Cover: Community Outreach in Awach, Gulu District

Back: Community meeting with a women’s group

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CONTACTS
5B Peter Paul Opok Road
P. O. Box1422, Gulu
Tel: +256471432029, 0772835076, 0704156138
Email: info@fjdi.org Web: www.fjdi.org
facebook: fjdi.org, twitter: @Fjdiinfo
Foundation for Justice and Development Initiatives

Annual Report 2020

Plot 5B, Peter Paul Opok Road, Gulu Town
P. O. Box 1422, Gulu
Phone: +256471432029, +256772835076
Email: info@fjadi.org
Website: www.fjadi.org| Twitter: @FjadiInfo| Facebook: fjadi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2020 was a landmark year for transitional justice in Uganda. Amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the trial of Dominic Ongwen concluded with closing statements from the prosecution, defense, and victims' representatives. A ruling is expected in early 2021. On the other hand, the trial of Thomas Kwoyelo was indefinitely postponed due to the pandemic with no indicators of when it will resume. FJDl monitored both trials and updated the public locally and globally on key developments.

With elections scheduled for 2021, the Government of Uganda implemented select reparations programs, including ear-marking 10 billion Ugandan shillings for the compensation of war claimants in Acholi, Lango and Teso Sub-Regions. For reparations programs to be effective however, a comprehensive national program is required, and the Government has so far fallen short of this.

To support recovery in northern Uganda, FJDl continued supporting victims associations all over the region to conduct community events and memorial prayers. FJDl’s memorial programs in 2021 will aim at strengthening these associations.

During this reporting period, FJDl in collaboration with the Peace and Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) launched a research project entitled: “All is Fair in Law and War”. The project sought to investigate the justice strategies that the Ugandan government used during the LRA conflict in Northern Uganda and their impact on the current Justice and Rule-of-Law.
FJDI also partnered with various development partners including, the International Criminal Court (ICC), the African Center for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV), the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), Action Aid Uganda Gulu Field Office- to conduct Transitional Justice awareness activities across the districts of Gulu, Omoro, Nwoya and Amuru. FJDI also entered a new collaboration with Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice (RFPJ), to implement a TJ profiling project in Northern and Western Uganda.

Like many other CSOs, FJDI’s activities were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to delays. To overcome this obstacle, FJDI ensured strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures set by the government of Uganda.

**Introduction**

The FJDI works with children, youth, women and communities to promote justice, development and economic recovery in northern Uganda. FJDI seeks solutions to the long-term impacts of the conflict which ravaged northern Uganda by advocating for the redress of human rights violations and atrocities committed during the conflict, implementation of sustainable development initiatives, and promotion of economic empowerment through livelihood programs. We believe in the concept of holistic justice grounded in the notion that judicial mechanisms of redress go hand in hand with development and economic empowerment of victims.
2. **Education, Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment Program**

FJDI works to empower vulnerable and special interest groups such as children, youth and women. We achieve this through implementing educational, livelihoods and economic empowerment initiatives for these special interest groups.
3. Children, Youth, and Women’s Program

Children, youth and women continue to be the biggest victims of human rights abuses in post-conflict northern Uganda. They have trouble in meeting their health, educational and economic needs. FJDIL therefore, implements programs in this area with a special focus on children, women and youth as the most vulnerable categories.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN THE YEAR 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Robert Bosch Stiftung</td>
<td>Dealing with the Past: Support to Local Memorial Initiatives and Strengthening of Victims’ Associations in northern Uganda</td>
<td>February 2019 – December 2020</td>
<td>Acholi, West-Nile, Teso &amp; Lango Sub-Regions</td>
<td>67,000€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>International Criminal Court (ICC)</td>
<td>Access to Justice and Accountability</td>
<td>2019 - 2021</td>
<td>Gulu District</td>
<td>Direct Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIIO)</td>
<td>All is Fair in Law and War: Research on Justice Mechanisms</td>
<td>March – December 2020</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>7,000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wellspring Philanthropic Fund</td>
<td>Fostering Victim-Responsive Transitional Justice (TJ) in Uganda</td>
<td>November 2020 - January 2022</td>
<td>Northern/ western Region</td>
<td>40,000$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITIES

