assets in two of the three communities, Masese III and Kakira. Time did not allow for an assessment of Masese I. Guided by residents, some researchers walked around the community to document building structures and uses, location of water taps, schools and latrines. They concluded the assessment by documenting prices of goods in the markets, conducting a housing and structural, and a topographical map for Masese I and Nairo Village, Kakira.

²⁶ Pader District is where Friends of Orphans (FRO) has located their headquarters. Analysis revealed that 44% of respondents in our research came from Pader District. This is partly attributable to the fact that the head of the Women's Leadership Group that FRO created in Jinja helped mobilize the population to volunteer to participate in our research.

Their findings are included in appendix II and III of this thesis. They were shared with FRO and community members and will be compiled in a document. Hard copies of the document will be presented to FRO and the communities this summer.

The demographics of IDPs who did participate in our research fell into a number of general categories but were primarily composed of sixty semi-structured individual interviews with men and women. The respondents ranged in age from eighteen to eighty years of age. We interviewed thirty-four women (most of whom were between twenty-five and forty-three years of age) and twenty-seven men (who were between their mid to late thirties or early fifties). The twenty-six individuals who were below the age of thirty-three described themselves as youth. The researchers also conducted three interviews with elected local government officials to gather information about the communities over which they presided. With the exception of two of the locally elected government officials and one respondent, all other participants were ethnic Acholis.

In transcribing our interviews, the researchers recognized that there were discrepancies in the information we collected from informants. I recognize that some informants believed that since we were working in the community, we should have provided financial assistance. I am also aware that some respondents may, for various reasons, have revealed partial truths about their income level and well-being in the community and presented themselves as worse, or better off, than they actually were. Triangulating information from the interviews with our information from the LC chairs and published data about Masese III and Kakira, helped to reconcile some of these differences.

IV. A Brief Overview of the Conflict *Causes of the Conflict*

The twenty year current conflict in Northern Uganda is said to have underlying roots in the atrocities the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), dominated primarily by Acholi soldiers, committed in the Luwero Triangle during the 1981-1985 civil war.²⁷ A Human Rights and Peace Center (HRPC) report indicated that when President Yoweri Museveni captured Kampala and seized power in a military coup d'etat in 1985, his forces, the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M), moved into the Northern region in 1986 to flush out Acholi leaders of the UNLA, the opposition forces. One of the immediate causes of the conflict, according to this report, stemmed from the failure of Museveni and the NRA/M to share power with the UNLA forces and unite the country along democratic lines. The report asserted that Museveni's abrogation of the Nairobi Peace Accord, a power sharing agreement, and subsequent NRA/M atrocities against the Acholi population in their attempt to flush out Acholi soldiers, have led Acholis to believe that the conflict was started as "an impending punitive war" against them for atrocities committed in the Luwero Triangle.²⁸ In their analysis of the conflict, a Refugee Law Project (RLP) working paper explained that the Uganda People's Democratic Party (UPDA), created by former UNLA soldiers, responded to this abrogation by starting a rebellion.²⁹

The HRPC report included other factors as causes of the war. According to their report, economic factors, complicated under British rule by uneven development in the North and South were exacerbated by NRA/M looting of Acholi cattle and property in 1986. Social, cultural and political factors including the brutal suppression of the rebellion in 1986 have also added complexity to the

²⁷ Human Rights and Peace Center. *The Hidden War, The Forgotten People: War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda*. 30 October 2003, 24-26

²⁸ Human Rights and Peace Center. *The Hidden War, The Forgotten People: War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda*. 30 October 2003, 34

²⁹ Zachary Lomo and Lucy Hovil. "Behind the Violence: Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda" *Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 11* (2004). p4 Accessed from <http://www.refugeelawproject.org/papers/workingpapers/RLP.WP11.pdf>

conflict. Finally, the conflict has been perpetuated by external actors in Sudan and the US, arms trafficking and global politics after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.³⁰

Since the conflict started in 1986, various opposition groups have fought against government forces, the NRA/M (renamed the Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) in October 1995). The conflict was initially confined to the northern districts of Acholiland. However, security threats have now spread to neighboring districts including Apac, Adjumani, Soroti, Kabermaido and the north-eastern parts of the Teso region and Lira District.³¹

Actors in the Conflict

Alice Lakwena formed the Holy Spirit Movement in 1986 by mobilizing youth and former UPDA fighters to fight against the NRA/M. The movement was spurred on by fear of marginalization by the Museveni regime and resentment against atrocities the NRA/M were believed to have carried out in the North. After Lakwena was defeated, this movement was regrouped under her father, Severino Lokoya, as the Holy Spirit Movement II. Her cousin, Joseph Kony, assumed leadership of the HSM II and renamed it the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in 1991.³² Since Kony's rise to the helm of this rebel group, the conflict has been fought between the LRA and the UPDF with support from the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), the Government of Sudan and the United States. A conflict that started as an Acholi revolt against Museveni, has been transformed. The LRA no longer appears to be fighting only UPDF soldiers but have turned against Acholis in the North. The LRA attacks are characterized by looting of food and other resources and the brutal and strategic use of

³⁰ Human Rights and Peace Center. *The Hidden War, The Forgotten People: War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda*. 30 October 2003, 7-8

³¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. *Uganda: Relief efforts hampered in one of the world's worst internal displacement crises. A profile of the internal displacement situation December 2005* Global IDP Project, Geneva. 10, 39 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/\\$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf)

³² Ibid., 20-21

abductions, murder, rape and mutilation, to control and impose terror among the civilians. These attacks are targeted against civilians in IDP camps.³³

International Dimensions of the Conflict

The war has been described as an extension of international and regional struggles for power. The Government of Uganda (GoU) has been accused of providing military equipment to the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). In turn, the Government of Sudan has been accused of providing the LRA with military equipment as well as military bases in Southern Sudan. In their war against terror the United States has provided the GoU with political, military and financial support to fight against the LRA, which has been designated as a terrorist organization.³⁴ Civil Society for Peace in Northern Uganda (CSOPNU) estimates that US contribution to Uganda's military budget in 2003 was \$3 million.³⁵

As a CSOPNU publication noted, the GoU has launched six military attacks against the LRA rebels since 1986. These included Operation North in 1991 and Operation Iron Fist in 2002 and Operation Iron Fist II in 2004.³⁶ Data from the IDMC has shown that following Operation Iron Fist in 2002, the numbers of displaced Acholis in camps increased from half a million to almost 800,000. In the first year of the operation in 2002, more than 10,000 children, 45% of the total number of abducted children, were abducted and the intensity of attacks increased as civilians became targets for LRA

³³ Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Nowhere to Hide: Humanitarian Protection Threats in Northern Uganda* (Kampala: Care International 2005), 51-52 Accessed on February 10, 2006 from http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/uganda/downloads/nowheretohide_sum.pdf

³⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. *Uganda: Relief efforts hampered in one of the world's worst internal displacement crises. A profile of the internal displacement situation December 2005* Global IDP Project, Geneva 28 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/\\$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf)

³⁵ Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Nowhere to Hide: Humanitarian Protection Threats in Northern Uganda* (Kampala: Care International 2005), 83 Accessed on February 10, 2006 from http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/uganda/downloads/nowheretohide_sum.pdf

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 30

attacks. The worst episodes of violence against civilians occurred between 2002 and 2004 and coincided with Operation Iron Fist I and II.³⁷

Missed Opportunities for Peace

As far back as 1985, the failure to come to a power sharing agreement was the genesis for the current conflict. Since then, there have been numerous peace negotiations that have been attempted. For example, the NRM and UPDA signed a peace accord in Pece in 1988. The failure of this accord to bring an end to the conflict is attributed to lack of trust and commitment on the side of both parties. In 1993-1994, the Lord's Resistance Army entered into peace talks with Betty Bigombe, the minister for pacification of the north. The talks ended when the LRA rebels rejected President Museveni's 7-day ultimatum to surrender³⁸ and retreated to their military bases in Southern Sudan. Their rejection of this overture and retreat to Sudan, marked the beginning of systematic attacks against civilians.³⁹

More recently, the Carter Peace Center tried to negotiate the Nairobi Peace Agreement between the Sudan and the Government of Uganda in 1999. The goal was to promote regional peace by bringing an end to Sudan's support of LRA rebels and Uganda's support of the SPLM/A. As part of the agreement, the GoU entered into Southern Sudan to flush out the LRA rebels. This military offensive instead pushed the rebels further into Sudan and out of the reach of the UPDF.

Current Situation in the North

³⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. *Uganda: Relief efforts hampered in one of the world's worst internal displacement crises. A profile of the internal displacement situation December 2005* Global IDP Project, Geneva, 10 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/\\$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/9A2DDAF5AC30AA04C12570D50052A546/$file/Uganda+-December+2005.pdf)

³⁸ Ibid., 10, 20-21

³⁹ Civil Society for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Counting the Cost: Twenty Years of War in Northern Uganda* March 2006, 9 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/\\$file/counting+the+costs.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/$file/counting+the+costs.pdf)

In October 2005, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for five LRA leaders. Civil Society Organizations believe that by issuing these warrants, the ICC may have jeopardized rather than improved security of civilians. Critics believe that the possibility of being convicted for war crimes could drive the top officials in the LRA into hiding and lead to a continuation of atrocities against civilians. With no signs that the conflict is abating, critics are calling for dialogue rather than justice.⁴⁰ Additionally, the LRA has now moved into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where they have been engaged in combat with UN peacekeeping forces. Their entry into the DRC has the potential to jeopardize any promise of stability in the region.⁴¹

Eight percent of the population in Uganda lived in camps under situations of extreme poverty. Estimates indicated that in 2005, 50% of Internally Displaced were under the age of 15, 25% of children under the age of 10 had lost one or both parents, and 12% of females between the ages of 30-4 were widows. CSOPNU estimates also seem to indicate that between January and June of 2005, 146 Acholis in IDP camps died each week. These deaths were a result of LRA violence, poor living conditions, inadequate health care and incidences of illness including malaria, HIV/AIDS and diarrhea.⁴² At the time the report was published, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in camps in Northern Uganda were defined as among the most vulnerable in the world because the GoU could not guarantee their safety in the IDP camps. They also lived in conditions the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center described as among the world's ten worst situations for IDPs.⁴³

⁴⁰ Josefine Volqvartz. *ICC Under Fire Over Uganda Probe Global Policy Forum* February 23, 2005 Accessed from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/intljustice/icc/2005/0223iccfire.htm>

⁴¹ Civil Society for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Counting the Cost: Twenty Years of War in Northern Uganda* March 2006, 25 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/\\$file/counting+the+costs.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/$file/counting+the+costs.pdf)

⁴² *Ibid.*, 15-16

⁴³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Norwegian Refugee Council, Switzerland *Internal Displacement Global Overview and Developments in 2005* March 2006, 14, 17 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/895B48136F55F562C12571380046BDB1/\\$file/Global%20Overview%20low.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/895B48136F55F562C12571380046BDB1/$file/Global%20Overview%20low.pdf)

It is critical that members of civil society and the international community assist the GoU in finding a just and sustainable peace. As long as the conflict persists in Northern Uganda, IDPs in camps will continue to live under difficult circumstances and in fear of the LRA. As the following section will show, IDPs, fearing for their safety in camps, have made the decision to leave the camps. How are these decisions made? Where do IDPs who leave camps flee? The subsequent section will attempt to provide some insight to these questions.

V. Context: From Camps to Urban Settlements

A. Deciding to Leave IDP Camps

A CSOPNU report published in 2004 asserted that IDPs lived in 180 protected villages that the Government of Uganda (GoU) established in nine districts in the eastern and northern parts of Uganda.⁴⁴ In their Armed Conflict Database, the International Institute for Strategic Studies estimated that in November 2004, if the numbers of IDPs who were living in 63 previously unrecognized camps were taken into account, the number of IDPs in Northern and Eastern Uganda could be as high as two million.⁴⁵ In Northern Uganda alone, in 2005 about 1.2 million people, or 94% of the population, were displaced.⁴⁶ With the exception of references Hovil and Morehead have made to IDPs in Pader district in their paper, there is little data on IDPs in Uganda who have resettled outside of camps in the North.⁴⁷ The only reference made to urban IDPs has been in a 2006 International Organization for

⁴⁴ Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Nowhere to Hide: Humanitarian Protection Threats in Northern Uganda* (Kampala: Care International 2005), Accessed from http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/uganda/downloads/nowheretohide_sum.pdf

⁴⁵ The International Security Institute and Strategic Studies Armed Conflict Data Base Accessed on March 12, 2006 from http://acd.iiss.org/armedconflict/MainPages/dsp_HumanAndEconomicCost.asp?ConflictID=200&YearID=918

⁴⁶ Civil Society for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Counting the Cost: Twenty Years of War in Northern Uganda* March 2006, 7 Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/\\$file/counting+the+costs.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/78DC5930FE6B7C54C12571460054FEFB/$file/counting+the+costs.pdf)

⁴⁷ Lucy Hovil and Alex Moorehead. "War as Normal; The Impact of Violence on the Lives of Displaced Communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda." *Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5* June 2002 Accessed March 6, 2006 from <http://www.refugeelawproject.org/papers/workingpapers/RLP.WP05.pdf>

Migration (IOM) report. The IOM report simply stated in a footnote that between 300,000 and 600,000 unregistered IDPs were believed to live in Gulu, Lira, and Kampala.⁴⁸

For the Acholi IDPs who lived in the bush or in camps in Northern Uganda, violence was a part of the reality of life. Yet the decision to leave these camps was not without risk. Sommers has argued that refugees who leave the protection of camps to resettle in urban areas “are representative of a deliberate decision to live beyond official sanction or preference; a decision based on the careful assessment of risk and opportunity.”⁴⁹ Hovil and Moorehead have also argued that, like refugees, IDPs are faced with the “dilemma of living in an insecure environment” and “have to make calculated judgments about the relative safety of different locations.”⁵⁰ Given the relative risk involved in leaving “protected villages” and settlements, why do refugees and IDPs leave?

