

FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (FJDI)

2024

ANNUAL
NARRATIVE
REPORT

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Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
FJDI	Foundation for Justice and Development Initiatives
GoU	Government of Uganda
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICD	International Crimes Division
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
ARLPI	Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NTJP	National Transitional Justice Policy
RFPJ	Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice
TJ	Transitional Justice

Foreword

On behalf of the Foundation for Justice and Development Initiatives (FJDI), I am honored to present our Annual Narrative Report for 2024, a year that marked significant milestones in Uganda's transitional justice and post-conflict recovery agenda. Nearly two decades since the end of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict, communities in Northern Uganda continue to confront the legacies of violence, displacement, and loss.

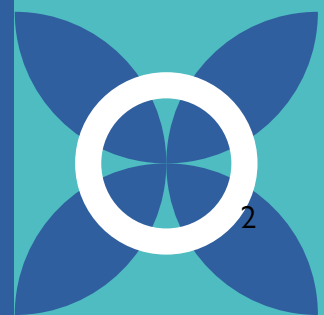
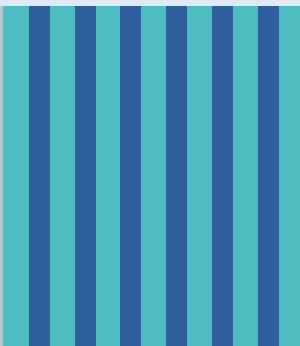
In 2024, FJDI deepened its commitment to advancing victim-centered transitional justice through four interlinked pathways:

- ➔ Strengthening access to justice by supporting victim participation in judicial processes such as the Thomas Kwoyelo trial;
- ➔ Advocating for reparations to ensure redress, dignity, and accountability for survivors;
- ➔ Addressing land-related conflicts that threaten post-conflict stability;
- ➔ Promoting community memorialization to preserve memory and foster healing; and by combining justice and livelihood interventions, FJDI recognizes that peace without economic security remains fragile. Supporting survivors—particularly women, youth, and children born of war with livelihood opportunities is crucial in strengthening their resilience and restoring their dignity.

This report not only documents activities, but also highlights survivor voices, community resilience, and lessons learned that will shape our future programming. Importantly, our interventions remain closely aligned with the National Transitional Justice Policy (NTJP), the National Development Plan (NDP) IV of the Government of Uganda, and global commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), as well as the African Union Transitional Justice Policy.

Our achievements would not have been possible without the support of our donors, the trust of the communities we serve, and the dedication of our staff and partners. As we look ahead, FJDI reaffirms its mission to amplify victims' voices, bridge policy and practice, and build pathways to a just, inclusive, and economically resilient Uganda.

Lino Owor Ogora
Executive Director, FJDI



Executive Summary

In 2024, FJDI strengthened its role as a leading voice in transitional justice, reconciliation, and post-conflict recovery in Northern Uganda. Through the project “Strengthening Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Recovery in Northern Uganda” (Oct 2023 – Sept 2024), supported by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), FJDI advanced justice for victims while simultaneously addressing the economic and social dimensions of recovery.

Area of Impact	Key Results	Highlights
Beneficiaries Reached	5,000+ community members	51% women, 42% youth, 7% children born in captivity
Geographic Coverage	15 districts and 4 sub-regions	Gulu, Amuru, Kitgum, Nwoya, Pader, Agago, Lira, Apac, Kole, Soroti, Ngora, Amuria, Adjumani, Moyo, and Arua
Justice & Accountability	400+ victims engaged	Supported participation in Kwoyelo trial
Reparations Advocacy	30+ victims' groups mobilized	Joint petition submitted to GoU on International Day of Peace (21 Sept 2024)
Community Memorialization	5 major memorial events supported	Barlonyo, Pagak, Lukodi, Parabongo, Namukora (3,000+ participants)
Land Conflict Mitigation	500+ sensitized	Community dialogues and rights awareness sessions in Gulu & Amuru

Despite notable progress, FJDI’s work in 2024 faced structural and contextual challenges. The absence of a comprehensive National Transitional Justice law continues to delay formal reparations and weaken survivors’ confidence in state-led justice. Escalating land disputes—particularly affecting widows, orphans, and displaced households—undermined social cohesion. Furthermore, limited financial resources constrained the scaling up of livelihood initiatives, leaving many survivors without adequate pathways to rebuild sustainable incomes and achieve long-term resilience.

