

**INTERNAL REVIEW OF
DFID'S ENGAGEMENT
WITH THE
CONFLICT IN
NORTHERN UGANDA**

Jeremy Ginifer

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PREFACE

This study was undertaken as part of the programme of independent evaluation studies commissioned by the Evaluation Department (EvD) of the Department for International Development (DFID). EvD is independent of the spending divisions in DFID and reports to DFID's Management Board through the Director General: Corporate Performance and Knowledge Sharing. Lessons learned from evaluation can be applied to strengthen current and future policies and programmes. Evaluation of development assistance provided by DFID also helps to strengthen DFID's accountability.

This evaluation, managed by John Murray, is one of a series of short reviews commissioned by EvD to provide quick evidence for ongoing programmes. It was undertaken largely as a desk study, supplemented by a short field visit. Conclusions are necessarily preliminary, and reader feedback is welcome.

The report presents the results of a review of DFID's support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Northern Uganda. It presents preliminary conclusions on the effectiveness of DFID's conflict reduction and peace building programme in Northern Uganda from 1999 to 2005. It also draws out lessons for other conflict reduction programmes.

The broad conclusion is that DFID Uganda's programme is making an effective contribution to conflict reduction and peace building in the extremely difficult circumstances of the ongoing conflict in Northern Uganda. The report draws together some important lessons for wider work:

- As influencing of national governments is critical to make progress on conflict reduction and peace building, it is important to do this in a coordinated fashion across the UK Government and with other donors. The UN has an important role in agreeing a joint framework for intervention.
- Coordination with the UN and other donors is also vital in areas such as civilian and child protection and Internally Displaced Persons, where individual donors may have limited leverage.
- Working regionally and cross-border is vital to address the regional dimensions of conflict.

Nick York
Head of Evaluation Department

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A considerable debt is due to the numerous interviewees and organisations in Uganda and the UK who agreed to be interviewed and gave valuable information and insights to the researcher. Many of these comments were off-the-record and are not attributed in the Review.

Full responsibility for the text of this report rests with the author and CICS. In common with all evaluation reports commissioned by DFID's Evaluation Department, the views contained in this report do not necessarily represent those of DFID or of the people consulted.

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Glossary

AC	Amnesty Commission
ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
ARLPI	Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
CPP	Conflict Prevention Pools
CHIPPU	Children and Young People for Peace Project
CICS	Centre for International Co-operation and Security
CPA	Concerned Parents Association
CR	Conciliation Resources
CRS	Conflict Reduction Strategy
CRPB	Conflict Reduction and Peace Building
CSOPNU	Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDR	Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DTGNARC	Donor Technical Group Northern Uganda & Recovery from Conflict
DTG	Donor Technical Group
EC	European Commission
FCO	Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoU	Government of Uganda
GUSCO	Gulu Support the Children Organisation
HC	High Commission
HMG	UK Government
HSMF	Holy Spirit Mobile Force
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IFI	International Financial Institution
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KM	Kacoke Madit
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDRP	Multi-country Demobilisation Reintegration Programme
NRA	National Resistance Army
NUPI	Northern Uganda Peace Initiative
PSA	Public Service Agreement
RUFUO	Rural Focus Uganda
SCiU	Save the Children Uganda
SCPO	Senior Child Protection Officer
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UKMIS NY	UK Mission in New York
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPDF	Ugandan People's Defence Force
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

S1 This evaluation has two principal objectives:

- To evaluate DFID's conflict reduction and peace-building (CRPB) Programme in Northern Uganda to determine its effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives.
- To come up with relevant lessons for the strategic direction and management of conflict reduction programmes in Uganda and elsewhere.

FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS

S2 Overall, the evaluation finds that DFID's CRPB Programme is effective and is making a contribution to conflict reduction and peace-building in the extremely difficult circumstances of an ongoing conflict in Northern Uganda. First, it is supporting and enhancing the capacities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in areas such as protection, reintegration, better information, advocacy of conflict sources, and approaches to build peace between individuals and groups. A second strand is support to peace efforts, primarily through the 'Betty Bigombe process'. A third element is the enhancement of closer co-ordination arrangements, understandings, and approaches, particularly with other donors. All this is being undertaken through, or in co-operation with, local and national authorities and capacities.