DEALING WITH THE PAST: Support to Local Memorial Initiatives and Strengthening of Victims’ Associations in Northern Uganda- Phase Two

This project commenced in February 2019 and ended in December 2020. The overall goal of the project was to contribute to promoting healing and recovery for conflict survivors in northern Uganda. The project was instrumental in supporting community memory events including annual memorial prayers, capacity building of victims associations, documentation of conflict events, advocacy and operational support to Lukodi community memory centre. The following activities were implemented during the year 2020.

Support to Community Memory Events

FJDI supported virtual and physical community memory events in Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile Sub-Regions. The COVID-19 pandemic presented a major challenge in the organization of most of these community events as gatherings were prohibited. FJDI offered moral support and encouraged the organization of small events with limited numbers of participants. The following memorial events were supported by FJDI. As a result of these engagements, FJDI reached over 5,000 community members across northern Uganda.

- **Abia: February 2020**: On February 4, 2020 the FJDI supported the survivors of Abia massacre which claimed the lives of over 50 people in Lira district.
- **Barlonyo: February 2020**: On February 21, 2020, the FJDI team joined survivors of the Barlonyo massacre as they remembered over 300 loved ones who died.
• Atiak: April 2020; On April 20, FJDI joined the community and victims of the Atiak massacre for the annual memorial prayer that took place at Atiak Sub-County headquarters.

• Burcoro: April 2020; On April 27, FJDI joined the community of Burcoro in an annual memorial prayer for those that lost their lives on April 18, 1991 during the Burcoro massacre at Burcoro Primary School.

• Odek: March 2020; On April 29, FJDI supported and attended the annual memorial prayer of the 2004 Odek Massacre in Odek Sub-county organized by the community members.

• Lukodi: May 2020; On May 19, FJDI joined the community of Lukodi and survivors of the massacre in the 15th annual memorial prayer for the 2004 Lukodi massacre victims.

• Obalanga: June 2020; On June 15, three staff and one intern attended the annual memorial prayer day in Obalanga, Teso Sub-region in remembrance of those who died in the LRA massacre.

• Ombaci: June 2020; On June 24, three staff and one intern joined the community of Ombaci as they commemorated the 1981 massacre that took place at Ombokoro catholic parish in Manibe Sub-county, Arua district.

• Mucwini: July 2020; On July 24, 2020, three staff from FJDI attended an annual memorial prayer in Mucwini. The annual memorial prayer took place in Pajong where the technical school is being constructed in memory of the 56 people who were killed in the massacre.

• Namokora: August 2020; On August 19 2020, three staff attended the annual memorial prayer of the 1986 massacre in Namokora Kitgum district.

• Kabwele: September 2020; On the September 19, 2020, three staff from FJDI attended the annual memorial commemoration in Kabwele, Kumi District, Teso Sub

Collection of Artifacts for the Lukodi Community Memory Center
Established in 2018 with funding from the Robert Bosch Foundation in Germany, the Lukodi Community Memory Center has played a significant role in promoting healing and recovery for survivors of the Lukodi Massacre of 2004, and
preserving memories of those who lost their lives. In 2020, FJDI supported the collection of artifacts to boost the number of items on display at the Lukodi Community memory Center.

**Donation of 10 Beds to Lukodi Primary School**

On January 24, 2020, FJDI delivered 10 beds to Lukodi Primary School as a fulfilment of the promise made by FJDI to support the school. The delivery was conducted in the presence of the school Parents and Teachers’ Association (PTA) representatives, the School Management Committee (SMC), victims’ representatives, and local leaders. FJDI’s support was to appreciate Lukodi Primary School for hosting the community memory center.