Why Camps?

The Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda (CSOPNU) report explained that the Government of Uganda’s (GoU) policy of forced displacement was designed to serve a number of purposes. First, the GoU believed it would be better able to protect civilians from attacks by the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) attacks by placing them in locations that were near army detachments. Second, by separating the civilians from the rebels, the GoU hoped to restrict cultivation of and make

⁴⁸ International Office of Migration. *Uganda: Internally Displaced Persons in the 2006 National Elections, Action Plan, IOM Project on Political Rights and Enfranchisement System Strengthening (PRESS)*. Final Report, May 2005. Accessed from [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/A67E3FC4ED77CE24802570B7005A586E/\\$file/Uganda_Action_20Plan_PRESS_May_05.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/A67E3FC4ED77CE24802570B7005A586E/$file/Uganda_Action_20Plan_PRESS_May_05.pdf)

⁴⁹ Marc Sommers. “Young, Male and Pentecostal: Urban Refugees in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 14, No. 4 (2001), 350

⁵⁰ Lucy Hovil and Alex Moorehead. “War as Normal; the Impact of Violence on the Lives of Displaced Communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda.” *Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5*. (2002) Accessed March 6, 2006 from <http://www.refugeelawproject.org/papers/workingpapers/RLP.WP05.pdf> p.19

it difficult for the rebels to access foodstuffs.⁵¹ The extent of the protection⁵² or lack thereof, offered to IDPs has been documented by a number of authors.

Protection in the Camps?

Hovil and Moorehead, for example, have documented accounts from some of the IDPs and refugees who lived in Acholi-Pii camp in Pader district. These authors reported that with the countryside emptied of civilians, concentrating populations of displaced persons in camps or settlements have made the camps more vulnerable to LRA attack. Indeed, the rebels attack these communities for food and information. In effect, as the authors reported, these communities have become a “resource base for feeding the war economy.”⁵³ In the same document, civilians reported that rather than protect the displaced populations, the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) soldiers stationed in the settlements and camps raped and killed women and children. They used their position to harm rather than protect the IDPs and refugees. With this in mind, what alternatives did these IDPs and refugees who were threatened by the lack of protection have?

Flight: Adaptive and Restraint Coping Strategies

Drawing from my interviews with IDPs and the work that scholars have done on IDPs in camps in Northern Uganda, this research will look at IDPs who made the decision to leave the conflict-affected north for urban areas in Southern Uganda. For the Acholi IDPs who lived in the bush or in protected

⁵¹ Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda. *Nowhere to Hide: Humanitarian Protection Threats in Northern Uganda* (Kampala: Care International 2005), Accessed from http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/uganda/downloads/nowheretohide_sum.pdf p.60

⁵² Scholars have argued that while the Government of Uganda claims that these IDP and refugee camps offer protection from rebel activity, the camps have made it easier for the rebels to attack civilians. The civilians are concentrated in designated areas and inadequate protection from the army leaves them vulnerable to attack.

⁵³ Lucy Hovil and Alex Moorehead. “War as Normal; the Impact of Violence on the Lives of Displaced Communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda.” *Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5* (2002) Accessed March 6, 2006 from <http://www.refugeelawproject.org/papers/workingpapers/RLP.WP05.pdf> p.17

villages in Northern Uganda,⁵⁴ violence was a part of the reality of life. Many of the IDPs in camps remained vulnerable to attacks from rebels and from UPDF soldiers. For many, the only option was to live in what Finnstrom described as ‘bad surroundings,’ even when they felt trapped in these surroundings.⁵⁵ Despite such constraints against moving freely, some IDPs found ways to leave the camps.

The Acholi informants who were the first to arrive in the Jinja communities explained that they either left the North in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s to find employment. Those who left in the mid to late 1980’s wanted to escape the insurgency in the North. Sixty-five percent of our informants reported that they arrived in Jinja after 1992. Five and a half percent arrived between 1971 and 1999.

Overwhelmingly, the IDPs responded that they felt insecure living in camps or in the bush. Fifty-two percent of respondents were either abducted or had a family member killed or abducted by the LRA. Twenty percent left because of their heightened level of fear and lack of stability. The narratives in the following sections will offer some insight into their experiences.

Sixty-five and a half percent of respondents indicated that they either had a family member who had already fled from the North or knew of other ethnic Acholis who lived in Jinja. Thus, they came to Jinja by train or military convoy, walked part of the way and relied on the kindness of strangers to help them complete the journey. Most respondents brought nothing with them. With few or no assets to rely on, IDPs reported that they had to find ways in which to access local networks in order to find

⁵⁴ The Government of Uganda designates the “protected villages” in which IDPs can live and the settlements in which refugees can live. In theory, both refugees and IDPs in these designated areas are under the protection of the Government. Additionally, refugees are under the protection of UNHCR. While “protected villages” and settlements are sometimes referred to as camps, camps are essentially unrecognized IDP settlements that are not under the protection of the GoU. The camps do not receive World Food Programme food rations. In theory, both refugees and IDPs in these designated areas are under the protection of the Government. Additionally, refugees are under the protection of UNHCR.

⁵⁵ Sverker Finnstrom. *Living with Bad Surroundings: War and Existential Uncertainty in Acholiland, Northern Uganda* (Uppsala: Uppsala University. 2003), 118

employment, housing, food, bedding, and other necessities. They stayed with family members or other Acholis until they acquired enough resources to move into a home with their families.

Seeking Social Support for Instrumental Reasons and Exercising Restraint

The informants did not always know where to locate their relatives who were living in Jinja. One female informant made the trip from an IDP camp in Pader twice. She recalled first coming to Jinja by military convoy to look for her mother. Being unsuccessful in her search for her mother and with nowhere to stay she returned to Pader where she hoped life would be better. This did not turn out to be true. The informant and her sister were captured by the LRA rebels. The rebels cut her sister's head off and cut her body into pieces. After the informant managed to escape, she learned that her uncle lived in Kampala. Seeking distance and safety from the LRA rebels, she traveled to Kampala in search of her uncle. When she could not find him, she came to Jinja hoping that this time she could find someone to assist her. She found an Acholi woman who took her in. She stayed with this woman until she met and married her husband.⁵⁶

Another informant from Gulu district reported that he was abducted by LRA rebels and managed to escape during a skirmish with the UPDF. After receiving treatment for his injuries, he decided to leave the North due to fear of re-abduction. Informants such as this man were not always able to come with their families. He explained that he "left with no preparation" and had to leave his family in Gulu.⁵⁷

A female informant who left Pader district before the government established camps told the researchers the following:

⁵⁶ Female informant, 34 years old, was interviewed in Nairo Village in Kakira sub-county. She is uncertain when she moved to Jinja

⁵⁷ Male informant, 59 years old, was interviewed in Masese I parish. He moved to Jinja in 2000

I was living in the bush outside Pajule town in Pader district because of the rebel system. I was living with two women, two men, my husband, and our five children. Two of my sons and one daughter were abducted and killed. Life in the bush was very hard. Maggots would come and your whole body could swell. Getting food was risky, because the rebels could kill you while you were escaping from the bush. There was never enough food.⁵⁸

Since this woman knew that her uncle lived in Jinja, she walked with her family to Lira and caught a ride on a military convoy for Jinja, even though she had a broken foot. A fellow Acholi woman welcomed her to the community simply because she was also from Pader district.

Another informant, a former abductee, stated that even though his family was in Kolongo camp in Pader district and doing nothing but receiving assistance from NGOs he left the camp for Jinja since he knew that if he was abducted again, he would be killed. He sold his bicycle to pay for his transportation to Jinja. He came to Jinja even though he did not know anyone here.⁵⁹

Another informant who was interviewed lived in the bush with insecurity for over ten years. She made the decision to leave the North for Jinja partly because her uncle worked for Kakira Sugar Works in Jinja District. To get to Jinja, the informant and her family walked twenty miles from Pader to Corner Kilak and boarded a truck from Kitgum to Lira. A priest in Lira paid Ush 40,000 to get the informant, her husband and children from Lira to Jinja. She shared her decision to leave the Pader District:

My family was forced to hide in the bush from the LRA. We lived in the bush from about 1990 until my father died of malaria in 2001. At night, my six brothers and sister and our parents slept in the bush, two or three at one place. We left the bush in the morning around 10:00am to dig and harvest crops. By 2:00pm, we returned to the bush. My aunt was almost abducted. When she escaped, she run away to Kampala. My father died in 2001 and we lived in the bush until Pajule camp opened in 2003. I was there for eight months. My name was not on the WFP list and so I was not receiving food aid.⁶⁰

Most of the IDPs who were interviewed claimed that they arrived in Jinja with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. One informant explained that when he arrived in Jinja, he did not even have a shirt. His brother welcomed him to the community and gave him clothing, food, and shelter so that he

⁵⁸ Female informant, 55 years old, interviewed in Masese III village. She moved to Jinja in 1988

⁵⁹ Male informant, 27 years old, interviewed in Masese III village. He moved to Jinja in 2002

⁶⁰ Female informant, 30 years old, interviewed in Nairo Village in Kakira sub-county. She moved to Jinja in 2004

“looked like a person again.” He was a former abductee who was motivated to leave the camp he lived in because he believed that the rebels searched for him “night and day.” If he had stayed in the North, he explained, the rebels would have found him and killed him.⁶¹

Some male informants who left Jinja and returned to the North explained they were abducted by the LRA. For some, it was their first time but for others, it was their second time.⁶² As such, the IDPs interviewed in Jinja stated that returning to the camps was not an option since they did not believe the camps provided enough protection from LRA attack and re-abduction. For these informants, living in Jinja and experiencing economic hardship was preferable to the risks involved with returning to the North. They recognized that there were trade-offs. Remaining in Jinja came at the cost of healthcare and primary education for their children especially when they recalled the free healthcare, uniforms, and books that NGOs provided in some camps. The decision to stay or leave the camps was one that came with costs and benefits. As I will explain shortly, it is important to understand how organizing in groups can reduce the relative costs of displacement by creating networks through which IDPs can access resources.

My research will look at some of the IDPs who have worked in groups to develop ways in which to access resources in Jinja and address some of the constraints described. By working in groups, some IDPs linked themselves to local council members in their communities and were better able to access resources. Their networks also helped to increase the pool of information on business opportunities in the informal sector. By working in groups, some IDPs created social networks that allowed community members to protect themselves from violence and destitution. The informants also indicated that by networking with Friends of Orphans and with the researchers, the IDPs in these communities were

⁶¹ Male informant, 34 years old, interviewed in Nairo Village in Kakira sub-country. He arrived in Jinja in 1991.

⁶² As already stated, 52% of informants were either abducted or had a family member who was abducted or killed by the LRA rebels.

enlarging the pool of resources they could take advantage of. When the researchers asked those IDPs who were not aligned with a group who they turned to for assistance, most reported that they had no one to turn to except for God. Faith in God and *turning to religion* was a coping strategy that played a significant role in enabling IDPs in Jinja to access livelihoods and resources essential to coping with displacement.

B. Settling in Jinja

Jinja District

Jinja District is the second largest urban center in Uganda and covers 701.9 square kilometers of land and 65.8 sq. kilometers of water bodies. 2000 census data projected a population of 410,900 people for the District. There are 11 sub-counties, 46 parishes, and 381 villages in Jinja District. In the 1970's, Idi Amin expelled Asian entrepreneurs, the driving forces behind the industrial sector, from Uganda. As a result Jinja, once a booming industrial center, collapsed. Fifty-five percent of the people who live within Jinja District, work in the informal sector. Ninety percent of those who live in rural Jinja are fishermen or peasant farmers who produce cotton, sugar cane, coffee, sorghum, timber, and horticulture products that are consumed by wealthier residents in urban areas as well as by the industrial sector.⁶³

Governance at the District Level

Local governance in Uganda is based on the District, under which are elected Local Government Councils. According to the Ministry of Local Government in Uganda, the Local Government Council is the highest political authority in its area of jurisdiction. These councils have both legislative and executive powers to make and enforce local laws.⁶⁴ Local Councils (LC) are broken down into five levels. The LC 5 works at the district level, the LC 3, at the sub-county and the LC 1 at the village

⁶³ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development: Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Masese III Site Report Jinja District August 2002

⁶⁴ Ministry of Local Government Accessed from http://www.molg.go.ug/local_govts/local_gov_system.htm

level, or, in an urban area, a neighborhood. Theoretically, problems are relayed from the local level through the various LC levels until they reach an LC with enough authority or power to resolve the problem.⁶⁵ In Jinja District, LC 1 and LC 3 Chairs have responsibility over the three communities the researchers conducted research in.