Targeting and effectiveness

S3 In terms of its targeting, the choice of interventions and support, if measured against sources of conflict in the North and what can be practically achieved, seems rational. However, more support to gender and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) protection is worth considering. The CRPB Programme does not have a traditional development focus and is not addressing education, health, and social services, where there is a clear need, but these are addressed elsewhere in DFID. It is doubtful whether much progress can be made as yet in these areas given the chronic insecurity in the North. By addressing sources of conflict the CRPB Programme is potentially making a contribution to poverty reduction and all the projects are directed at the poor. The 2002 Household Survey showed that poverty levels in the north were 68%, 30% above the national average.

Goal and purpose

S4 In terms of meeting the CRPB Programme 'goal' and 'purpose', the CRPB Programme has a mixed record. The non-achievement of the first part of the goal – a sustained reduction in the number of people's lives affected by violent conflict – is largely attributable to the lack of a peace agreement. The achievement of this is clearly not in the hands of DFID or the UK, but UK support to peace efforts has been constructive and effective. However, during the summer of 2005 whether new approaches or initiatives, with UK involvement, were required to take forward peace efforts became an issue.

S5 The second part of the goal (a reduction in the potential sources of future conflict) and the purpose of the provision of appropriate, timely, and effective support has been largely met. DFID's support has contributed to mitigating future sources of conflict by increasing awareness and understandings of the conflict in the North and elsewhere. It has also strengthened the capacity of civil society to push for protection, respect for human rights, and the rule of law – all which can potentially alleviate sources of future tension. However, there are limitations as to how far attitudes and behaviour can be changed during a conflict and in an area that has deep-seated societal and economic problems.

S6 In terms of timely and effective support, DFID Uganda has developed a good reputation in Uganda for its rapid responses in terms of strategic and micro management of projects.

Areas where interventions could be strengthened/supplemented

S7 Although the CRPB Programme is an effective intervention there are project areas where follow-up is required or project interventions could be more comprehensively targeted. Areas where there is room for further progress include:

- the reception and reintegration of ex-combatants;
- IDP protection and gender;
- challenging human rights abuses in the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF);
- developing a culture of independence in CSOs;
- developing new momentum on reconciliation particularly in utilising local and traditional approaches and in advocacy for a national reconciliation debate.

S8 Some of these outcomes cannot be achieved in short time frames, or may indeed be very difficult to do so, given dynamics and attitudes in Uganda. However, at least some of them require long-term targeting and support.

Programme and project management.

S9 DFID support to projects has been strategically well-managed. Although many projects have been well implemented there are signs of lessening impact in a few. Problem areas have included:

- Top-down approaches on some projects co-ordinated by International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO), and conversely, a lack of ownership displayed by local CSOs.
- Lack of strategic and project focus by some NGOs after a good start suggesting a need for refocusing. Some of this is taking place.
- Delays in the co-ordination and implementation of some projects co-ordinated by INGOs.
- Difficulties in mobilising and adopting a common position in CSO networks on some issues.
- Resource constraints, particularly in terms of the Amnesty Commission (AC), although DFID has been a major donor, and cannot be regarded as responsible in this area.

Co-ordination and common approaches

S10 DFID has played a leading role in donor co-ordination, including being a founder member of a donor group. It has advocated for common donor positions and approaches/strategies. Relations between the High Commission (HC) and DFID are good and with Whitehall and the UK Mission in New York (UKMIS NY). However, donor co-ordination as a whole in relation to the conflict in the North has problems with a lack of agreed common approaches and strategies, or areas of delineated engagement.

LESSONS-LEARNT FOR DFID COUNTRY, REGIONAL, AND THEMATIC PROGRAMMES OUTSIDE OF UGANDA

DFID and HMG

S11 An important lesson is that effective communication and co-operation between HCs and DFID offices in-country increases the possibilities of bringing leverage and influence to bear on critical programming issues. The close co-operation between the two in Uganda has enabled pressure to be brought to bear on Security Sector Reform (SSR) and UPDF abuses in the north and also to persuade the Government of Uganda (GoU) to negotiate with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Joint UK Government (HMG) work also persuaded LRA representatives to communicate with the GoU. This approach of joined-up working has lessons for elsewhere where working relations may not be as closely integrated.

S12 A further HMG lesson is that relations between in-country desks and Whitehall can potentially have important programme implications. It appears that the official HMG position on the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its activities in Uganda do not necessarily tally with the view on the ground that ICC indictments would be likely to be detrimental to short-term peace efforts. If the ICC indictments led to sustained violence this could seriously hamper the Programme.