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

FJDI in partnership with other stakeholders monitored the trials of former LRA commanders Dominic Ongwen and Thomas Kwoyelo. The trials occurred simultaneously before the ICC in The Hague, and the ICD in Uganda. FJDI monitored both Ongwen and Kwoyelo’s trials in partnership with the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) the International Criminal Court (ICC), Avocats Sans Frontieres (ASF), the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and other stakeholders. Monitoring activities included gauging public opinion in northern Uganda and writing corresponding blog articles which were
published on the International Justice Monitor (IJM) Website, video screening and radio listening clubs, attending trial sessions – especially in Uganda, and participation in community outreaches.

**Monitoring the Trial of Dominic Ongwen**
Dominic Ongwen is charged with 70 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in the former IDP camps of Lukodi, Pajule, Odek, and Abok in northern Uganda. His trial at the ICC, which began in 2016, is now in advanced stages, with closing arguments conducted in March 2020 and a judgement expected in February 2021. In partnership with the OSJI, FJDI gauged public opinion in northern Uganda regarding the trial of Dominic Ongwen. This aimed at monitoring public perceptions about the trial, gauging public interest in following the trial, and gathering recommendations and feedback. This resulted in the production of blog articles which were published on the International Justice Monitor website. All articles can be accessed at [www.ijmonitor.org](http://www.ijmonitor.org)

**Screening of Trial Sessions**
In collaboration with the ICC, FJDI conducted video screenings and radio listening clubs to keep the public updated about the ongoing trial of Dominic Ongwen at The Hague. The activity details are as follows:

- On February 11, FJDI conducted a video screening on the ongoing trial of Dominic Ongwen in Ariaga Central, Laroo Division for approximately 150 community members.

- On February 14, FJDI conducted a radio listening club on the ongoing trial of Dominic Ongwen in Ariaga Central, Laroo Division, attended by
approximately 60 community members.

- From March 10 to 13, 2020, FJDI conducted live-screening of the closing statements of the prosecution, the defence and the victims’ representatives in Ongwen’s trial at Gulu district council hall alongside teams from ICC, UWAP and JRP.

**ICC Stakeholders Meeting**

On March 13, FJDI attended an informative meeting organized by the ICC outreach team at Churchill Courts Hotel to update stakeholders on the closing statements in the trial of Dominic Ongwen immediately after the 3 days of closing statements. During the meeting, the ICC outreach team provided information on what would transpire in lieu of the court’s ruling. The meeting was attended by 37 members 17 of whom were female and 20 were male.

**Radio Programs to Update the Public on Ongwen’s Trial**

On Sept 18, 2020, FJDI together with the ICC outreach team and two other partners under the project “Access to Justice Project” conducted a teleconferenced radio talk show on Mega FM, a local radio station, to update the public on the trial of Dominic Ongwen, and to share the impact of COVID-19 on gender violence and gender justice, the role of informal justice in fighting impunity and to share community expectation on the trial of Dominic Ongwen. Another radio program was held on 01 December 2020, FJDI participated in a join radio talk show with the team from ICC outreach.

**Monitoring the Trial of Thomas Kwoyelo**

FJDI actively participated in monitoring the trial of Thomas Kwoyelo throughout the year. Kwoyelo is facing 93 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed between January 1995 and December 2005 in northern Uganda.
The main phase of his trial started on September 24, 2018. The first two prosecution witnesses testified from March 12 to 14, 2019. From July 1 to 18, the court heard testimony from five additional prosecution witnesses. The seventh and eighth prosecution witnesses appeared from September 30 to October 3. From October 7 to 10, two more prosecution testified, and afterwards, the trial was postponed indefinitely due to a disagreement between the defense and the prosecution over the use of closed sessions. In December 2019, the trial resumed before the ICD sitting at the High Court in Kampala, however, proceedings could not take place due to the absence of Kwoyelo, the court assessors, interpreters, and witnesses.

Subsequently, in January 2020, the ICD resumed the trial in Gulu Town. Only three trial sessions were conducted, all of which were held in closed sessions with the public not allowed to participate. In March, the case of the Thomas Kwoyelo at the ICD Gulu High court resumed. The hearing continued until March 19 but were indefinitely adjourned due to COVID-19 pandemic.