At the village level, the LC 1 is responsible for mobilizing the community in matters related to law and order. The LC 1, with the primary responsibility of preventing and responding to crime, policies the community, gathers criminal data and establishes bylaws based on prevalence of crime and the needs of the community. The LC 1 refers criminal cases to the LC Court. The court adjudicates cases by promoting reconciliation rather than punishment. The LC1 and the LC court are charged with bringing order to the village level and serving as the first line of response to crime and serious disorder.⁶⁶

Population Demographics: The Poor in Masese

2002 data from the Jinja Poverty Assessment Report for Masese III village, one of the most densely populated slums in Jinja District, indicated that the majority of the 2,000 residents were Karamojong and Iteso who settled in the area in the 1980's.⁶⁷ However, government statistics also indicated that migrants from Soroti, Mbale, Tororo and Moroto lived in this community. The indigenous members of the community in Masese blamed the migrants for reducing employment opportunities in Jinja and contributing to the poverty crisis. Residents complained that inadequate skills, information, and education were a root cause of their poverty. The elderly and people with disabilities in these

⁶⁵ Commonwealth Local Government Forum "Country Profile: Uganda The local government system in Uganda: Accessed from <http://www.clgf.org.uk/2005updates/Uganda.pdf>

⁶⁶ Bruce Barker. "Popular Justice and Policing from Bush War to Democracy: Uganda 1981-2004" *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (2004), 333-348, Accessed from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=MIimg&_imagekey=B6WGX-4DSB0D6-1-1&_cdi=6834&_user=201547&_orig=search&_coverDate=12%2F01%2F2004&_qd=1&_sk=999679995&view=c&wchp=dGLbVtz-zSkWb&md5=4f5ae981acb106f8418c265deec7c2c9&ie=/sdarticle.pdf

⁶⁷ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Jinja District Poverty Assessment Report* (August 2002)

communities attributed stigmatization and isolation as a source of poverty which prevented them from accessing resources. Women noted that the high incidence of domestic violence and crimes had a negative impact on the community.

Government data categorized the population in Masese III into three groups - fair, poor and very poor. In terms of wellbeing, those who were described as *fair* had household assets, could afford to pay supplemental fees for children in primary school, could make contributions for funerals and access credit. They made up 9% of the population in Masese III. The *poor* initially belonged to the very poor category. The poor paid monthly rent of between Ush 5,000 – 7,000,⁶⁸ had some household assets and some steady income. They comprised 20% of the population. The remaining 82% of the population were the *very poor*. The *very poor* were unemployed, earned less than Ush 5,000, scavenge for food, had no shelter or assets. They were ostracized and alienated by the Jinja Community. The majority of these residents spoke Swahili. Government reports described the residents as beggars, scavengers and vagabonds. Residents who were employed brewed local gin, cultivated other people's gardens, cut and sold grass and fished to earn a living.

Community members in Masese indicated that they received material and spiritual support from religious institutions. For example, Christian Outreach Organization and an individual identified as Ms. Anne Ingrid have targeted the Karamojong for assistance. Karamojong children could attend a free Primary School while the adults were provided with clothing, blankets, mattresses, and other goods. Additionally, indigenous women in the community had access to credit and savings groups they helped

⁶⁸ In July of 2005, the exchange rate was \$1 to Ush 1,735. 5,000 Ush is roughly equivalent to \$2.90 and 7,000 Ush is equivalent to \$4.00 a month

to establish. These included the Police Wing Women Drams Group, Etandikwa and Mama Women Group which allowed indigenous women to enhance their incomes.⁶⁹

Population Demographics: The Poor in Kakira Sub-County

Kakira Sub-County is the third-most urbanized center in Jinja District. Nairo Village is one of the 50 villages in the Sub-County. Community members defined poverty in terms of crises in the family or in an individual's life, as lack of access to leaders who had the authority to help address poverty issues, and as such, the inability to positively impact their lives. Lack of access to land and relevant skills ensured that employment opportunities, or the ability to become self-sustaining, was limited. An assessment report conducted by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development stated that the *very poor* survived by begging or scavenging, had no shelter and drank habitually. Some of the very poor worked for others or were widows. In contrast, the *poor* were described as people who were employed but had little income, youthful with the energy to work hard, had some household assets and were able to pay rent. The rich owned cattle, could feed themselves, and worked for others to supplement their income. Most importantly, the rich were perceived to have the ability to own a business and continuously progress.⁷⁰

Cultivating people's gardens, brewing *waragi* (the local gin), cutting sugar cane to sell as firewood, selling handicrafts, working in the nearby sugar factory (Kakira Sugar Works), and cutting and selling thatched grass were described as common, albeit unsteady, sources of employment. The Local Council Chair 3 for Kakira sub-county explained that people in Nairo Village who had nowhere to live, slept in the market and at storefronts. He added that Kakira was full of many displaced people from the North.

⁶⁹ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Masese III Site Report Jinja District* (August 2002)

⁷⁰ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Kagoma Gate Site Report Kakira Sub-County Jinja District* (August 2002)

The average person repeatedly ate one meal a day, had to find petty jobs, and had an unsteady source of income. This same person probably was a peasant farmer who no longer had access to land. Those who found employment with the sugar factory earned between Ush 800 per day to Ush 40-60,000 per month. For many who could not find employment with Kakira Sugar Works, brewing *waragi* was their primary source of income. Finally, residents, particularly women, lacked physical security.

“Defilement” the LC 3 Chair explained “is one of the major crimes committed and is rampant.” He also reported that women rarely reported violence against them to the police even though these capital offenses would be taken very seriously by the government.⁷¹

Population Demographics: Ethnic Acholis in Masese I and III and Kakira Sub-County

No official data or reports are available about the numbers of displaced ethnic Acholis who have settled in Jinja District. Information that is publicly available focuses on the Karamojong, the Itesos, and the indigenous Luganda and Basoga communities. For example, as already noted, 2002 data from the Jinja Poverty Assessment Report for Masese III village, indicated that the majority of the 2,000 residents were Karamojong and Iteso.⁷² However, the Local Council 1 (LC 1) Chair of Masese III revealed in a July 2005 interview that there were closer to 5,000 people in the village, the majority of whom were Karamojong and Acholi. A Jinja District report remarked that these “internally displaced people have never succeeded in assimilating themselves in indigenous society.”⁷³ Masese I Parish has an estimated population of 4,000 residents with roughly 450 Acholis.⁷⁴ While there is no specific data available for the population of Nairo village in Kakira sub-county, the Local Council 3 (LC 3)

⁷¹ Interview with John Kamau LC 3 Chair, Kakira Sub-County

⁷² Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Jinja District Poverty Assessment Report* (August 2002)

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 3

⁷⁴ Interview with Chair of Can-Lit, Community Based Association in Masese 1.

Chairman for the 50 villages and 4 parishes in Kakira sub-county, estimated that more than 28,000 people live in the sub-county.⁷⁵

Like the poor in Jinja, the ethnic Acholi informants were confronted by many difficulties. They lacked basic necessities including bedding, firewood, food, access to medical care, and assets such as farming tools and bicycles. They did not have the financial resources or social or physical capital necessary to establish a vocation. The Acholis described themselves as powerless and lacked the voice to express their views on their welfare.⁷⁶ Finally, both male and female informants added that women were faced with the threat of rape, defilement, and domestic abuse. Some of the ethnic Acholis faced three additional constraints; a language barrier, discrimination by the indigenous population with whom they live, and lack of access to credit.

The Acholi IDPs who did not speak Swahili explained that their inability to speak the language acted as a barrier to finding employment and accessing health care. Some respondents also explained that because the indigenous community believed that Acholis were no better than animals and associated them with evil, Acholis were prevented from participating in microfinance programs and from buying water from taps owned by indigenous community members. As one informant reported, since no real effort was made to bring community members together in Kakira, indigenous residents told Acholis to “go back to the North and fight Kony,” the head of the LRA.⁷⁷

The Acholi informants interviewed in Masese I revealed that they paid between Ush 5,000 to Ush 10,000 per month for rent. The average informant earned between Ush 32,000 to Ush 50,400 per

⁷⁵ Interview with John Kamua, LC 3 Chair, Kakira Sub-County, July 2005

⁷⁶ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) Jinja District Poverty Assessment Report* (August 2002), 10-11

⁷⁷ Female informant, age 34. Nairo Village, Kakira sub-county, Jinja District.

month. Earnings fluctuated depending on availability of steady work. The highest wage earners worked as security guards, in construction, as fishermen, or brewed *waragi*. Eighty-six of informants who reported information on their household stated that 7.1 was the average size of the household. Twenty-six percents of informants were female. Eighteen percent of male respondents were single. The remaining men were married and reported that their wives contributed to household income.

Acholi residents of Masese III paid an average of Ush 19,000 a month for rent and earned between Ush 29,000 and Ush 38,600 a month. The average household size was 4.9. Here, the highest wage earners were employed as security guards, charcoal sellers, fishermen, *waragi* brewers or sold cooked food. While 38% of respondents were male, 62% were female. Only 13% of the women were married or lived with a man. The average household size was 6. Notably, those who earned the highest incomes in both Masese I and III were males who spoke English and/or Swahili and had at least been educated through Primary 1 and those who made the least were the elderly and female heads of households who did not speak Swahili or English.⁷⁸ Whereas 23% of respondents in Masese III spoke English, 66% of Acholi informants in Masese I spoke English. For more information about Masese III, please refer to Appendix II. A topographical map, market study, and housing and structural study will provide additional information about the living conditions of Acholi IDPs in Masese III.

The average household size in Nairo Village was 5.6. Rent ranged from Ush 5,000 to Ush 20,000 with most paying Ush 6,000 a month. Average income ranged from Ush 28,300 to Ush 33,000 per month. Seventy-nine percent of the informants were female and 21% were male. Those who earned the highest incomes brewed alcohol, worked in construction, or sold firewood to brewers. Those who made the least income worked sporadically (because of poor health) selling firewood, digging (cultivating the gardens), or working for alcohol brewers. Of the Acholis interviewed, 20.6% spoke English. These

⁷⁸ Women made as little as Ush 13,000 a month while the English speaking men made as much as Ush 78,000 a month.

respondents were either completing secondary school or had recently dropped out because of their inability to pay for school fees. In relation to the poor in Jinja, Acholis interviewed in the Masese I, III and Nairo Village appeared to fall within the poor or 'fair' category with those in Masese I earning more on average than those in Masese III or Nairo Village. Of note, only one Acholi informant owned livestock. A topographical map, market study, and housing and structural study in Appendix III will provide additional information about the living conditions of Acholi IDPs in Nairo Village.

How do ethnic Acholis in general, describe the circumstances under which they live? One poet explained:

War, war, war!⁷⁹
War, war, war!
War is destructive and dangerous
War can lead to destruction of homes
War can lost people's life in large numbers, adults and young ones
War is so destructive and dangerous to human life.

War, war, war!!!
Diseases are also destructive and dangerous to human life but conflict is beyond.
It caused people to fly from their homeland to a slavery life as we are now here in Jinja.

Conflict has ruined and destroyed children's lives and future because of what they have seen in past, some of their sisters, brothers, parents and relatives being, being killed, slaughtered, some beaten to death, hence, hindering them from staying a healthy and happy life. Conflict is really destructive and dangerous to our life.

Conflict, Conflict, Conflict!!
Religious leaders and cultural leaders tried so much to organize peace talks but failed.
That doesn't mean we are defeated even if "lost" years we still want peace and prosperity in our land, that we may keep children right positively.

We shall continue praying to God together with our religious leaders without any segregation and differences then through prayers, we shall be okay.

We under slavery life have in Jinja
We suffered for so long, over 10 years in this situation if God can help us to achieve sponsors like this to support us, then it is great and we are happy.

⁷⁹ This poem is printed with permission of Ismael Okidi, Masese I Parish, Jinja Uganda

Conflict, conflict, conflict!

Conflict is really destructive and dangerous to our life.

Conflict can hinder development, education, cost people's life, chased from your land, import suffering, ruin children future and destroy mothers plan and right to keep their children.

The poet described life for those who fled from the North as “a slavery life” in Jinja. Under what conditions were the IDPs in Jinja living? How did these IDPs work together or alone to overcome these constraints and gain access to education, employment, security and some semblance of stability?

VI. Analysis of Findings

In this section, I will investigate the three ways in which IDPs in Jinja were found to access resources.

They aligned with internal networks such as neighborhood associations, pursued individual strategies and aligned with external networks such as NGOs. By comparing these three strategies, I will test my hypothesis that IDPs working in groups are better able to cope with displacement than IDPs working alone. These groups and networks enable IDPs to gain access to resources and protection from threats.