S13 Experience from Uganda seems to indicate that the HMG Conflict Prevention Pools (CPP) framework of funding with its yearly cycles and administrative demand, and country rather than regional focus, is not suitable for the type of multi-year projects undertaken in Northern Uganda that require longer time frames. Further, are the Public Service Agreement (PSA) - derived goal/purpose used in Uganda sufficiently precise and measurable to be meaningful indicators of progress in Uganda and other conflict-affected countries? *

DFID and other international donors

S14 A lack of common donor approaches or strategies in terms of programmes has hampered progress in Northern Uganda. Experience suggests that common frameworks or understandings on areas of co-operation/delineation are vital for effective assistance. However, there are positive lessons in terms of co-ordination in Uganda. The Troika that has co-operated closely to take forward peace efforts in Uganda is the type of mechanism that could be duplicated in other countries.

* The overall aim of the PSA is the "elimination of poverty in particular through achievement by 2015 of the Millennium Development Goals". The PSA sets out targets that the DFID needs to research by 2008 and helps DFID assess whether its on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

DFID and national governments

S15 Experience in Uganda suggests that the influencing of national governments is critical to make progress on conflict reduction and peace-building. In situations like Uganda, where extreme human suffering is continuing, and where national governments have a clear view of their sovereignty and their scope for independent action, the UK and other governments will need to consider the use of leverage, including referral to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

DFID and CSOs

S16 A lesson from Uganda is that INGOs leading CSO projects are not always the best way forward. In Uganda there have been complaints from national CSOs regarding ineffective oversight on a few projects. Over time, as the security situation and the needs of the affected population allow, the work of INGOs to implement projects might be replaced or supplemented by an approach in which national governments and CSOs play the leading role.

DFID and international organisations

S17 A lesson from the Ugandan experience is that an important priority in DFID's strategy should be to establish early co-operation mechanisms with international organisations to complement and co-ordinate strategic analysis, programme and policy priorities, resource allocations, and responses.

DFID and regional co-operation

S18 DFID Uganda's effective regional project links in peace-building underline the lesson that many conflicts in Africa and elsewhere have significant regional dimensions and can only be addressed with cross-border links at the level of civil society, the national level, and through regional initiatives and organisations.

DFID and cross-sectoral/project engagement

S19 A lesson from Uganda is that co-ordination with the UN and other donors is vital in ongoing conflicts in key areas such as civilian and child protection and IDPs where individual donors may have limited leverage. This should include information-sharing and co-operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DFID UGANDA

S20 Maintain continued oversight of CSO projects and consider further or new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and strategies in areas where there may be under-performance.

S21 Continue to push for shared donor approaches and co-operative strategies particularly in relation to critical areas such as IDP protection, women, children, and peace-building strategies to end violence.

S22 Increase support for key national government departments supposed to be engaged with conflict reduction and national recovery.

S23 Consider engaging more with regional organisations, initiatives, mechanisms, and actors, both in terms of conflict reduction efforts and peace-building.

S24 Form constructive and functioning links with the UN, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and other donors, including bodies and individuals with responsibility for child protection and other vulnerable groups, to step up advocacy and political pressure.

S25 Increase monitoring of key issues such as IDPs and war-affected children with other agencies, to design transitional strategies and innovative approaches to move IDPs out of dysfunctional camp settings.

S26 Bring in expertise and experience, including from other developing countries, to derive lessons-learnt and ideas that can be applied to areas where less progress is being made or new interventions may be required.

LESSONS FOR OTHER ACTORS

S27 The UN should consider coherent framework strategies for early and timely interventions that co-ordinate and complement the efforts of national actors and other stakeholder groups in on-going conflicts.

S28 The situation in Uganda suggests the lesson that a heavy reliance on narrow 'military solutions' such as Operation Iron Fist often have only limited utility in bringing conflict to an end even when the threat in military terms is small. Even though the GoU has intermittently engaged in peace efforts, a lesson that might be learnt here is that multi-dimensional approaches that acknowledge and address the wider political, social, and cultural issues including reconciliation, human rights and protection, offer the best chance of reducing violent conflict in the long-term. They also have the capacity to deal with the root, structural and trigger factors that lead to violent conflict. The lack of engagement of the GoU in promoting reconciliation, national recovery and development is an area of concern.