In the coming period, therefore, FJDI will intensify advocacy for the swift enactment of the National Transitional Justice Act, anchoring reparations and accountability in law. Greater focus will be placed on livelihood and skills development, ensuring that survivors—especially women and youth—gain economic independence alongside justice. FJDI will also strengthen community memorialization initiatives, including digital archiving and support for the Lukodi Community Memory Centre, while broadening partnerships with government, civil society, and donors. Through integrating justice with economic recovery, FJDI aims to consolidate peace and resilience across Northern Uganda.

Introduction

The Foundation for Justice and Development Initiatives (FJDI) is a Ugandan non-governmental organization working with children, youth, women, and post-conflict communities to promote justice, development, and sustainable recovery. Founded in Northern Uganda—a region that endured over two decades of conflict between the Government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)—FJDI responds to the enduring legacies of displacement, mass atrocities, and socio-economic disruption that continue to shape community life nearly twenty years after the guns fell silent.

FJDI’s programming integrates transitional justice, advocacy, memorialization, economic empowerment, and policy engagement to address both the psychological scars of conflict and the material needs of survivors. Our interventions amplify the voices of victims and survivors in judicial processes, advocate for reparations and accountability, promote peaceful land conflict resolution, and support communities to honor and preserve memory through memorialization. At the same time, recognizing that justice without livelihood security remains fragile, FJDI promotes vocational skills, income-generating activities, and household resilience—particularly for women, youth, and children born of war.

Through this holistic approach, FJDI contributes to inclusive recovery by bridging the gap between local realities and national transitional justice frameworks such as the National Transitional Justice Policy (NTJP). Our work also aligns with global priorities, notably the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)—and the African Union Transitional Justice Policy. In doing so, FJDI serves both as a grassroots catalyst and a policy influencer, ensuring that survivors’ experiences shape the national and international justice agenda.

Program Areas

FJDI implements initiatives under three key program areas:

1

Democracy, Governance and Transitional Justice:

To promote accountability, inclusive participation, and access to justice.

2

Education, Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment:

To enhance resilience and self-reliance of conflict-affected communities, particularly women, youth, and children born of war.

3

Children, Youth and Women’s Programs:

To protect and empower vulnerable groups most affected by the conflict, ensuring their voices shape recovery and justice processes.

Summary of Projects Implemented in 2024

In 2024, FJDI implemented one major project with support from the International Development Law Organization (IDLO):

- ➔ **Project Title:** Strengthening Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Recovery in Northern Uganda
- ➔ **Duration:** October 2023 – September 2024
- ➔ **Location:** Northern Uganda
- ➔ **Donor:** International Development Law Organization (IDLO)

Key Outcomes For The Reporting Period

Outcome 1. Strengthened Advocacy for Post-Conflict Justice and Policy Reform

In 2024, FJDI reinforced its leadership in advancing justice for survivors by facilitating their meaningful participation in the Thomas Kwoyelo trial—the first domestic prosecution of an LRA commander. Through structured radio dialogues, community outreaches, and trial-monitoring missions, over 400 victims were informed, mobilized, and supported to engage directly with judicial processes. These interventions not only enhanced transparency but also rebuilt community confidence in formal justice mechanisms. Kwoyelo's conviction in August 2024 on 44 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity marked a historic milestone for Uganda, validating years of advocacy and strengthening momentum for comprehensive transitional justice reforms.