A. Seeking Social Support: The Importance of Networks

Can-Lit: A Community Based Association

“These people are all the same,” the directors of FRO told us. As FRO explained, there was no difference between the living conditions and practices of Acholis in any of the three communities in which we would be working. With the exception of the women's leadership they had helped to establish, FRO believed that the Acholis had not mobilized themselves to address the constraints they were faced with in Jinja. Our introduction to Can-Lit, a Acholi community association in Masese I, was therefore a pleasant surprise.

On our first day in Masese I, the two translators assigned to work with the research group met us at the fishing landing sight. Armed with our pens and research pads, we were ready to begin walking through the community to interview Acholi IDPs. We were puzzled when our translators insisted on bringing

us to an area in the community designated as the meeting site. Waiting for us were about half a dozen individuals, only some of whom we had met before. But we did not understand why they wanted to meet with us. My first thought was that as long as the meeting was to discuss our strategy for moving within the community, it would not take away from our time allocated to interviewing informants. Two hours later, I had a deeper understanding of how the community in Masese I worked together to access resources.

An individual in the group welcomed us to the community and asked us to explain our presence in Masese I. He then introduced us to Can-Lit, translated to mean “Poverty Pains”. As the individual, later identified as the Chairman of the group explained, “Can” was an Acholi word used when confronted with a problem and “Lit” meant painful. The Advisor started by telling us that the first 28 Acholis who settled in Masese came together in 1994 to form Can-Lit).

The Acholis who came to Jinja between the mid-1980s and early 1990’s found that they were targeted by local government officials who viewed the Acholi community negatively. At night, the Local Council (LC) 1 Chair would walk around the community and arrest any Acholi who failed to register with the government. Thus, leaders in the community who wanted to assure the government that Acholis coming into the area would not destabilize the community, started working with the LC 1 Chair “to keep out wrong elements.” The organization was dedicated to “assisting tribesmen coming into the area because of the conflict and to working with the government.”⁸⁰

The Chairman of Can-Lit worked with other executive members to record the names of new Acholi migrants entering the community. This information was given to the LC1 Chair so that he could

⁸⁰ Interview with Executive Board of Can-Lit, Jinja District, Masese I Parish.

register the new members with the government. By 2005, 260 Acholis belonged to Can-Lit.⁸¹ One of their priorities continued to revolve around ensuring the safety of community members. Can-Lit explained the code of conduct acceptable in Masese I and placed all new members on a one-month probation period. The Chairman could only recall having to ask two people to leave the community because they failed to abide by the code of conduct.

Masese I was distinctly different from Masese III and Kakira in that no community member reported rape, defilement, or theft as a concern in their community. All disputes (except for capital offenses) were handled by the Chairman of Can-Lit, typically on a weekend evening. Furthermore, the members reported that Can-Lit was engaged in marriage counseling, preaching the virtues of patience, politeness and fidelity within marriage to promote harmony and minimize the rate of HIV infection in the community. The Chairman recalled that on no more than two occasions, Acholis who were found responsible for serious offenses were publicly caned and then asked to leave the community. In most situations, offenders were counseled or fined depending on the nature of the offense. Fines were then used to assist members with needs. Their mission has evolved over the years so that group members also “come together to analyze their problems, remind themselves of their problems, sustain their culture, and perform traditional dances.”⁸²

The evolution of Can-Lit, a neighborhood association or special interest group in Masese I, falls in line with research Huntington and Nelson have conducted among the urban poor in Africa and Asia.⁸³ They note that there are specific conditions under which groups mobilize for collective action. The group must perceive that they share a common threat which requires group action. Typically, since the

⁸¹ According to Can-Lit, there are an additional 112 children and 78 infants in the community.

⁸² Acholi Chairman of Can-Lit

⁸³ Samuel Huntington and Joan Nelson. *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries* (Harvard University Press, 1976), 135

government is the cause of the problem, the group must believe that collective action will exert a positive influence and yield results that are more cost effective than pursuing other means.

Nelson adds, in another publication, that the group must be able to locate itself within a boundary such as a neighborhood. The group must also have some degree of social cohesiveness, be ethnically homogenous and have access to leaders.⁸⁴ Where the community has a pool of educated or politically savvy individuals who can liaise with the government to draw from, it becomes easier to follow the leader or mobilizer who makes membership in the group beneficial. Significantly, neither of the other two communities where we carried out our research have mobilized themselves into an association. Masese I was distinct because Acholi community members responded to perceived government harassment by forming an association to protect their interests. The leaders were among the better educated individuals in the community, and were able to mobilize individuals to form a group.

Each of the 12 members of the executive committee in Masese I was elected by the community members. The positions to which Acholi members could be elected were Chair, Vice Chair, Assistant Youth Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Mobilizer, Security, Women's Leader, Women's Secretary, 2 Advisors, Children's Leader, and Elder/Opinion Leader. These executives had more stable jobs, spoke English and completed primary or secondary school. One attended university in Kenya. The three women on the executive committee were the treasurer, Women's Leader and Women's Secretary. The organization held general meetings every 90 days and executive meetings every 30 days. While members were expected to contribute dues of Ush 1,000, high poverty levels resulted in inconsistent and sporadic contributions. When money was available (and this was not very often), Can-Lit shared the resources to pay for malaria treatment with women who were idle and had no jobs or education.

⁸⁴ Joan M. Nelson. *Access to Power: Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations* (Princeton, University Press, 1979), 256

The organization became a conduit through which Acholis in the community accessed resources. The Children's Chair explained that he was responsible for tracking the well-being of all 112 children and an additional 78 infants. He advised mothers to ensure that their infants were immunized and that children were taken to hospitals and not witch doctors when they fell sick. When they identified extremely poor community members, the Executive Board pooled resources to help provide the means to pay for treatment. He was also responsible for ensuring that children who were not in school were at home, not because their parents are unwilling to send them to school, but because they lacked financial resources to do so. On the days that the LC General Secretary offered free immunization clinics in the community, the Children's Chair and the Mobilizer were responsible for helping to get the word out.

Given the success of Can-Lit, the LC 1 Chair encouraged other ethnic groups including the Itesos, Bagisus, Alure, Semias, and Mebesos in Masese I to establish similar leadership structures. Notably, the Basogas and Lugandas, two groups indigenous to Jinja, were the only community members not mobilized into groups. These locals in all three communities were reported to own land, livestock and have established networks with other indigenous members of the community in other areas in Jinja. The Acholis believed the indigenous population they lived with were better off and could sustain themselves. For example, most of the Acholis we interviewed also told us that their landlord was either a Basoga or Luganda man or woman.

Francis Boliere Kayiwa, the LC 1 General Secretary and Chair of the Parish Development Committee⁸⁵ reported that he disbursed all information to the community through their elected Chairmen. When the Chairs of the different ethnic groups called community meetings, the LC 1 Chair

⁸⁵ On the day of our interview, the LC1 Chair was at home sick with malaria and so I interviewed with Francis Bogere Kayiwa, General Secretary and Parish Development Committee Chair at the Landing Site in Masese I, Jinja District.

attended the meetings to “witness what is happening” and held these ethnic Chairs accountable for keeping the environment clean. He also reported that the LC 1 Chair communicated with the ethnic Chairs about how to best endure community challenges. Kayiwa saw the LC role with the clan leaders as a partnership. As a result of this relationship, the LC Chair was able to monitor and evaluate the clan chairs and ensure that they collaborate with each other to solve community disputes. Elections happened within the clan, and the LC was pleased that the leaders are dedicated, successful, and able to carry out their responsibilities.

The LC 1 General Secretary described how he worked with the Acholi Chair, as well as other Chairs, to deliver services to the community. Over the 10 years that he has been the LC Secretary, Kayiwa noted a significant difference in community behavior based on the relationship the LC Office developed with local leaders. He reported that he worked with the clan leaders, particularly the Acholi Chair, to ensure that all fishermen were provided with medication to prevent bilharzia, a common illness that afflicts men who fish in Lake Victoria. He provided the medication at the landing site. Furthermore children were being immunized and greater numbers of individuals in Masese I were accessing health services. As a result of the leadership system, community members of various ethnic groups were used to working together. When an ethnic group had a problem, the Mobilizer was responsible for informing the members of the surrounding ethnic groups of the problem. Kayiwa also explained that the Chairs of each ethnic group were responsible for settling disputes. Since the LC understood that these Chairs were known in their community, the LC 1 avoided making mistakes in adjudicating cases by allowing the community Chairs to settle disputes and serve as mediators. Capital offenses, such as rape and defilement, fell within the jurisdiction of the local courts and not the ethnic chairs.

A community member illustrated how Acholis in Masese I worked to minimize violence in the community with the following comment:

“Most of the youth in Masese I are former abductees. Sometimes, those youth who have recently escaped from the bush have relapses. They start screaming and behaving as if they are in the bush shouting “run, run, the UPDF are coming” or “Commander, order me to kill.” When it happens, we tie up the youth and put them in a cool room until they are calm. The people they have killed live with them for a long time. Afterwards, they do not recall anything that happened and ask why they have been tied up. In these situations, the youth are very dangerous and this is the only way to prevent them from doing something wrong.”⁸⁶

Livelihoods

The data we collected suggests that among those Acholis interviewed, Can-Lit was the channel through which resources were accessed. An informant’s alignment with Can-Lit helped to explain:

“I heard of Masese in Gulu and came to Jinja looking for means to survive, specifically with the target to fishing. Although I knew no one in Jinja, I had the hope of finding a tribe mate who would help me out. When I arrived at the bus park in Jinja, I approached a group of men drinking tonto [a local beer made from bananas]. There a stranger from the Basoga tribe was kind enough to welcome me into his house for three days. After that, [an executive member of Can-Lit] accepted me and took me to the late Chairman of Can-Lit. The current Chairman of Can-Lit then connected me with a fishing job. It is my employment and how I earn my income.”⁸⁷

Unlike the “Lugandans in the area [who] receive support from nearby family members, most of the Acholi in Masese came from the north without anything. They are not in a good position to help.”

Therefore, another informant went on to say that “a good strategy is to make friends with shopkeepers so that if one day you are not able to buy food, you can at least borrow some and pay for it later.” As he indicated, finding a way to access the limited resources in Jinja made a difference.⁸⁸

What another informant found so great about Masese was that there was a great exchange of ideas.

When he approached some of the Basoga and Buganda big bosses of fishing, he was relieved to find that they were open to working with him. They asked if he was familiar with fishing techniques. The informant was confident that even if he had not been, they would have shown him how to fish. He felt

⁸⁶ Male informant, age 32. Masese I Parish, Jinja District.

⁸⁷ Male informant, age 57. Masese I Parish, Jinja District.

⁸⁸ Male Informant, age 29. Masese I Parish, Jinja District.

very happy because he knew how to fish. To him, the upside about living in Masese I was that “the place is so peaceful.”⁸⁹ He went on to describe Masese I in the following way:

“With Masese itself, it’s an interesting place. It’s a village, but I myself don’t call it a village, because a village to my understanding is a very remote area where people who are not learned...only live within their own family. But with Masese, people of different tribes, religions, and cultural norms get associated with any group that they come across.”

Social Support for Emotional Reasons

The importance of working with networks or in groups was underscored in the majority of the interviews conducted. Sixty-five and a half percent of respondents indicated the value of having a family member or ethnic Acholi as their first point of contact into the community. These family members provided them with shelter, food, and clothing until they were able to find employment and live on their own. It was after attaining some degree of self-sufficiency that individuals could focus on other priorities such as access to education. In all three communities, informants listed improving access to education as their number one priority. The Children’s Chair of Can-Lit explained that he had given the names of all children not in school (particularly the orphans in the community) to the LC 1 Chairman with the hope that the government can sponsor these children so that they can go to school. For 54% of informants, paying for school fees (primary and secondary) though it presented the greatest difficulty was their highest priority. The LC 3 Chair in Nairo Village noted that 90% of students at the secondary school were not enrolled in school because of the difficulty of paying school fees. Other household expenses like food, rent and purchasing medications took away from the resources available to pay for school fees. Parents therefore, decided to keep their children at home and some required their children to look for work and contribute to household income.

Those children who were enrolled in school did everything in their power to remain there. One young man made it clear that he was unable to get a break in his life because he lacked the financial resources to complete his education. Thus, those who were in school did everything they could to remain in

⁸⁹ Male informant, age 19. Masese I Parish, Jinja District.

school. As one informant told us, working in a group allowed a small group of girls in a local secondary school to stay in school. As she explained:

“I am in just one club in our school. We just formed a small club of VSO, Volunteer Service Organization. We volunteer to help our friends in school. We join hands with our friends to clean the school. And teachers appreciate that because it was last year we began that organization. Then teachers were very happy and said that we should keep the spirit and up to now we are still helping the school. If anyone, any student has problems, we can try to advise that person about how they should stay or should feel. Since it’s called volunteer organization, you have to volunteer to do something and you are not paid. That is the only group I am participating in. Someone might come and tell you that I have a problem... my parents do this and this on me or they deny me reading. So, if we have time, we can ask that person to take us to their home. Then at their home we talk just as if we are there to visit our friend. Then we begin talking to the parents. We say that studies are good; you should allow your child to study. Because nowadays if you don’t study, there is no way you can survive. So you have to study, you leave your daughter or son to read. Give that person time. Even if they’ve come late.....If you deny your child the chance to read a book then it is not good because at the same time you are also wasting your money.”⁹⁰

Cultural Preservation and Group Identity

A consensus reached by IDPs in Masese III is that Acholi culture has been a major victim of the war.