S29 A lesson from Uganda is that CSOs need to maintain pressure on, and constructive engagements with governments, despite the risks involved, if they are to change prevailing attitudes in government and elsewhere in terms of impunity, corruption, abuse, and denial of human rights.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CICS, at the Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, is pleased to present this Internal Review of DFID's Engagement with the conflict in Northern Uganda. This follows a two week research trip to Kampala and Gulu conducted between 23 June-8 July 2005 with key stakeholders to explore the key research questions and issues raised in the TORs. CICS was given extensive assistance by DFID Uganda in facilitating interviews and conducting the research and the field visit contributed considerably to the findings.

1.2 Prior to the field trip, an Inception Report outlining the methodology and approach was finalised in consultation with the Evaluation Department and DFID Uganda. It was decided that a new dimension to the report, which was not part of the TORs, would be added in terms of assessing gender dimensions in the DFID Programme.

1.3 Prior to the Inception Report, CICS visited London in June for a Briefing Meeting with the Evaluation Department to take forward the Internal Review and cross-departmental interviews were also undertaken.

2. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

TORs.

2.1 Two general research tasks are stipulated in the TORs:

- To review DFID's Conflict Reduction Strategy (CRS) in Northern Uganda from 1999 to the present with a view to reaching preliminary conclusions on its effectiveness in assisting conflict reduction processes and in relation to their stated objectives including poverty reduction (Research Task 1).
- To draw out relevant lessons for the strategic direction and management of DFID's conflict reduction programmes in Uganda and elsewhere, and for other key players in this area, and to identify possible areas for future DFID follow-up work in conflict reduction and peace building (Research Task 2).

2.2 In addition to this, a set of related 'key questions' are posed, namely:

- What were the objectives of DFID Uganda's programmes in Northern Uganda, and how did they change over the period?
- When was CRPB explicitly recognised as an objective of the DFID Uganda programme?
- To what extent did DFID's programmes contribute to Uganda's progress towards CRPB? Were there any elements that contributed negatively? Opportunity costs / counterfactuals to consider?
- To what extent did DFID attempt to make / succeed in making CRPB more pro-poor?
- How successful was DFID in working with the other donors on CRPB and pro-poor objectives?
- What lessons can be drawn for the future of DFID programmes in CRPB? For donors and other governments?
- What further work could usefully be done to arrive at more objective and robust conclusions?

2.3 A further key question was subsequently added on gender and the DFID Programme: Did DFID have explicit gender objectives in its Northern Uganda Programme and how successful was DFID in incorporating gender into it?

Approach adopted

2.4 This report follows the methodology and approaches set out in the TORs. After setting out as background the context within which the DFID Programme is being undertaken, it addresses the first research task on effectiveness. In doing this, it reaches general conclusions but also analyses aspects of specific projects. The report then addresses the second research task relating to the strategic direction and management of the CRPB Programme highlighting shortfalls and opportunities through the project and programme analysis. Last, the specific research questions are responded to. These, on occasion, cover some of the same ground as the research tasks.

2.5 The conclusions reached have been arrived at through interviewing key individuals and stakeholders across departments in Whitehall and in the field in Uganda. In Uganda, the Centre for International Co-operation and Security (CICS) spoke to UK stakeholders, all the key donors actively engaged in the north, INGOs, CSOs, and civilians and ex-combatants in the North. The research questions were used as a basis for interviewing along with other respondents' insights on matters relating to the North. This was backed up by primary and secondary document research both in the UK and Uganda.

2.6 The research was conducted within a tight timeframe and with the large number of activities conducted within the programme it was not always possible to form definitive conclusions on issues of effectiveness on some projects. Some of the findings therefore may benefit from follow up and further investigation.

3. CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFLICT AND KEY INTERVENTIONS

3.1 DFID's engagement in Northern Uganda has taken place in a particularly difficult setting. A longstanding 19 year old civil war is continuing in the three districts in the North – Kitgum, Gulu and Pader – frequently referred to as 'Acholiland'. One estimate suggests that between 60-70,000 Ugandans, mainly Acholi, have been killed,¹ and between 1.2-1.5m people are displaced and living mainly in camps. During this period, the rebel LRA under its leader Joseph Kony, has fought the UPDF and has also targeted the Acholi people through killings, abductions, particularly of children, rape and torture.