Key Activities

On February 28, FJDI, in collaboration with the International Criminal Court (ICC) outreach team, conducted a joint community engagement to raise awareness on ICC reparations. The outreach provided survivors and community members with accurate information on the reparations process while also creating space to gather their perspectives following the conviction of Dominic Ongwen. This dialogue not only deepened public understanding of international justice mechanisms but also amplified victims' voices in shaping conversations on redress and accountability.



Picture 1: ICC Outreach team lead addressing the Audience



On March 7, FJDI convened a joint Transitional Justice (TJ) dialogue with the Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice (RFPJ) in Kampala to build consensus on the principles and frameworks guiding transitional justice in Uganda. The meeting brought together key stakeholders to deliberate on approaches for addressing past human rights violations, ensuring accountability, and promoting reconciliation. By fostering shared understanding and collaboration, the dialogue laid an important foundation for the formulation of effective national policies and strategies that can advance justice, healing, and long-term stability for conflict-affected communities.



Picture 2: FJDI project team lead makes opening remarks



Picture 3: Victims' representative in the Case of Kwoyelo makes a presentation during the talk show

On May 3, FJDI hosted a radio talk show on Speak FM to update the public on developments in the Thomas Kwoyelo trial. The program expanded public awareness on the significance of the proceedings and reinforced victims' right to information and participation. These efforts helped demystify the judicial process for affected communities and sustained public interest in the pursuit of accountability. The trial culminated in August 2024 when the International Crimes Division (ICD) of the High Court of Uganda convicted Kwoyelo on 44 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, marking a historic milestone for transitional justice in Uganda.

Outcome 2. Increased Responsiveness Towards Reparations for Victims and Conflict Survivors in Uganda

In 2024, FJDI advanced reparations advocacy by mobilizing and engaging over 30 victims' groups from the Acholi, Lango, West Nile, and Teso sub-regions to build a unified voice on survivors' rights to redress. Through a series of consultative meetings, communities articulated clear demands—including education support for children, medical rehabilitation, and monetary compensation. This collective agenda was formally presented to the Government of Uganda on the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2024. By amplifying survivors' voices, FJDI strengthened momentum for state accountability and underscored reparations as a central pillar of Uganda's transitional justice process.

Key Activities

On May 25, FJDI convened a consultative meeting with representatives from more than 30 victims' groups across Acholi, Lango, West Nile, and Teso to shape a unified reparations agenda. The dialogue focused on developing a comprehensive Demand Note to be submitted to the Government of Uganda for consideration. Survivors highlighted priorities such as education, healthcare, and financial compensation, reaffirming that all victims of human rights violations are entitled to reparation. The meeting not only consolidated diverse perspectives but also strengthened collective advocacy, ensuring that survivors' voices remain central in national discussions on justice and accountability.

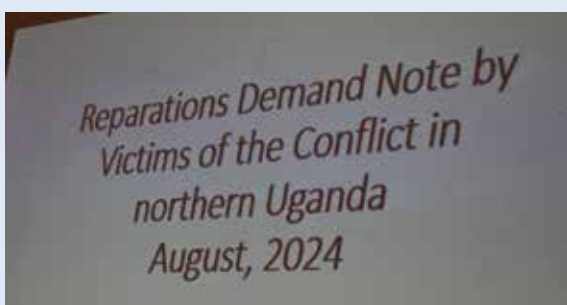


Picture 4: A survivor of Lukodi Massacre Speaks

On September 13, FJDI organized a consultative meeting with 35 leaders representing victims' and survivors' groups from Acholi, Lango, Teso, and West Nile to refine their reparations demands. The session provided a platform to harmonize priorities and build consensus ahead of the formal presentation to the Minister of State for Northern Uganda.



Picture 5: The Executive Director, FJDI comments on the reparations demand by victims' leaders



on International Peace Day, September 21. By consolidating survivors' voices into a clear and unified agenda, the meeting strengthened the legitimacy of their demands and enhanced the prospects for government action on reparations and broader transitional justice commitments.