**Community outreach in the trials of Dominic Ongwen and Thomas Kwoyelo**

From February 5 – 7, 2020, FJDI in partnership with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) conducted a three(3) days community outreach program to update communities on the trials of Dominic Ongwen at the ICC and Thomas Kwoyelo at the International Crimes (ICD). The outreach was attended by over 250 community members—men, women, youths and children. Among the issues raised by the community was reparations for victims and the criteria in which it shall be provided in case Ongwen is convicted. The delay in the trial of Kwoyelo also attracted complaints from the community who said the trial is taking too long. During the outreaches, focus group discussions were conducted with community members in Lukodi on a wide range of issues including their views on reparations.
RESEARCH & DOCUMENTATION
In February 2020, FJDI in collaboration with the Peace and Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) officially launched the research project entitled “All’s is Fair in Law and War”. The goal of the project is to explore justice strategies such as Amnesty that were used during the northern Uganda war. The one year-long research project involved collection of data from communities in northern Uganda and interviewing of prominent personalities. Prominent personalities who participated in the research included: Hon. Betty Ocan, the Woman MP, Gulu Municipality and the Leader of Opposition, Mr. Oryema Johnny Lacambel of Radio Mega FM. Ms. Jackline Atingo Owacigu, a Transitional Justice lawyer and advocate of the High Court of Uganda, Hon. Olara Ambrose, the Prime Minister of Acholi, Apire Ray—an ex-LRA combatant and Sheik Musa Khelil—the Khadi of Gulu. The research project also involved the conduct of focus group discussions with select community members. A report is expected in 2021.

FOSTERING VICTIMS-RESPONSIVE TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN UGANDA
In November 2020, FJDI in partnership with the Rwenzori Forum and for Peace and Justice (RFPJ) launched a new project entitled: Fostering Victim-responsive Transitional Justice (TJ) in Uganda. The goal of the project is to re-ignite regional and nation-wide dialogues on victim-led and responsive TJ. In this effort, partners will have three clustered actions. First, they will profile grassroots TJ-focused civil society organizations (CSO) and other actors in the Rwenzori and Northern regions
and also at national level for purpose of building a legitimate and broad-based national force to advocate for the implementation of the National TJ Policy. Second, partners will profile and contextualise TJ issues working hand in hand with victim associations and groups for purposes of amplifying victims’ voices. This will include, inter-alia, supporting activities of victims’ associations such as local level memorial events. Lastly, partners will undertake both regional and national level TJ advocacy campaigns using media and interest-based engagements. Local and regional-level campaigns are meant to give partners a chance to contextualise TJ issues, engage relevant actors, involve as many victims as possible and trigger TJ actions at a local level. National level engagements on the other hand are meant to amplify the national voice of victims, bring complex TJ issues to the attention of national level actors and also, create a space for victims and other TJ actors to dialogue and assume a national approach in the pursuit of TJ.

ADVOCACY, NETWORKING AND VISIBILITY
Through internal and external visits, meetings, workshops and other events, FJDI can articulate victims’ concerns, interests and needs. Our advocacy events rotate around two main pillars: external visits to FJDI and attendance and participation in meetings and other networking events. This ensures that FJDI’s activities are visible and known to the public, thereby creating a support base and audience for the promotion of the organization’s activities. In this quarter, FJDI participated in various advocacy events as seen below:

- **Manchester University Learning Exchange Visit**: On January 13, 2020, 20 students and 2 professors from Manchester University visited FJDI and the Lukodi Community Memory Centre where they also interacted with the victims’ group.

- **Workshop on Service Delivery and Leadership**: On January 22, 2020, FJDI attended the opening day of a workshop organized by an organization called TRAC FM to report on service delivery and rate leadership performance.
Reception at the German Ambassador’s Residence: On January 22, 2020, FJDI attended a reception at the German Ambassador’s residence in Kampala to celebrate the 57th anniversary of the signing of the Elysee Treaty that brought peace between Germany and France.