3.2 The impact of the civil war has been almost exclusively felt in the North. It has had a devastating impact with huge numbers of IDPs being created, and the virtual shut down of agriculture in the region with most farmers confined to IDP camps, or only farming on the margins. Further, a lack of government investment, targeting of children and human rights abuses by all sides, and the growth of poverty in the north, compared to other regions, has added to suffering. Decades of war have also had a severe impact on the Acholi both in socio-economic and psycho-social terms. Peace efforts during the summer of 2005 seemed to have stalled until September when contact was renewed between the LRA and Betty Bigombe (a former Ugandan minister who is acting as a mediator in the conflict).² However, a significant development occurred when the ICC unsealed arrest warrants for five named leaders of the LRA, including Joseph Kony, in October 2005. It was not clear what impact this would have, although many NGOs in the North feared it would lead to increased violence.

Key events 1987-2005

3.3 Key events and interventions in the conflict are described below.

1986-7. In January, Yoweri Museveni is sworn in as the President of Uganda after the overthrow of the Okello government. National Resistance Army (NRA) forces by April establish control of the country. In September, the precursor of the LRA, the Holy Spirit Mobile Force (HSMF), is formed by Alice Auma Lakwena, an Acholi priestess, to oppose the government. By the end of 1986, many services in rural areas of Northern Uganda are closed and some roads blocked. Lakwena mobilises uneducated youths and links up with the Uganda Peoples Defence Army to form the Holy Spirit Movement.

1988. The movement deploys across Northern and Eastern Uganda but is finally defeated and Lakwena flees to Kenya. The movement regroups under new leaders but is severely damaged.

1989 – 1990. The movement collapses and future LRA leader Joseph Kony forms the United Holy Salvation Army which starts ambushing and looting.

1991. The National Resistance Army (NRA) launches a military campaign against the rebels and through April-August seals off the Northern districts from the rest of Uganda. The rebels begin the practice of mutilating civilians.

¹ Estimates of people killed vary. The above estimate comes from: Joel D. Barkan, 'Uganda: An African "Success" Past its Prime?', summary of talk at Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, USA, 2 June 2005, p. 7.

² See Henry Wasswa, 'Talks after 19-year Civil war in Northern Uganda', Associated Press/HindustanTimes.com, 10 September 2005.

1993. Pope John Paul II visits Gulu in February and rebel attacks decline until August, when insurgents under the newly formed LRA under Kony launch attacks on Ugandan army units. Peace talks between the government and the LRA are initiated through the minister for the pacification of the north, Betty Bigombe.

1994. The LRA reject Museveni's seven-day ultimatum to surrender marking the collapse of the peace talks. The LRA launches attacks and is said to be supported by the Government of Sudan (GoS).

1995. The LRA escalates the violence and in August invades Kitgum district and carries out large-scale abduction of children to become child soldiers. Moving to the Sudanese border, LRA are attacked by an army helicopter and rebels and abductees are killed. In October, a new constitution is introduced and the NRA becomes the UPDF. An offensive by the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and UPDF forces the LRA out of its base in Palotaka, southern Sudan.

1996. Few Acholi people vote for the President in presidential and parliamentary elections. Over 90% vote for the opposition leader. The LRA intensifies military action and the government begins a policy of moving people into 'protected villages' in Gulu. Two elders on a peace mission are murdered by the LRA.

1997. A parliamentary commission of inquiry recommends a military solution in January and non-engagement in peace talks with the LRA. The SPLM/A and the UPDF operating in Sudan force the LRA to move its camp further north. Concurrently, religious leaders begin local peace initiatives. In April, Acholi living abroad and in Uganda meet at the first large gathering of Acholi in a 'Kacoke Madit' (KM) in London. KM highlights the worrying humanitarian and human rights situation in the North. At the same time, it brings Government and LRA representatives together and both sides are urged to bring about a speedy resolution of the conflict.

1998. Following the religious leaders' engagement in peace efforts, the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) is formed.

1999. In February, LRA fighters retreat to Sudan and there is near peace for 10 months leading to many civilians seeking to return to their homes. This is followed by Sudan and Uganda signing a peace accord in December. The parliament in Uganda passes the Amnesty Bill offering immunity from prosecution to LRA denouncing the rebellion and voluntarily surrendering to the GoU. However, the LRA attacks Gulu at the end of the month and expectations of peace lessen.

2000. Another peace deal between Uganda and Sudan, brokered by the Carter Centre, is reached in September. LRA attacks continue.

2001. New Presidential elections are held in March with the President again failing to attract support in the North and violence continues.