With so many Acholis scattered in Uganda, it has become hard to continue with many traditional gatherings and ceremonies. Therefore, passing on traditions to the youth has proven to be difficult. In Jinja, the Acholi we interviewed were trying, with difficulty, to hold onto their culture. One practice which has been affected by displacement but still continued in some form in Jinja was that of funeral rites. One informant told the researchers that community participation in funeral rites happened on a significantly smaller scale in Jinja. Nevertheless, “when an important Acholi dies, all the Acholi in the area donate a little money, maybe 200 shillings, to be able to buy a piece of land to bury the body.”⁹¹

Muweru, the LC 1 Chair acknowledged that burying the dead in Masese III was a problem since all land in the area is owned by the government. When people passed away, Mweru tried to ensure that they were buried by helping to pay for the coffin and other needs. But with three to four people dying each day, he had a hard time meeting these needs. This was in contrast to what the Acholi Chairman in

⁹⁰ Female informant, age 18. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District.

⁹¹ Male informant, age 55. Masese III Village, Jinja District

Masese I described. In Masese I, the LC 1 Chair had given the Acholi land on which to bury their dead.

During the two months the research team spent in Jinja, the community came together and performed dances for the team. These opportunities to come together as a group allowed elders to pass on aspects of Acholi culture to the youth. The turnout at these events was remarkable. Some informants told us that if they could equip themselves with new drums, musical instruments and uniforms, it would allow them to enhance youth cultural groups. If they could practice enough dances to perform at functions, the group told us, the dance troupe could serve as a potential income-generating activity.

B. Individual Strategies

Without the benefit of belonging to groups like Can-Lit or to external organizations, the Acholi IDPs in Masese III said that they depended on their own skills to survive. These IDP informants reported that they had been barred from accessing resources available to other forced migrants. Hence, they struggled to gain acceptance in the community. The informants repeatedly told us that the only leadership in the community included the LC1 and LC3 Chairs whose primary job was to settle disputes and not improve access to resources. By working together with the LC Chairs in Masese I, the community managed to “keep out wrong elements” and maintained some semblance of peace in Masese I. Yet, in Masese III, the LC1 who worked alone stated that

“I struggle to take care of wrongdoers. There are many children without work. These kids steal things because they lack a proper education, have no work, and live in poverty. They think that they might die and so they do something just to survive.”⁹²

One informant came to Masese III with his wife and son after three of his children were abducted by the LRA in Kitgum. Unfortunately, he went on to say, his remaining son was killed in Masese III when he was twenty years old. He was killed by a local Basoga man. “To this day, they have not discovered the reason for his death. We reported the crime, but nothing was done.” Now the informant and his

⁹² LC I Chair, John Mweru, Masese III Village, Jinja District.

wife live alone. This informant told the researchers that his biggest complaint about living in Masese III stemmed from his inability to speak Swahili. As a result, he could not communicate with the Health Center staff and so did not attempt to go to the clinic for treatment. Instead, he stayed at home and suffered from an illness that caused his entire body to shake.⁹³ His case was illustrative of how difficult it was for IDPs working alone to access resources essential to their well-being.

Helplessness: Gendered Violence

In Nairo Village, the LC 3 Chair discussed the complex environment within which Acholi IDPs live. With the exception of Kakira Sugar Works, there were no other industries to sustain the community members. With a limited range of employment opportunities, brewing *waragi* became the dominant source of employment for women and men. The LC 3 Chair explained that even though production of *waragi* was illegal, the local government had done little to restrict brewing, the only way most could sustain themselves. Restricting brewing could make a bad situation even worse.

Yet alcohol consumption created a different set of problems that community members, particularly women, had to deal with. Many of these problems were a result of over-drinking. “When people get drunk, they have little or no control.” In addition to the prevalence of domestic abuse, “defilement is one of the major crimes committed and is rampant.”⁹⁴ The LC 3 Chair acknowledged that even though the sentence for defilement results was the death penalty, offenders were typically imprisoned for a minimum sentence of 7 years or a maximum of 12 years. The LC 3 Chair insisted that if a woman raised a complaint with the police, they would treat it as a capital offense.

⁹³ Male informant, age 80. Masese III Village, Jinja District.

⁹⁴ LC 3 Chair, John Kamau, Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District.

However, women in Nairo Village rarely reported violence against them to the police. Women were reluctant to go to the police because they understood that their partners would be apprehended. Staying with an abusive partner was seen as preferable to being single. Unfortunately, they explained, women in the community, with “no man around,” were not respected. Hence, they felt pressured not to report violence against them to the police.⁹⁵ Another female informant suggested that in Kakira, it was the men who did the drinking and this caused many problems. Some of the negative consequences she listed were increased interpersonal conflicts, misunderstandings and exchange of abusive words between community members.

In households where money was hard to come by, men spent their money on drinks. In some cases, women reported that some men sold their household possessions in order to buy more alcohol. A female informant said that after 8:00 PM, women in Kakira preferred to stay indoors. With drunkards wandering around at this time, women were an easy target.⁹⁶ A female informant added:

“People can hide there. They can even kill you or beat you and you are left there useless. People fight sometimes, like when they are drunk. [Neighbors] fight over people coming onto your plot of land. Sometimes they end up killing themselves because of the conflict. People drink anywhere... It is unsafe to stay in a community where people drink. It affects your studies and it leads you to bad peer groups. Like, if you have friends who drink they can come and deceive you they can try to deceive you. You cannot respect your parents if you are joining a bad group. And if you drink and you know alcohol affects our brains, I don't think you can stay safe really. There are very many who drink.”⁹⁷

A male informant who stated that crime (defilement, theft, rape) was rampant in Kakira indicated he would go the LC 1 Chair to report crimes or for dispute resolution. Few people actually went to the LC Chairs for assistance because “it can be hard because they may want money to continue with the case.” If there was a fight, it was left to the “masses” to settle the dispute. He concluded by saying that there was nobody he can really turn to with his problems.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Female informant, age 19. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District

⁹⁶ Female informant, age 33. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District.

⁹⁷ Female informant, age 18. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District.

⁹⁸ Male informant, age 29. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District

During a conversation with a female informant in Nairo Village she described the relationship between community members saying, “two ladies, one Acholi and one Basoga can be quarreling. The Basoga woman might say to the Acholi “What brought you here? You go back north and fight with Kony.” From her experience, there has been no real effort to bring community members together. If someone came to the community to bring people together to talk, she was certain this would help improve community relations. She acknowledged that even though the LC3 tried to tell people to live in peace, nobody listened to what he said. She went on to note that she did not know of any non-Acholis who were sympathetic to the Acholi community in Kakira.⁹⁹

With no opportunity to address gendered violence, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence, these community members internalized the problems they encountered. They focused instead on working alone to secure resources. Even though most informants abhorred the violence in the community and saw the link between alcohol consumption and violence, they understood that brewing alcohol offered the most lucrative income and steady source of employment. The majority of our informants either worked in the distilleries or sold firewood to the distilleries. Since most of the illnesses that informants reported were related to brewing, most wanted an alternative source of employment. In each of the three communities, Acholi IDPs spoke about the negative effects of brewing *waragi*. Yet 51% of respondents either reported that one or more members of their household brewed *waragi*. If given the opportunity, 6% of respondents indicated that they would like to brew *waragi*. Forty-six percent of those interviewed noted that alcohol-related violence, health, and sanitation problems associated with brewing *waragi* were detrimental to their community. But with no capital, alternative skill set or employment opportunity, brewing was the best option available to many. The experiences of these IDPs working alone illustrated how much harder they had to work to access resources. Despite their

⁹⁹ Female informant, age 33, Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District.

hard work, these IDPs were more vulnerable to violence, found it hard to secure steady sources of income and integrate into their communities.

Turning to Faith

For those Acholis who felt they had no one to turn to for support, religion played an important role in creating a safety-net. Fifty-six percent of Acholi IDPs described themselves as devout Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals (or born-again according to the Acholis) or Protestants and talked about the support they received from fellow Christians or their church. Acholis who aligned with faith-based organizations received financial support and moral support and drew personal strength from their association with these groups and their belief in God. Going to church was an activity most of these Acholis were involved with. Interestingly, turning to God was something the Acholi IDPs pursued on an individual basis.

When we asked another informant where he turned to for support, he explained that as long as he was alive, praying was essential. He was certain that it was the hope he derived from God that kept him alive. He also reported that once a month he either received food or clothing from the Catholic Church in Walukuba, a neighboring village. Serving God and believing that God would relieve their suffering was a common response from many Acholis we interviewed in all three communities.¹⁰⁰ Their views on displacement were within the context of God's plan for their lives and their trust that faith and God would allow them to deal with any hardships that confronted them. Not only were the IDP informants unable to hold any meetings or interviews on Sundays, but some also tried to convert me to their faith by offering pamphlets and inviting me to church. Their conviction in God and the influence religion and faith had on the lives of some informants was particularly evident in Masese I when informants expressed their views on alcohol brewing and consumption in the community.

¹⁰⁰ Male informant, age 80. Masese III Village, Jinja District.

The research found that IDP informants in Masese III and Niro Village who worked alone were particularly vulnerable to threats. These IDPs working alone frequently mentioned that they had no one to turn to for assistance. Women were victims of domestic violence and crime was rampant in both communities. In addition, IDPs in both communities spoke about the antagonistic relationships between Acholis and members of other ethnic groups. These factors made it more difficult for these informants to cope with displacement in Jinja.

C. External Networks

Finding Faith

While some IDPs coped individually with the difficulties of displacement by turning to God, others gained access to resources by aligning with faith-based organizations. As this section will show, by working as a group with external networks, IDPs gained access to more resources than IDPs who worked on their own. In Masese III, informants complained about the distinction that external religious organizations maintained between different ethnic groups. The LC1 Chair in Masese III reported that the Karamojongs have access to special programs including a special education school. This Karamojong Special Education School was established for the Karamojongs with outside help. The fact that resources are available to the Karamojong was confirmed in a report produced by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.¹⁰¹ It was also confirmed by the only Karamojong we interviewed.

As the Karamojong informant said, “there is a white community of born-againists that aids many Karamojong children including my own.” According to him, this group teaches children about biblical stories and how to read and write. Although he is of a different faith, our informant did not mind that

¹⁰¹ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Report. Masese III Site Report Jinja District* (August 2002)

his children were educated by this group. He reasoned that the teachings were only ideas and that overall his children had a lot to benefit from attending the group's programs. The informant was grateful that his children were receiving some education and were sometimes given cooked food.

Occasionally, the external organizations also provided medicine and performed health checks for the children. To date, this group of born-again Christians has helped the community deal with AIDS-related issues, especially by providing some antiretroviral medication (ARVs). They have delivered food items like macaronis and packed beef and have provided an elderly woman with a place to sleep. He expressed gratitude for the services these *muzungus*¹⁰² offered. Additionally, the informant told the researchers that Children Outreach Organization (COO) and an individual named Ms. Anne Ingrid sometimes provided clothes, housing, education, and medication to the Karamojong.¹⁰³ John Mweru was certain that COO was the only organization working with Karamojong members of Masese III Village. By aligning with this organization, Karamojongs increased the resources available to them.

Some Acholis, who feel excluded and unable to access these resources, find other ways to receive assistance. One informant spoke about a time when a Karamojong MP came with missionaries from Kampala to Masese III to bring food to the Karamojongs. In order to get one cup of posho (maize meal) and one cup of beans, this Acholi informant found a short-term solution to his problem. By fighting to get in line and pretending he was a Karamojong, he gained access to the food aid.¹⁰⁴

Aligning with Non-Governmental Associations

The Acholi IDPs in these communities who have aligned themselves with Friends of Orphans acknowledged that gaining access to resources outside their communities was preferable to brewing

¹⁰² Muzungu is a term used by locals to describe Caucasians.

¹⁰³ Male informant, age 33. Masese III Village, Jinja District

¹⁰⁴ Male informant, age 60. Masese III Village, Jinja District

waragi. Appendix II and III illustrate the range of businesses currently available in Nairo Village and Masese III. However, the majority of Acholis told us they were unable to access these opportunities. By their own admission, finding the capital to enter into the food preparation, fishing, wholesale and retail industries was critical.

In August of 2005 FRO launched a sewing project to provide thirty single mothers with the opportunity to pursue a new income-generating activity. Fifteen women were to be selected from Masese I and III on the one hand and Nairo Village on the other hand. FRO explained that they had carried out an assessment at the beginning of the year and determined that this would be most beneficial to the community. However, during the two months I spent in Jinja, none of the individuals I spoke to agreed that this initiative was a priority for them. The plans had been developed by FRO executives and the women's leadership without input from community members. In addition, the market in Jinja was saturated with tailors making it difficult to understand how these young women would find employment after completing the sewing course.

