1.0 Introduction

The Refugee Law Project (RLP), working as part of the Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS), organizes forums on the radio and in the community to gather information for contextual analysis of the recovery and development process in northern Uganda and for providing early warning on emerging conflicts. With the recent announcement of the lapse of Part II of the Amnesty Act, RLP is assessing the impact this development will have on stability and peacebuilding in the region most affected by the LRA conflict. Before the lapse, the Amnesty Act facilitated the return of over 10,000 formerly abducted children in northern Uganda, and 16,000 insurgents from about 29 other rebel groups. It also opened the door to the Juba Peace Talks and the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government of Uganda and the LRA.

In response to a letter from the Nwoya District Reconciliation and Peace Team (DRPT) requesting capacity-building support for conflict resolution and management and for community sensitization and peacebuilding activities, RLP convened a Stakeholders Dialogue at the Nwoya District Headquarters on 12th July, 2012. The purpose of the dialogue was three-fold: (i) to identify the ongoing conflicts, conflict drivers, and peacebuilding needs in Nwoya district; (ii) to gauge the community’s reaction to the lapse of Part II of the Amnesty Act; (iii) and to identify steps toward resolving or mitigating conflicts, addressing conflict drivers, and promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Participants included local government officials from Nwoya District including the Resident District Commissioner, the District Speaker, the Secretary of DRPT, the District Chairperson as well as other councilors, sub-country leaders and youth council members.
2.0. Key Issues following PRDP I

The following are some of the key conflict areas raised.

- **Land Conflict:** Land disputes are common between community members, with the Uganda Wildlife Authorities, with youth who want to take back land given to institutions, and with investors.

- **Oil-related Conflict:** There is a high level of mistrust due to lack of transparency from potential investors and because drilling for oil in Acholiland, including in Nwoya District, is not publicized by the government as it is in Bunyoro. Community members question whether investors will adequately compensate and reinvest in the community because oil companies are currently recruiting employees from other parts of the country, including manual laborers like cooks and porters.

- **Animal-Human Conflict:** Community members whose property is destroyed by wild animals coming from the national park are not compensated. Also, poachers are routinely killed within the park and their bodies are never recovered.

- **Alcoholism and Idleness:** An increasing number of youth are less productive and prone to conflict due to lack of education during the war, lack of employment and excessive alcohol consumption.

- **Sexual and Gender-based Violence:** SGBV is an ongoing problem. Differing interpretations of women’s and children’s rights leads to tensions within households.

- **Poor Mediation Practice:** Corruption in dispute mediation processes is a hindrance to peace.

- **Ignorance of Law:** Community members who rely on translators to understand the constitution and land policies are vulnerable to manipulation and ignorant about their rights and responsibilities.

- **Poverty:** Men who cannot provide for their families may have tension within their households, and they may sell land that does not belong to them.

3.0 Views on Lapse of Amnesty

Stakeholders’ perceptions on the Amnesty Act lapse are summarized below.

- Stakeholders were generally unaware of the recent lapse of the Amnesty Act.

- Many voiced concerns that the lapse would prevent abductees still in the bush from coming home.

- Some feared that lapse of amnesty would force fighters to continue their rebellion, and that war may return to the region.

- Stakeholders agreed that more time should be given, by reinstating the Amnesty Act, to allow fighters to come home without fear of prosecution.
4.0 Recommended Action Steps

Several avenues for further action were identified.

• Raise awareness about human-animal conflict through a radio talk show involving the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and community members.

• Pressure MPs from Nwoya District to represent their interests in Parliament.

• Pass a district ordinance to limit alcohol consumption.

• Conduct research on implications of oil exploration for local economic development.

• Engage the wider Nwoya community on conflict issues through large stakeholder forums and other community outreach events.

5.0 Conclusion

The Stakeholders Dialogue revealed the diversity of pressing conflict issues affecting recovery and development in Nwoya District. It also provided an opportunity to inform local government leaders about the Amnesty Act lapse and to understand the hindrance it poses to the reintegration of fighters who have not yet returned from the bush. Participants expressed an interest in working with RLP to conduct further research and community outreach events. The DRPT committed to communicate with RLP about emerging conflict issues for documentation and early warning purposes and to develop a concept paper for a radio talk show concerning UWA-community issues.
About Refugee Law Project (RLP)
The Refugee Law Project (RLP) seeks to ensure fundamental human rights for all, including; asylum seekers, refugees, and internally displaced persons within Uganda. RLP envision a country that treats all people within its borders with the same standards of respect and social justice.

About Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS)
The Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS) is a three member consortium that brings together, Refugee Law Project, International Alert and Saferworld. The overall aim of ACCS is assisting DFID and partners in strengthening the potential of the PCDP and recovery process to address the causes of conflict and contribute to sustainable peace and stability. Under ACCS, RLP is leading on contextual analysis of the overall recovery process (focusing on conflict indicators, issues and dynamics), and early warning as and when necessary.

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