2002. The GoU and the UPDF have increasing expectations that Kony can be captured and the LRA defeated. LRA field commander Vincent Otti contacts the government seeking peace talks. The launching of Operation Iron Fist in 2002 – the military push by the Ugandan army into Sudan with that government's support – marked an attempt to deal decisively with the LRA. It inflicted casualties and destroyed the LRA's base camps south of Juba, but it also resulted in many LRA returning to Northern Uganda and creating greater insecurity. In 2002, the conflict spreads and has a significant impact in the East for the first time including displacement.

2003. There are positive responses by the GoU as a Presidential Peace Team is formed in January. Further pressure is put on the LRA as Sudan permits the UPDF to pursue Kony inside Sudanese territory. The LRA responds by abducting nearly 300 people in Lira and it launches attacks in the eastern region, causing the displacement of thousands.

2004. Displacement rises with 30,000 people displaced and many homes burned in Pabbo IDP camp by the LRA. However, the UPDF captures an LRA training commander, Kenneth Banya, and it claims to be winning the conflict. Parallel to this, Betty Bigombe undertakes a new peace initiative in November. Between November 2004-January 2005 a number of meetings took place between Bigombe and the LRA 'spokesperson' Kolo in the presence of the UK and other international observers from the Netherlands, Norway and the UN. A series of ceasefires are agreed between the LRA and the GoU. However, the process suffered a major setback on 31 December 2004, when the GoU gave the LRA only six hours to sign a cease-fire agreement. When the LRA did not sign, Kolo was attacked on 1 January 2005 by helicopter gun ships directly after the lapse of an agreed period of ceasefire.

2005. Further pressure is put on the LRA when a comprehensive peace agreement is signed in Sudan and the warring parties pledge to assist the GoU in the fight against the LRA. In February, the GoU declares an 18-day truce to enable LRA soldiers to seek amnesty. Sam Kolo becomes the highest-ranking rebel to surrender to the UPDF. The LRA fights back by increasing its attacks on civilians in March. However, Bigombe says she is in regular contact with Kony and negotiations are on-going. In May, the UPDF kills another LRA commander, the LRA's chief of operations, Sam Okullu, near Gulu. In June, Museveni says Kony will benefit from the amnesty if he surrenders, in contrast to his previous statements. Nevertheless, through July-August hopes of a cease-fire or peace talks fade as contacts with a suspicious LRA are said to be non-existent. However, in September, Kony was said to have opened direct talks with Bigombe, saying he wanted to negotiate an end to the conflict. On 14 October 2005, the ICC unsealed arrest warrants for five LRA leaders, including Joseph Kony.

4. BACKGROUND TO DFID'S PROGRAMME

4.1 DFID's involvement in terms of the Conflict Reduction Strategy (CRS) dates back to 1999. A review of the conflict was first conducted between 15-20 July 1999 by a DFID East Africa, DFID/Conflict Humanitarian Department and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) team to inform HMG thinking on how to best shape its policy and programming in Northern Uganda given the conflict dynamics and motivations of the actors involved. This led to an agreed strategic framework under which support to conflict reduction and resolution interventions was articulated. The analysis and strategy was updated with the 'Conflict Analysis and Strategy for Acholiland' document in June 2003.

4.2 Between 2001-2005, the UK has allocated approximately £2.7 million in support of conflict reduction and peace-building in Uganda. DFID's approach has been to work closely with local institutions and the GoU to bring about these changes. This support has been directed at three core areas:

- the development of closer coordination arrangements, common understandings, and approaches;
- the promotion of human rights, international humanitarian law, accurate information and the role of civil society;
- the targeted support to reconciliation and stabilisation processes with an emphasis on locally-driven initiatives.

Development of closer coordination arrangements, common understandings and approaches

4.3 DFID/UK have been at the forefront of developing and participating in closer co-ordination arrangements and common approaches. DFID/UK played a key role in the formation of Donor Technical Group Northern Uganda and Recovery from Conflict (DTGNARC), and has also been involved in the Core Group, the Ambassadors' Group, and various supporting technical groups such as Donor Technical Group (DTG) Anti-corruption and DTG Human Rights. DFID/HC was instrumental in the founding of the DTG. DFID/HC between them have a presence on virtually all the relevant co-ordination mechanisms. DFID/HC, have played a central role in advocating more joined-up interventions and have developed close co-ordination between themselves. DFID engagement also extends outside the various donor groups, to co-ordination and common approaches with the GoU, INGOs, NGOs, and civil society.

