

# Everyday Peace Indicators, experiences in Uganda

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Justice and  
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Project

# Atiak



- 68 kilometres north of Gulu town along a main highway leading to the South Sudanese town of Nimule.
- Has 16 villages and is primarily rural with low income.
- **Characterised by violations by both sides to the conflict.** On 20 April 1995 rebel soldiers entered the trading centre and attacked the small military presence there, burned homes, looted shops and rounded up hundreds of people. 200 to 300 people died.
- In the immediate aftermath, a process of recovering bodies for burial took place. Aid, including iron sheets and food was provided by the Ugandan government. A memorial stone was constructed to memorialise the Atiak massacre.
- In 2011 and 2012 the Ugandan president attended the memorial prayers.
- The Atiak Massacre Survivors Association was formed to provide peer support for survivors and worked to advocate for compensation for its 60 members.
- A school, Lwani Memorial College, also was constructed in memory of the massacre in 1999.

# Odek



- Odek sub-country was located in Omoro county in Gulu district within the Acholi sub-region of northern Uganda. Like Atiak, Odek is primarily rural and the average income for most households is low
- The sub-county is 61 kilometres east of Gulu town. It has four parishes of Binya, Lamola, Lukwor and Palaro, 24 villages and a population of about 32, 000.
- The languages spoken in Odek are mainly Acholi, with Lango spoken particularly in Lamola parish which borders Lango sub-region.
- Odek sub-county's history of violence stems from its status as the ancestral home of Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony. It is also close to the Awere Hills, the place where Kony in company with LRA soldiers travelled to "pray and renew their spiritual powers" to fight against the Ugandan government.
- During the years of conflict that Odek experienced an almost constant military presence by both rebel and government soldiers. Following the end of the war, the stigma of Odek's association with Kony remains.

# Kanyagoga and Kasubi

- Kanyagoga and Kasubi are urban areas located in Bardege, a division in Gulu municipality. They are a host to very many ethnic groups such as Acholi, Madi, Banyoro, Dinka, Bagisu, Lugbara, and Baganda. They have a population of approximately 2000 people.
- They received a high influx of refugees from South Sudan as a result of the conflict that was going on there.
- Many people came to it to seek refuge at during the heat of the conflict in northern Uganda.
- During recent conflict in South Sudan, people from Sudan sought refuge in Kanyagoga and continued to live there to date.
- In 2011 there was a reported retaliatory attack by some Ugandan youth on the Dinka of Sudan because of alleged killings of Acholi girls and other Ugandans in South Sudan.

# Challenges

- **A lot of respondents could not tie down their indicators to daily occurrences because of their past experiences of the way.** This became a time consuming process as many times the researchers had to probe respondents more so in the focus group discussions to get to know what they meant by their responses and how they could link that response to their day to day life.

## Apathy

- During the course of the research, there were also other **ongoing national initiatives like the national census** and the registration for national identification cards. Some respondents we interacted with especially during the surveys had questions as to why the surveys were being done at such a time as this.

## Practical challenges

- The long distance between homes in the resettlement sites was another challenge that the researchers had to confront. Unlike in the past when most homes were within the camps, people have now returned to their villages and homes as it was in the case of Atiak and Odek. **The homes are spread apart and many times it took the researchers some long walks before finding the next home.** Similarly, the method of selecting 'every third household' to interview proved to be challenging as it often meant fewer interviews than were ideal would be conducted because of the distances between the households.
- In Kanyagoga A, most of the occupants of the households were **tenants** who most times preferred the researchers to talk to their land lords claiming that they are the real owners of the homes, and that as tenants they may move to other places before this study is complete. Most times this was resolved by asking another member of their family to take the survey if he/she was willing and then in some cases the landlords were taken in separately as individual respondents.
- Since most of the survey times fell within **the rainy season**, most respondents in Odek and Atiak could not be found home in the morning because they went to tend to their gardens leaving only young children at home, and yet the gardens would be 5 or more miles away from home. There were also times when the research process interrupted by abrupt down pour of rain.
- In the surveys especially, we encountered respondents who **felt limited by the tool because it did not give them enough room to narrate their experiences at length.** To counter this, we tried to stick within the research format and only noted one or two things of such personal experiences in the note book.
- Enumerators also noted that they felt more comfortable reading and translating the English version of the survey, rather than the translated Acholi version.
- There were scenarios of **expectation of material benefits by the participants..**

## Process documentation

- The research experienced delays in **its completion** because of transitions for most of the researchers and some of the EPI team in the US. There were **changes of jobs, change of funding as well as turnover of researchers.** This caused did not only result to funding delay but also delay in the whole research process as some new researchers had to be trained and brought on board. This was exacerbated by a lack of process documentation. Often times, to implement the project researchers had to rely on the memory of individuals.

# Outcomes



- The majority of people we interacted with understood the idea behind Everyday Peace Indicators, they understood the concepts but based a lot of their responses around what was happening during the conflict and how their lives are now. This resulted into each of the three communities of Atiak, Odek and Kanyagoga having its own indicators as seen appropriate by the respondents in that area.
- Perceived levels of peace in Odek are incrementally going up since the beginning of the surveys; but when you compare Atiak and Odek's average levels over time, they're pretty equal. The question is why is this, with Atiak where there's been so much more interventions and engagement that there would be higher levels of peace.

# Outcomes



- The project served as an introduction of JRP to Odek, where the organisation had not worked prior to its start. It has also been helpful in gaining an understanding of the geographical, economic and social scope of both communities.
- The use of handsets to implement phone surveys inspired other surveys conducted by JRP outside the scope of EPI.