Outcome 3. Reduced Prevalence of Land Conflicts Among Post-Conflict Communities in Northern Uganda

In response to the growing incidence of land disputes across Northern Uganda, FJDI intensified efforts to raise awareness and promote peaceful conflict resolution.

Key Activities

On July 18, 2024, FJDI convened a major community sensitization in Gulu District focusing on land rights, land grabbing, and disputes disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as widows, orphans, and displaced households. Through participatory dialogues, communities were equipped with knowledge on their legal rights, empowered to pursue non-violent avenues of redress, and encouraged to adopt consensus-driven approaches to resolving conflicts. These interventions not only mitigated tensions but also laid the foundation for long-term stability and social cohesion in post-conflict settings.



Picture 9: A war widow raises issues that affect women in the community

Outcome 4. Strengthening Community Memorialization in Northern Uganda

In 2024, FJDI supported annual memorial prayers at key massacre sites including Barlonyo, Pagak, Lukodi, Parabongo, and Namukora. These commemorations provided spaces for survivors and communities to honor victims, preserve memory, and collectively process trauma. Beyond remembrance, the events fostered healing, strengthened calls for reparations, and created platforms for dialogue on justice, reconciliation, and accountability. By sustaining cultural memory, FJDI not only safeguarded historical truth but also reinforced community resilience and commitment to building a peaceful, inclusive future.

Key Activities

Barlonyo Massacre Commemoration

February 21, FJDI supported the Barlonyo Massacre annual Memorial Prayers at the Barlonyo massacre site in Uganda.



Picture 10: The Barlonyo Massacre Mass Grave

The site holds a mass grave where 301 civilians who were brutally killed by the Lord's Resistance Army on February 21, 2004 were buried. A monument stands in their memory, serving as a solemn reminder of the tragedy. Each year, the commemoration fosters remembrance, acknowledges survivors' pain, and promotes healing and peace by reflecting on the devastating impact of conflict.

Pagak Massacre Commemoration

On May 16, FJDI supported the annual Memorial Prayers for the Pagak Massacre in Amuru District.

On May 16, 1996, Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels under the command of Thomas Kwoyelo attacked Pagak IDP camp, killing more than 30 men, women, and children, and setting ablaze over 500 huts. Thomas Kwoyelo was later charged and convicted for this and other war crimes and crimes against humanity.



Picture 11: The Executive Director, FJDI addressing the congregation

Each year, survivors and community members gather to honor their loved ones, preserve memory, and promote collective healing. The commemoration not only pays tribute to the deceased but also strengthens advocacy for justice, reparations, and lasting peace.

Lukodi Massacre Commemoration



Picture 12: The main celebrant leading prayers for the victims of Lukodi Massacre

On May 19, FJDI supported the annual Memorial Prayers for the Lukodi Massacre in Gulu District.

On May 19, 2004, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) brutally attacked the Lukodi IDP camp, killing more than 60 civilians and displacing hundreds of others. In 2021, former LRA commander Dominic Ongwen was convicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity and war crimes, including masterminding this attack, and sentenced to 25 years in prison. The commemoration provides space for survivors and community members to honor the victims, preserve memory, and strengthen calls for justice, reparations, and healing.

Parabongo Massacre Commemoration

On August 18, FJDI supported the Memorial Prayers for the Parabongo Massacre in Amuru District.



On July 28, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attacked Parabongo Primary School, killing 22 people and leaving the community deeply scarred. Survivors and families of the victims continue to gather for periodic memorial prayers, joining voices with other massacre-affected communities across Northern Uganda.

This year's commemoration honored the memory of the deceased while amplifying survivors' calls for reparations, justice, and recognition from the Government of Uganda, as part of broader efforts to promote healing and accountability.



Picture 13: A view of the congregation gathered to commemorate the Parabongo Massacre

Namukora Massacre Commemoration

On August 19, FJDI supported the annual Memorial Prayers for the Namukora Massacre.