OPM-NGO Coordination Meeting: On March 5, 2020, FJDI attended an NGO coordination meeting organized by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in Gulu. The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen support and partnership with all the NGOs in Northern Uganda.

Meeting with TRAC FM: On June 22, 2020, FJDI participated in a zoom meeting arranged by TRAC FM to discuss possibilities of partnering in an upcoming Memorialization activity.

ASF “Theory of change Evaluation” –Survey: FJDI team participated in a one-day research training and a two days data collection in collaboration ASF under their research project “Theory of change Evaluation”. The objective of the study was to understand the community perception of Transitional Justice activities in their communities.

Meeting with ACTV: On Sept 18, 2020, FJDI attended a meeting organized by the African Center for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV). The purpose of the meeting was to provide updates on the status of torture in Uganda.

Media Campaign in Partnership with ICTJ: FJDI in collaboration with International Center for Justice (ICTJ) conducted a media campaign on different radio stations within Gulu. The objectives of this campaign were to put critical transitional justice issues in the 2021 elections agenda in Uganda.

Outreach on the Transitional Justice Policy in Partnership with Action Aid: FJDI partnered with Action Aid Uganda to conduct outreaches to create awareness on National Transitional Justice Policy (NTJP). The outreaches took place in Awach Sub-County (Gulu district) Lalogi (Omor district), Anaka (Nwoya district), and Pabbo (Amuru district), reaching over 1,000 community members.
- **GIZ Workshop**: On October 26, 2020, FJDI attended a one day workshop organised by Deneva and GIZ in Gulu to create more awareness of the NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism (QuAM) and to select committee members to support the program.

- **Training with Konrad Adenuaer Stiftung (KAS)**: On November 12, 2020, FJDI staff attended a two days training organised by Konrad Adenuaer Stiftung (KAS) to build and enhance the capacity of CSO actors, and strengthen collaboration and networking among CSO players.

- **Dialogue on Service Delivery by Konrad Adenuaer Stiftung (KAS)**: On December 11, 2020, FJDI attended a dialogue organized by Konrad Adenuaer Stiftung to discuss challenges hindering the performance of the local government which included corruption, lack of transparency, the contradiction between government and politicians, to mention but a few.

- **Participation in Report Launch by ARLPI**: On December 8, 2020, FJDI attended the launch of a report entitled: "**Home is Unviable**"; Analysis of Factors Affecting Reintegration of Former Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) Returnees. The report examined re-integration challenges still being faced by former LRA abductees several years after their return into the community, and made recommendations for improving their welfare to accelerate their recovery.

**CONCLUSION**

The recovery of northern Uganda is far from over and a lot remains to be done to mitigate the impacts of the conflict. In 2021 and the years ahead, FJDI will continue monitoring the trials of Dominic Ongwen and Thomas Kwoyelo and providing updates to the public. FJDI will advocate for the expediting of Thomas Kwoyelo’s trial. Under its democracy and governance program, FJDI also hopes to conduct awareness and capacity building to promote better understanding and respect for human rights. FJDI will also engage the Government of Uganda to advocate for the implementation of a comprehensive reparations package. With availability of funding, FJDI hopes to strengthen its women, youth, and children’s programs. Envisioned programs include advocacy for gender equality and women’s rights, fighting gender-based violence, youth unemployment, and mitigating the impacts of HIV/AIDS.
Our Donors & Partners

FJDJ's work in 2020 was made possible with the support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and the Peace and Research Institute of Oslo (PRIØ). FJDJ thanks partners including Avocats Sans Frontieres (ASF), the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), Action Aid, TRAC-FM, the ICC Field Outreach Office in Uganda, and others for a wonderful working relationship.
Geographical Location

FJDI has presence in the northern Uganda regions of Acholi, Lango, Teso and the West Nile.

Our districts of operation include: Gulu, Nwoya, Omoro, Amuru, Kitgum, Pader, Agago, Lamwo, Lira, Otuke, Kole, Oyam, Soroti, Ngora, Amuria, Ajudmani, Arua, and Moyo.