Promotion of human rights, international humanitarian law, accurate information, and the role of civil society

4.4 Support in these areas has been directed at leading CSO organisations based in Uganda such as the Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (CSOPNU), MEGA FM, and INGOs such as Save the Children Uganda (SCiU) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

4.5 CSOPNU, which was formed in May 2002, is a network of local, national and international NGOs. Its stated purpose is to advocate for a just and lasting peace in Northern Uganda based on analysis and articulation of the underlying cause of the conflict. Activities have included: advocacy directed at the GoS, at donors and at UNSC members; studies of

aspects of the conflict; research into why previous peace initiatives have failed; work with the media and on humanitarian principles; and advocacy on reconciliation and on nation-building as mainstreamed policy.

4.6 **MEGA FM** went on air in August 2002. It is funded as a stand-alone project, although it is part of the Acholi Framework, and it is owned by the GoU. Its objective has been to provide the population of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts with relevant and accurate information aimed at increasing opportunities for engagement on peace and development issues. It aims to be a self-sustaining, editorially independent radio station providing quality, accurate programming. It has established an audience estimated at one million and has broadcast news, drama, cultural events, and specific programmes on development and conflict reduction. It can be heard over much of Acholiland and outside of Uganda in areas of southern Sudan.

4.7 **SCIU** has been supported by DFID since March 2001. Its activities have included: supporting local NGOs working on the reception and reintegration of former child combatants; supporting the provision of safe accommodation for child night commuters in Gulu Town - through Rural Focus Uganda (RUFUO); supporting peace and reconciliation initiatives and youth/child rights events; and income generation schemes for ex-child combatants and war-affected youth.

4.8 Local organisations such as **Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO)**, **Concerned Parents Association (CPA)**, the **Gulu Development Agency**, and the **Gulu Youth Council**, have been part of a network called **Children and Young People for Peace Project (CHIPPU)** which is also supported by DFID and seeks to enhance the contribution of children and young people in the peace-building process in Northern Uganda. It started in April 2004 and has included activities such as: national and international peace initiatives and peace conferences/debates; national and international exchange visits for young people; life skills and livelihoods promotion; child rights protection in conflict/emergency situations; the training of children and duty bearers in child rights and responsibilities; and documentation, dissemination and advocacy.

4.9 DFID also supports child protection through **UNICEF**. UNICEF Uganda has sought to strengthen advocacy for children, as well as women's rights in Northern Uganda. It has recruited a Senior Child Protection Officer (SCPO) to Gulu. Supported activities have included overseeing UNICEF support for reintegration of child soldiers in northern Uganda; activities aimed at preventing children from being abducted; psychosocial services for war-affected children; and ensuring that ongoing protection and humanitarian work takes into account the vulnerability of children and women to sexual violence and exploitation. The protection officer also advocates for the prevention of the recruitment of child soldiers.

Targeted support to reconciliation and stabilisation processes with an emphasis on locally-driven initiatives

4.10 **ARLPI** has been supported by DFID since mid-2001 in terms of capacity-building and support to advocacy and peace initiatives. ARLPI is perhaps best known for the role it played in facilitating peace contacts between the LRA and the GoU. However, ARLPI has also undertaken: training and capacity-building in negotiation, mediation, arbitration and

reconciliation processes; education in justice, peace and human rights; lobbying on social justice and transformation, and development issues; mediation between communities; and exchange visits and relationship-building.

4.11 **KM** was established in 1996 by Acholi communities in the diaspora. It seeks to identify and implement approaches to end the conflict by peaceful means. It has a London secretariat which supports a worldwide network involving Acholi communities, organisations and other groups in promoting peace building, and development and reconciliation initiatives. It has been supported by Conciliation Resources. KM has employed 'multi-track' strategies involving the building of contacts with parties to the conflict, providing space for analysis and reflection, confidence-building, and the strengthening of collaboration. It has received over £400,000 of funding over a five-year period.

4.12 The **AC** was created in January 2000 and granted a comprehensive amnesty to those involved in insurgency related activities. The Amnesty Act 2000 offered a pardon to all Ugandans engaged or engaging in acts of rebellion against the GoU since 26 January 1986.³ DFID has: supported the AC Commissioners in their visits to Sudan and Kenya to hold meetings with potential reporters⁴ and Government officials; and given technical support and equipment to AC offices. DFID is also a major contributor to the Multi-country Demobilisation Reintegration Programme (MDRP) which is working with the AC on reintegration.