Community members who understood the local market and identified more lucrative income-generating activities, drafted and presented proposals to Friends of Orphans for the activities outlined below.

- Loans at low or no interest since they cannot afford the high interest rates offered by current programs administered by Finca, Pride Africa, and others.
- Sponsorships to attend welding, carpentry, motor mechanics, driving school, hair training schools, and computer training workshops.
- Capital to purchase fruit, fish, grain, produce and so on for wholesale and retail sale.
- Fishermen would like the capital to purchase or upgrade fishing boats, engines, and nets so they can catch a wider variety of fish in greater quantities.
- Capital to open restaurants either in Kakira or in Jinja.
- Capital to buy chicks and start a poultry industry for Masese I and III. They can sell eggs and live chickens and enjoy the nutritious benefits themselves.
- Loans to buy bicycles and become Boda Boda (bicycle taxi) drivers.
- Cultural dancing groups need capital to purchase uniforms and musical instruments for youth cultural performances in the greater Jinja Community.

- Start-up capital for paper, cloth, dyes, beads, glue, and string to make jewelry and batiks.

Gaining access to capital was critical for these community members, some of whom had tried the microfinance route. The problem, they reported, was that the terms and conditions for the micro-credit loans were high. As such, people were not able to pay back the loans with interest on a weekly basis.¹⁰⁵ In Masese I, Can-Lit executives had to help four community members who defaulted on their loans to make payments and so they actively counseled members not to participate in micro-credit programs.

Acknowledging the Importance of Social Support

Particularly in Nairo Village, where residents reported that they had no community groups, we were told frequently that community meetings did not happen often unless Friends of Orphans called meetings.¹⁰⁶ Another informant was happy to report that since these meetings started, the Acholis meet twice a month,

“for a moral boost and to strengthen our spirit. We talk about how we would like the war in the north to end and we will be able to go back. We also talk about alcohol. We advise each other not to drink a lot because it will destroy us and our children. Generally, one person will speak and then others will raise their hands to speak in turn. Most of the people in the community support the meetings where we discuss the negative impacts of drinking.”¹⁰⁷

This informant seemed to indicate that community gatherings could positively impact the confidence ethnic Acholis had in their ability to solve their own problems. In contrast, another informant in Masese III contended that the meetings usually consisted only of opinions and promises and could not act on empty promises. Yet another informant suggested that there was poor leadership in Masese III. The women’s leadership that FRO has created was accused of not allowing people to talk or express themselves and of nepotism. Ideally, community members would like to see FRO delegate work to other members of the community and appoint a coordinator from Nairo Village, Masese I and Masese III to communicate with the director and the women’s leadership.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with John Kamau LC 3 Chair, Kakira Sub-County

¹⁰⁶ Female informant, age 31. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District

¹⁰⁷ Female Informant, age 53. Nairo Village, Kakira Sub-County, Jinja District

It was made clear by some community members, that all Acholis in Jinja were not the same. As such, a designated spokes person from each community would be in a better position to articulate their needs. These levels of needs were specific and could be categorized by gender, income level and age. It was important to the community that we understood who the Acholis were, the conditions they lived under, and the resources they needed to become more self-sustaining.

This was particularly true in Masese I where Can-Lit categorized members by their level of need. As already noted, this group came together to reflect on their problems, keep families together, mobilize group members to assist individuals and works to sustain their culture. They did this by creating networks among Acholis and establishing links with non-Acholis and the government. High on their list of priorities was increasing the household materials and assets of group members. This included bedding, pots and pans, mosquito nets, water gallons and more.

For others, the presence of foreigners in the community was an answer to their prayers. They looked to all of the researchers for money to pay school fees. They wanted to know what we were doing in the community and how our presence would benefit them. Few acknowledged their own agency and ability to work in groups to solve problems. According to this group, creating access to and taking advantage of available resources were essential if they were to lift their burden of “slavery.” As the young poet stated earlier, the quest to end their suffering, benefit from development, education and peace and be self-sustaining continued in Jinja. The impact groups like Can-Lit and FRO had on the lives of community members was invaluable to many. But as one informant repeated, they live in slums in Jinja and under difficult circumstances. They wanted us to understand that their ability to work in groups and help themselves is limited. Even more, they wanted us to understand that what they

have accomplished must not be taken lightly and must be placed within the context of their difficult surroundings.

It is evident to me that working in groups allowed Acholis to come together to rejuvenate themselves, protect their interests and gain access to resources. Whether they came together for Can-Lit meetings, for funerals or cultural dances, what was also obvious was the extent to which working in groups was essential to preserving Acholi culture, which some described as being under attack. Like their culture, the Acholis in Jinja felt that they were under attack from violence, malaria, AIDS, poverty and discrimination. Those Acholis who pursued individual strategies were found to be more vulnerable to discrimination and found it more difficult to protect their interests. Informants described the limitations they faced when they worked alone. Community members working alone were more susceptible to discrimination, domestic and alcohol-related violence and general instability compared to those working with local or external associations.

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Too often, external agencies assume that urban IDPs lack the capacity to mobilize into associations that promote the interests of members and defend the community from threats. Rather than building on what already exists, external agencies end up creating or imposing groups through which resources are distributed and decisions are made. Understanding how associations urban IDPs have formed work, how they have evolved and how they promote the interests of their members is important for two reasons. First, it will increase our knowledge about the role of associations in promoting the interests of members. Second, NGOs like FRO and other agencies can use this information to map and assess the capacity of the urban poor to help themselves.¹⁰⁸

By understanding the nature of threats communities are faced with, agencies can work with the government and community associations to minimize the threat. In Jinja, minimizing domestic and

¹⁰⁸ Victor Adetula. "Ethnicity and the Dynamics of City Politics: The Case of Jos," in *Urban African Changing Contours of Survival in the City*, eds. Simone, AbdouMaliq and Abouhani, Abdelghani Zed Books Ltd 2005

alcohol related violence seems to be critical for the well-being of community members, particularly women. At the same time, it is important to understand the extent of social cohesiveness in a community and the capacity of IDPs to mobilize their communities for action. This knowledge will allow organizations like FRO to work with these individuals or groups to provide resources that the majority of community members can access. The nature of the interventions in communities with associations (like Masese I) and with no associations (like Kakira and Masese III) must either build on what already exists or develop local capacity to respond to individual and community needs.

Do No Harm

Acholi informants told the researchers that aligning with FRO and the researchers was important to helping them gain access to financial resources outside their communities. At the same time, some informants viewed FRO with suspicion because they were uncertain if FRO represented the interests of community members at large. One informant, a member of Can-Lit, explained that he understood what it meant to align with an internal association which had popular support with members and represented the interests of members. From my interaction with both parties, I understood what he meant. First, though well-meaning, Friends of Orphans (FRO) neither understood the population they were working with nor represented the voices and interests of the majority of members. Second, while FRO made decisions they thought were in the best interest of the community, they were not always transparent. For example, the process through which FRO created the Women's Leadership, their mobilizing agent in the community, as well as the reasons for creating this group were not transparent. FRO and the Women's Leadership they created treated the Acholi IDPs as victims and beneficiaries they wanted to serve rather than as active agents with the capacity to make decisions. Finally, like the faith-based organizations that supported Karamojongs, FRO was working exclusively with one ethnic group. In the same way that Christian Relief Organization created tensions and divisions in Masese III by working with Karamajongs and excluding others from accessing resources, FROs involvement in

Masese I had the potential to undo the peaceful co-existence between Acholis and other ethnic groups in this community.

If external organizations, such as, FRO want to have a positive impact on communities like this, it is in their interest to ensure that their decision-making process is transparent and collaborative. In addition, in the interest of doing no harm, external organizations should work with local official and individuals in these communities to ensure that their work does not increase ethnic tensions or cause divisions. Even though most organizations have limited resources to work with, it is important to consider the negative impact their work could have on Acholi relations with other ethnic groups.

The Same, Yet Very Different

The experiences of the ethnic Acholis in Jinja demonstrated that experiences with urban displacement are not uniform even in the same city. The strength and presence of networks can support individuals and groups in the community and increase the resources to which IDPs have access. The impact of Can-Lit in the lives of IDPs in Masese I and on relations with the government was clear from our discussions with informants. Yet, none could explain why this association, which had done so well in one community, was not exported to others. Understanding these nuanced differences and building on local initiatives will help external organizations to strengthen their relationship with community members. Understanding why in similar contexts, some IDPs form associations and others do not is another area for research since it appears that IDPs working in groups are better able to cope with displacement.

Navigating Politics

Interestingly, our interaction with Can-Lit and with community members in each community revealed an intricate web of politics surrounding our presence and our relationship with FRO and community

members. Community members were critical of what they perceived as undemocratic practices on the part of FRO. They wondered if members of the community would be selected to participate in FRO sponsored projects because of their allegiance to FRO or because of nepotism. They wanted to know if Acholis in the community would be selected to participate in programs based on need or merit. I am bringing this up to demonstrate two points. First, the community structures already in existence among the Jinja Acholis are complex and have established ways in which to identify needy members in their communities. Second, as already mentioned concerns that were raised all point to the demand for transparency in working with the communities. Taken together, a more democratic, collaborative and participatory approach between FRO, Can-Lit and other community members is essential to resolving the current lack of trust community members have for FRO.

The Importance of Networks

Acholi informants in Jinja found ways to cope with displacement. For some, networks of family and friends made the initial transition to life in Jinja smoother. For others, aligning with Can-Lit ensured their physical safety, mental well-being and allowed them to access livelihood opportunities more easily. For others, the opportunity to align with FRO was significant since they believed FRO could provide access to resources. By taking advantage of their networks, the informants integrated into the urban environment to varying degrees. Those IDPs in Masese III and Nairo Village who had limited opportunities to access established networks, had greater difficulty thinking strategically about personal security and liberty or about community or public participation. Their energies were focused on accessing basic goods and services and finding employment. Their relationship with the indigenous community was antagonistic. Aligning with FRO, an external organization, could provide a morale boost, strengthen their spirits and improve community relations.

Despite the strong desire some community members have to align with FRO, this organization must recognize that the displaced in these communities have their own ideas about how to improve their standard of living. As many informants explained to the researchers, they know which members have greater needs and hence place emphasis on doing what they can to assist the more vulnerable individuals. Gaining access to steady employment, education and acquiring new skills sets were priorities for our informants. Nonetheless, the solution 90% of the respondents brought up was for FRO and the researchers to pay for their children's school fees. While many considered this a viable option, a few members of Can-Lit explained that availability of credit for group projects and steady employment was preferable since it would make them self-sufficient in the long term. These individuals recognized the distinction between being beneficiaries and active agents in charge of shaping their own destiny. Can-Lit submitted various proposals for income-generating activities to FRO. FRO should provide Can-Lit with the means to identify community members with the most need and help fund income-generating activities or provide them with skills training.

This research has shown that IDPs working in groups to access resources cope better with displacement than IDPs working alone. The research also demonstrates that internal networks that have popular support because they represent the interests of community members are most effective at meeting the needs of their members. After spending two months in Jinja, I was awed by the strength, wisdom, integrity and initiative of the Acholi IDPs. The approach Can-Lit took to helping members cope with displacement and access resources was innovative. Despite having no financial resources and despite the difficult living conditions they spoke about, they accomplished more for the communities than I expected, and their initiatives have had a lasting impact on the quality of life in Masese I. FRO is motivated to positively impact the lives of displaced Acholis in Jinja by providing them with access to much needed resources and building local capacity to make decisions.

Appendix I: Consent Form and Research Questions

Consent form for adults displaced from northern Uganda, now residing in the communities of Kakira and Masese

Project title: COPING MECHANISMS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM NORTHERN UGANDA RESETTLED IN KAKIRA AND MASESE: A CASE STUDY IN RESILIENCE.

Sandra Sohne: address: P.O. Box 441769, Somerville, MA 02144 U.S.A.
Tel: (617) 627.1117

Contact address in Uganda: Sandra Sohne
Mayfair Hotel, Clive Road
Jinja, Uganda

Mobile phone no: + 256 78 94 01 05
June 3rd – July 29th, 2005.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this project is to document the assets and needs of Kakira and Masese in order to best understand and serve your communities. Additionally, we seek to create a collection of stories and personal testimonies that reflect the communities' shared history, culture and experiences. This is information that we will leave with your communities and intend to share the history and current conditions of these communities with the outside world. Neither Tufts University nor student researchers will receive any compensation for this work.

We would like to interview you about your experiences in the north, your journey to Jinja, and your experiences here. We would like to ask about your personal life, your accomplishments, your struggles, and your hopes for the future. We would also like to ask about the impact displacement has had on traditional cultural practices, the aspects of your culture that have been preserved, the new cultural practices that you have adopted, and the ways in which these practices may have assisted you in your transition to life in Jinja.