On August 19, 1986, government soldiers of the National Resistance Army (NRA) attacked Namukora, killing dozens of civilians after accusing them of collaborating with the ousted president Tito Okello. The massacre left deep scars on the community, with survivors continuing to carry the weight of loss and trauma nearly four decades later.



Picture 14: Community members observe a minute of silence during the commemoration of the victims

The commemoration serves as a solemn moment of remembrance, honoring the victims while reinforcing FJDI's commitment to supporting memorial initiatives that preserve memory, promote healing, and advocate for justice in Uganda.

Advocacy & Networking

In 2024, FJDI engaged in advocacy and networking through collaboration with CSOs, the International Criminal Court (ICC), government actors, and local communities. These engagements included joint meetings with the Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice, community sensitizations with ICC outreach teams, and high-level engagements with policymakers. Such networking broadened FJDI's reach, influenced policy discourse, and strengthened solidarity with victims and survivors.



Picture 15: Victims' leaders hand their petition to the State Minister for Northern Uganda, Hon. Dr. Kenneth Omona



Picture 15: Victims' leaders hand their petition to the State Minister for Northern Uganda, Hon. Dr. Kenneth Omona

On September 21, FJDI organized the commemoration of the International Day of Peace in Gulu. In the event, over 30 representatives of victims presented a petition for reparations to the government demanding, among others; education for children, rehabilitation of those who sustained injuries, monetary & compensation. The petition was received by the state minister for Northern Uganda, Hon. Dr. Kenneth Omona.

Progress on Gender Strategy / Gender Mainstreaming

FJDI integrated gender considerations across all activities, ensuring at least 50% women participation in community meetings, consultations, and memorial events. Special focus was given to women survivors of sexual violence and children born in captivity. By adopting gender-sensitive programming, FJDI promoted inclusive justice, equitable participation, and empowerment of marginalized groups.

Lessons Learned & Best Practices

- 1 The use of community-driven memorialization remains a powerful tool for healing and advocacy.
- 2 Sustained engagement with victims' groups increases trust and ensures stronger advocacy for reparations.
- 3 Gender-sensitive programming ensures inclusive participation and strengthens outcomes.
- 4 Land conflicts remain a significant barrier to recovery and require consistent mediation efforts.
- 5 Collaboration with media and production of advocacy content enhances visibility and public awareness.

Sustainability

FJDI promotes sustainability by strengthening local ownership of transitional justice initiatives, building the capacity of victims' groups, and working with government structures to institutionalize reparations and land conflict mediation. Memorial centers and annual prayers foster intergenerational remembrance, while partnerships with stakeholders ensure continuity of interventions beyond donor support.

Conclusion & Way Forward

In 2024, FJDI made significant strides in transitional justice and post-conflict recovery in Northern Uganda. While progress has been made in reparations advocacy, memorialization, and trial monitoring, challenges such as delayed enactment of the National TJ Law, limited funding, and unresolved land conflicts persist. Moving forward, FJDI will intensify policy advocacy, strengthen victim-centered approaches, expand partnerships, and explore innovative funding to consolidate gains.

Priorities for the Next period

1

Advocate for the enactment and implementation of the National Transitional Justice Act.

2

Scale up advocacy for reparations and compensation for victims across Northern Uganda.

3

Strengthen land conflict resolution mechanisms and promote legal awareness at community level.

4

Enhance community memorialization through support to memory centers and digital archiving.

5

Promote gender equality and inclusion in all project interventions.

6

Expand partnerships and mobilize resources to sustain transitional justice efforts.

Our Donors and Partners

We extend our gratitude to our donor, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), whose financial and technical support made the 2024 project a success. We also acknowledge the contributions of community leaders, cultural institutions, government stakeholders, and civil society partners who worked alongside FJDI to advance justice and healing in Northern Uganda.