If you agree to participate in the project, this interview will last for approximately 60-75 minutes. We may publish the results of this study in a working paper or scholarly journal, or leave them with Friends of Orphans, but we will not use your name or anything else that may identify you unless you consent to be identified. We may tape and/or video record and/or photograph this interview, and take notes by hand. Please understand that you may refuse to participate before the interview, you may stop the interview whenever you wish, you may skip an interview question at any time, and you may ask questions throughout the interview. You may also decline to be photographed, video or tape-recorded before, during, or after the interview.

Our questions are not intended to upset or distress you in any way. However, if they do upset or distress you, please tell us or a trusted member of your community who can contact us on your behalf. If you feel upset or distressed after we leave, please contact Sandra Sohne at the above address and phone number. This will allow us to accordingly change the content of our interview questions. If you feel upset or distressed, you can also speak with a counselor at the Psychiatric Ward at Jinja Government Hospital at 43 Jinja Hospital. Counseling services are available at no cost to you every Monday and Friday from 9:00am until 2:00pm. This does not mean that either we or Tufts University are at fault, and you will not receive compensation.

If you have any further questions or concerns about the project or this consent form, please feel free to contact Sandra Sohne at the addresses or telephone numbers above.

CONSENT FORM:

I, _____, agree to participate in the project called “Coping mechanisms of internally displaced persons from northern Uganda settled in Jinja district, Uganda: A case study in resilience.

I understand that the researchers intend to publish what they learn in this study.

I _____ consent _____ do not consent to being named or otherwise identified in their publication of this study.

I _____ consent _____ do not consent to being photographed for their publication of this study.

I _____ consent _____ do not consent to being video or tape recorded for their publication of this study.

I understand that I may refuse to participate, stop the interview, or skip an interview question at any time. I understand that I will not receive compensation for my participation in this study. I will be given a copy of the project description and consent form to keep.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

Student researcher’s name (printed) _____

Student researcher’s signature _____

Date _____

Witness’s name (please print) _____

Witness’s signature _____

Date _____

Questionnaire

Can you please tell me about yourself? (– your name, where you were born, where you came from, where you went to school, yourself and your family)

Can you give a brief overview of the community with a focus on:

- a. History
- b. Waves of migration into and out of the community
- c. Demographics

What is the general perception of the community on education?

- a. Formal
- b. Informal

How many children do you have? How old are they?

What do they do during the day? Are they in school and in what class?

If they are not in school, why not?

What are those children who are not in school doing?

- c. Are they needed at home?
- d. Is working/generating income for family valued over school?

What was your life like before the conflict and how did the conflict change your family life? (did you work, what did you do, how many people did you have in your life?)

Before the war, what were you doing?

Can you describe why you left your home?

Did you ever see or meet the LRA?

What are your thoughts and feelings about the LRA?

Can you explain in more detail?

What were some of your thoughts and feelings that made you decide to leave the North?

Who helped you make this decision?

Did you come alone or with a group?

Did any members of your family come with you?

If not, did any family members come separately and why did they chose to come earlier or leave later?

What possessions did you bring with you? (did you have any money on you when you arrived, material possessions, others resources, items with religious meanings, reminders of home, personal or cultural possessions)

What did you do with the possessions you left behind?

What was your route coming here and why did you chose it?

Why did you leave Lira (or your mid-way point)?

What were some of your biggest problems making this journey?

Did people help you along the way?

What had you prepared for and what were you not prepared for?

Why did you come to Jinja and in what year? What had you heard about Jinja before you came?

Where else did people you knew settle?

Did you have relatives in Jinja (how are you related to them?)

Who were your hosts upon arrival?

For how long were you with them?

How long have you been in Jinja?

How do you spend your days?

What is your occupation?

If you had the opportunity, what type of work would you be doing?

How much do you make?

How do you spend that money?

Are you able to save?

Have you ever received a loan? If yes, from whom?

Do you own or rent your home? If yes, how much do you pay in rent and to whom do you pay?

How many people live in your home?

How do you travel about?

How far do you walk for drinking water?

How much do you pay for water?

Where do you find food?

Do you use a latrine?

How often does it flood in your village?

Is there brewing in your village?

Do lorries travel through you village? Has anyone been knocked?

Have things become harder or easier since you have been here?

Are there moments that make you hopeful for the future?

Are there activities you do that you enjoy?

What would you like for yourself and your family in the future? What do you hope for?

When people face challenging situations, they find things that help them deal with these difficulties. What are things that you do or have done to find the strength and to make it easier to deal with these difficulties?

What does your community do? Do you discuss these with your family members?

Where do you get your support from?

What would you tell people who wish to come to Jinja to do to prepare themselves? Would you tell them to come to Jinja? Have you told people not to come to Jinja?

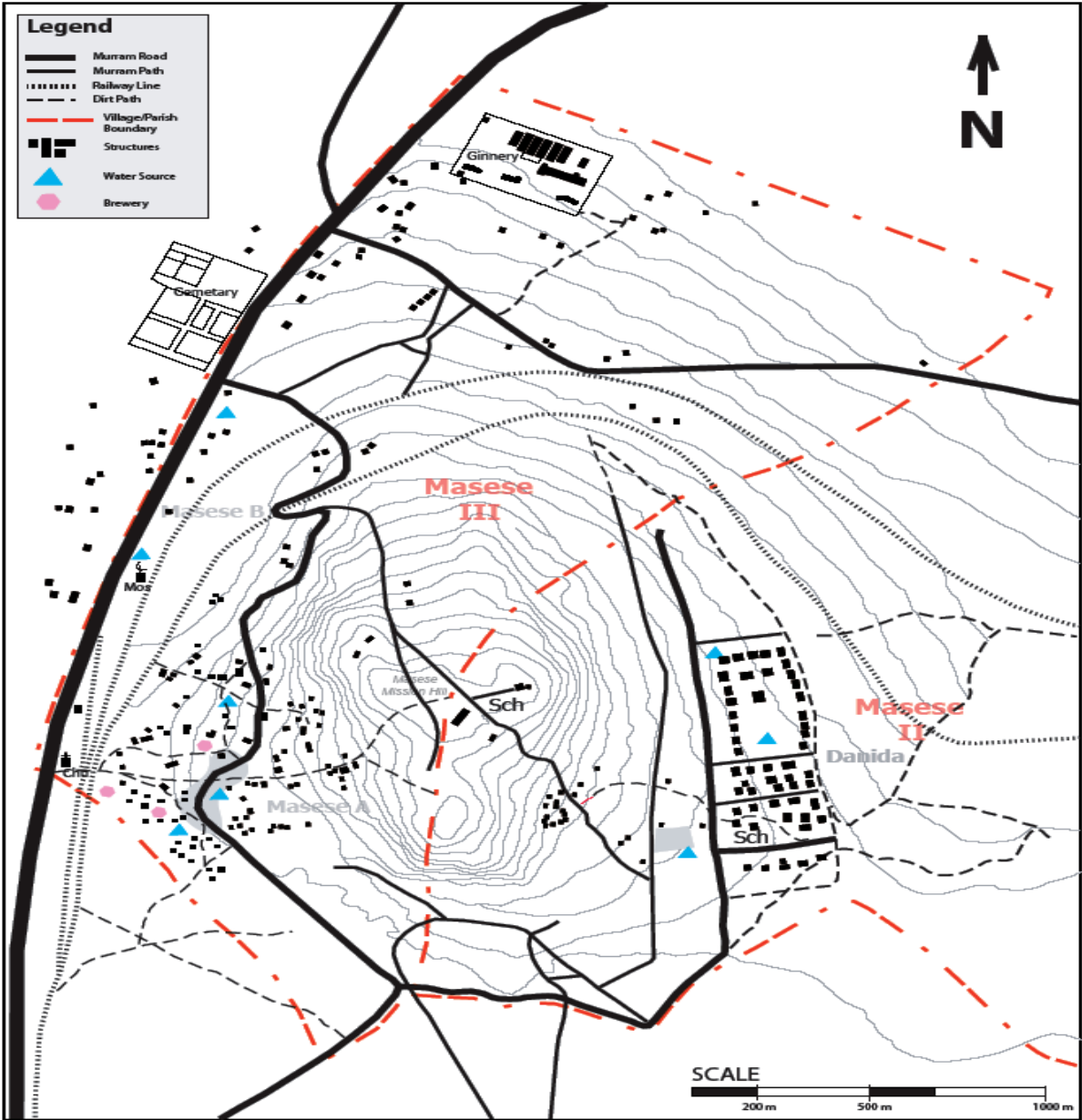
Can you tell us what you think about the conflict?

Are there people you think would be willing to speak with us? Can you help us to identify people with whom it would be beneficial for us to speak?

Appendix II: Masese III Village

A. Topographical Map

TOPOGRAPHICAL/ROADWAYS MAP: MASESE



B. Market Study

MARKET STUDY: MASESE III MARKET

Conducted by the Tufts Uganda Internship Program (TUIP) June 2005

BUSINESS CENSUS	
Retail Shops:	15
Type	Number
Bakery (chapati, bandazi, bread etc.)	0
Butchery (Halaal meats, fish)	0
Crafts (Batiks, drums, mats)	0
Dairy (Milk and Yogurt)	0
Drug Store (dispensary, non-clinic)	1
Dry Goods (beans, peas, flour, maize)	4
Electronics (used radios, VCR Decks)	0
Fabric (batenge, shirts, dresses, etc.)	0
Gen. Merchandise (soaps, plastics, cells, brushes, polish and misc. household items)	10
Hardware (tools, rope, auto parts)	0
Stationary (pens, notebooks, etc.)	0
Wood Shop/Furniture (chairs, bed frames, tables)	0
Retail Services:	10
Type	Number
Saloon	0
Telephones	0
Restaurants/Take Away	1
Joints (serves only drinks, no food)	7
Sewing Machines	1
Bicycle Repair	0
Auto/Lorry Repair	0
Hotels	1
Movie House	0
Clinics	1
Kioski/Tables/Mats	8
Produce	6
Charcoal	2

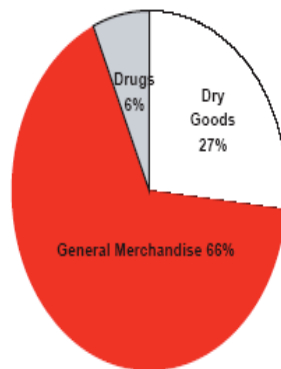


EXHIBIT 1: RETAIL GOODS

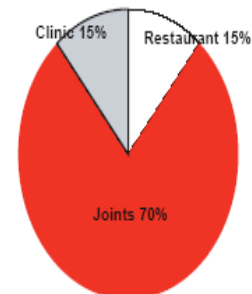
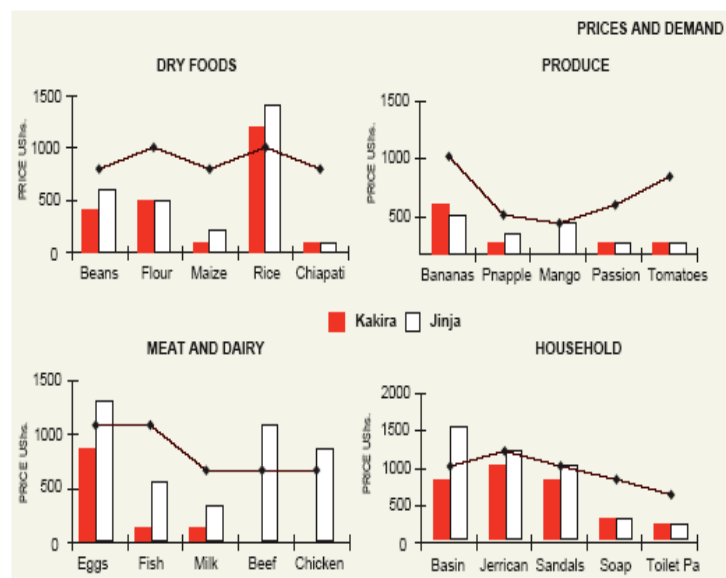


EXHIBIT 2: RETAIL SERVICES

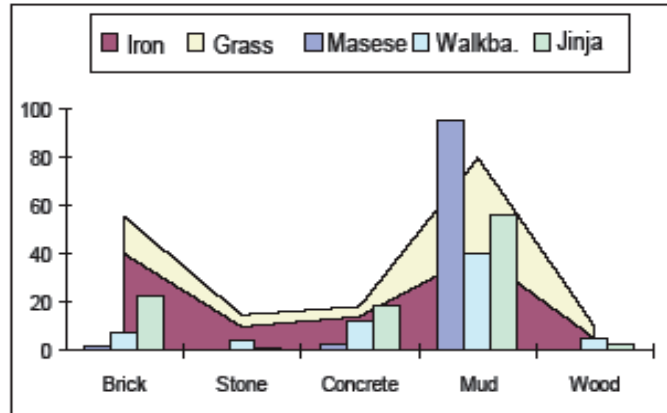
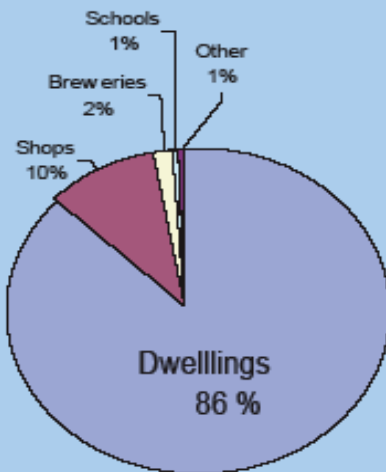
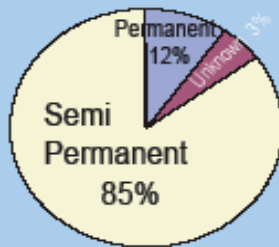
This market study was conducted using a simple tally and casual discourse with local store owners who were willing to participate. Distinctions were made between established store fronts and various kiosks found within the market vicinity. Distinctions were also made between retail shops selling final goods and informal service providers selling retail services relying on manual labor or professional machinery.



HOUSING AND STRUCTURAL STUDY: MASESE III VILLAGE

Nyumbani (Dwellings)	158
Maduka (Shops)	19
Brewari (Breweries)	3
Skuli (Schools)	1
Kingine (Other)	2

TOTAL 183



Mud Dwelling with Tin Roof



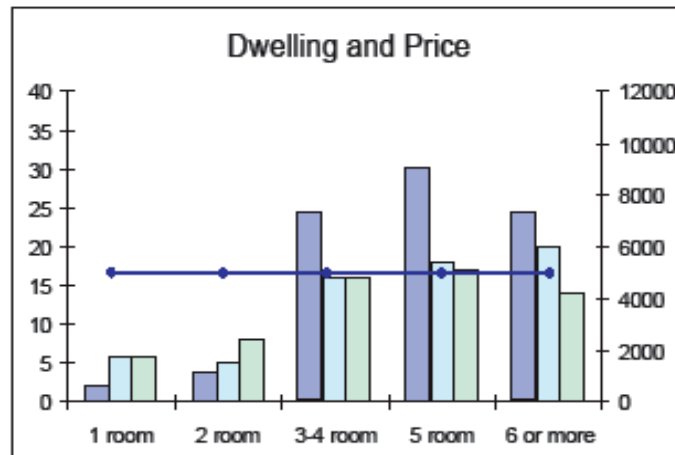
Mud-Adobe Dwelling with Iron Roof



Mud Dwelling with Tin Roof



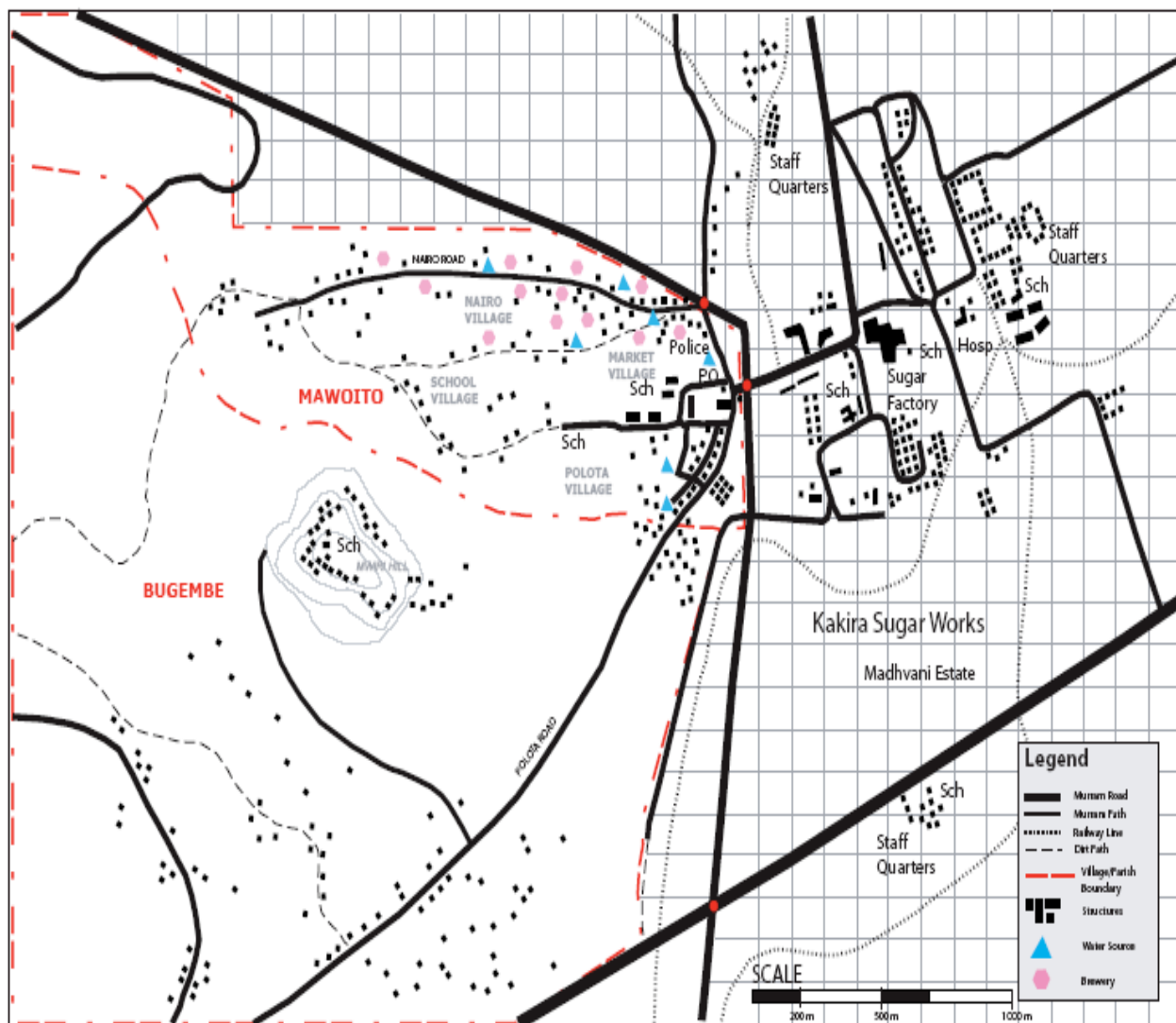
Traditional Hut with Grass Roof



Appendix III: Nairo Village, Kakira

A. Topographical Map

TOPOGRAPHICAL/ROADWAYS MAP: KAKIRA-NAIRO VILLAGE



B. Market Study

MARKET STUDY: KAKIRA MARKET

Conducted by the Tufts Uganda Internship Program (TUIP) June 2005

BUSINESS CENSUS	
Retail Shops:	75
Type	Number
Bakery (chapati, bandazi, bread etc.)	1
Butchery (Halaal meat, Fish)	2
Crafts (Batiks, drums, mats)	0
Dairy (Milk and Yogurt)	0
Drug Store (dispensary, non clinic)	10
Dry Goods (beans, peas, flour, maize)	28
Electronics (used radios, VCR decks)	2
Fabric (batenge, shirts, dresses, etc.)	9
Gen. Merchandise (soaps, plastics, cells, brushes, pollen and misc. household items)	12
Hardware (tools, rope, auto parts)	5
Stationary (pens, notebooks, etc.)	3
Wood Shop/Furniture (chairs, bed frames, tables)	3
Retail Services:	78
Type	Number
Saloon	15
Telephones	12
Restaurants/Take Away	10
Joints (serves only drinks, no food)	9
Sewing Machines	6
Bicycle Repair	5
Auto/Lorry Repair	4
Hotels	3
Movie House	3
Clinics	2
Petrol Station	2
Photocopiers	2
Photo Development	2
Computer/Internet	1
Newstand	1
Secretariat Bureau	1

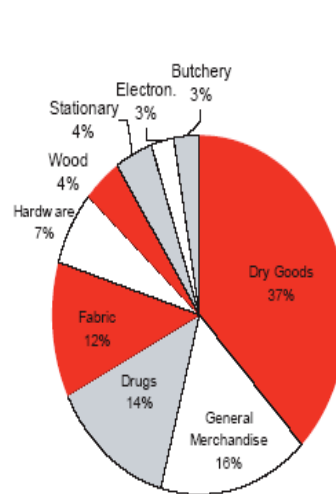


EXHIBIT 1: RETAIL GOODS

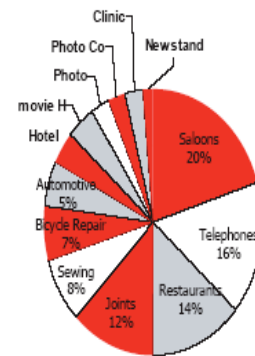
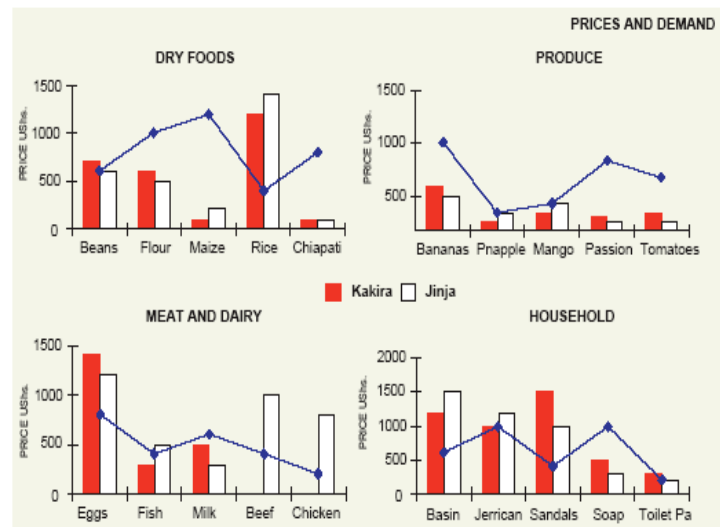


EXHIBIT 2: RETAIL SERVICES

This market study was conducted using a simple tally and casual discourse with local store owners who were willing to participate. Distinctions were made between established store fronts and various kiosks found within the market vicinity. Distinctions were also made between retail shops selling final goods and informal service providers selling retail services relying on manual labor or professional machinery

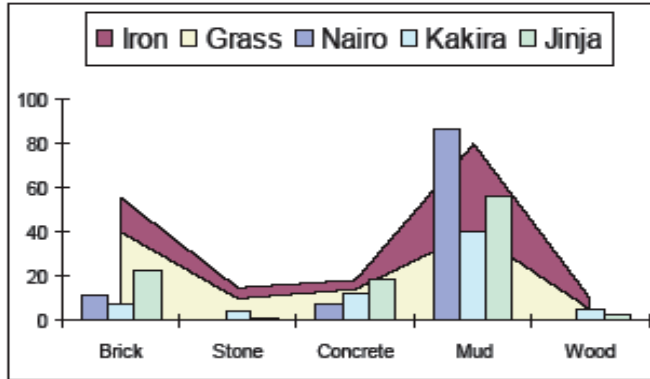
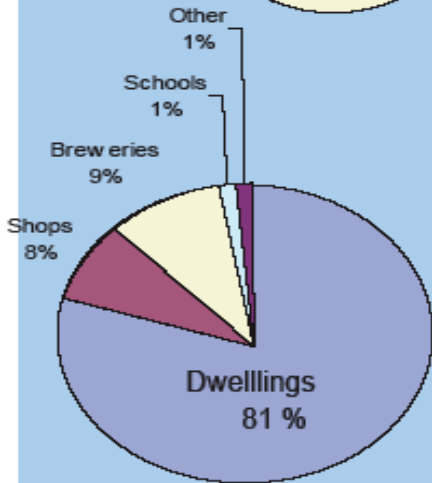
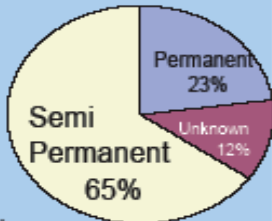


C. Housing Study

HOUSING AND STRUCTURAL STUDY: NAIRO VILLAGE

Nyumbani (Dwellings)	118
Maduka (Shops)	12
Brewari (Breweries)	14
Skuli (Schools)	3
Kingine (Other)	9

TOTAL 156



Mud Dwelling with Tin Roof



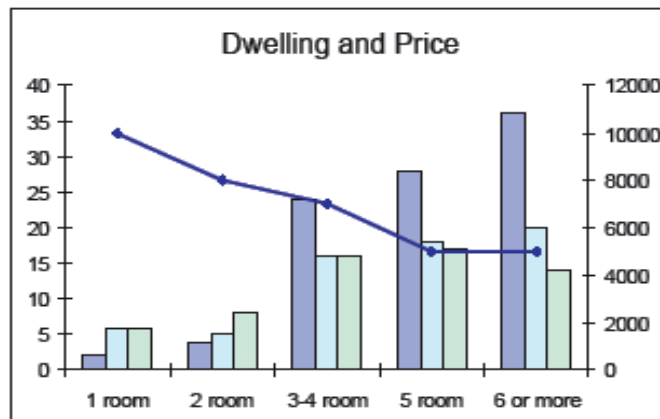
Stone Shop/Dwelling with Iron Roof



Cement Shop with Iron Roof



Traditional Hut with Grass Roof



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