4.13 Last, at the forefront of stabilisation efforts during the past year has been peace efforts connected with the **Betty Bigombe** process. The UK, since November 2004, has worked with Norway and the Netherlands to provide her with technical and financial support to act as an interlocutor between the LRA and the GoU.

³ See: Refugee Law Project, 'Whose Justice?', Working Paper no. 15, February 2005.

⁴ 'Reporters' is the term used to describe rebels/ex-combatants taking advantage of the Amnesty Act to surrender.

5 RESEARCH TASK 1

To review DFID's CRS programme in northern Uganda from 1999 to the present with a view to reaching preliminary conclusions on its effectiveness in assisting conflict reduction processes and in relation to their stated objectives including poverty reduction.

Core research questions

5.1 This research task is addressed through the following core research questions:

- Is the Programme supporting the right kind of activities in terms of assisting conflict reduction processes and is it achieving effective outputs?
- Is it doing so in an effective and efficient manner?
- What else could it be doing, or what could be done better?

5.2 In addressing issues of effectiveness relating to DFID's Programme it is important to take note of the considerable barriers facing any attempts to build peace and reduce conflict in Uganda. First, for much of 2005 there appears to have been little political will within the GoU to pursue meaningful peace negotiations with the LRA, and the LRA appears to have lost faith in the GoU. However, in September there was evidence of renewed contacts.

5.3 Second, the North remains an intractable problem with poverty rising, and indifference or hostility to the North high in much of Uganda. In the absence of good will and with deep-rooted reconciliation and reintegration problems, peace-building remains highly problematic. Third, civil society capacities are not fully developed in Uganda and CSOs are largely uninterested in the north, outside the north itself. Fourth, the GoU remains in a strong position to resist any but the most determined leverage or conditionality that the international community can bring to bear to persuade it to engage more deeply on conflict reduction or peace-building, or for that matter to substantively address human rights, corruption, and SSR.

Is the Programme supporting the right kind of activities in terms of assisting conflict reduction processes and is it achieving effective outputs?

Selection of activities

5.4 In general terms, the DFID programme is well targeted (see also 5.5 and 5.6), and is contributing to or achieving outputs that are having an impact on conflict reduction. The Programme has adopted an approach that targets both peace efforts and internal factors that have the capacity to exacerbate the conflict. Regarding the former, this has involved supporting civil society actors and Betty Bigombe as interlocutors between the parties to the conflict. In parallel to this it has attempted through human rights, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and accurate information, to target some of the key areas such as human rights abuses, misunderstandings, and discrimination that have exacerbated or have been a source of conflict in the North.

5.5 This has been undertaken through a sensitive approach that recognises that the main thrust of change needs to come from indigenous capacities and approaches rather than intrusive external interventions. However, DFID/UK has brought to bear advocacy and persuasion on the GoU in terms of approaches to end the conflict in the North.

5.6 The choice of interventions and support if measured against sources of conflict in the North and what can be practically achieved seems rational. Key sources of conflict in the North – many of them intertwined – include:

- poverty;
- inter-group tensions and differences particularly between the North and other areas of the country many with a historical basis;
- a lack of rights and abuse of vulnerable groups;
- poor governance;
- internal displacement;
- a lack of livelihoods.

5.7 Of these, poverty is not being addressed on the Programme in traditional developmental terms as it lies outside its scope and is being addressed elsewhere in DFID. Nevertheless, DFID is actively engaged in discussions on development and recovery in the North. DFID believes that the constraints on development caused by the security situation should not be under-estimated. By addressing sources of conflict the Programme is potentially making a contribution to poverty reduction and all the projects are directed at the poor. Indeed, the whole of the target audience in the North is poor. The 2002 Household Survey showed that poverty levels in the north were 68%, 30% above the national average.

5.8 The support to accurate information and to local and national peace-building contacts has made a contribution to raising the awareness of the conflict in the north, nationally, and internationally, and hence to the possibility of greater understandings and the improvement of inter-group relations. The targeting of women, children, and ex-combatants, all of whom are potentially vulnerable, for protection, and the propagation of human rights, is also addressing major sources of suffering in the north. Support to the AC, the amnesty process, and the reintegration of ex-combatants is also potentially helping to avert discontented ex-combatants from returning to conflict.

5.9 The Programme is less directly targeted at some other areas of concern such as poor governance, IDPs, and SSR. DFID through its humanitarian assistance is providing considerable funds to IDPs through, for example, the World Food Programme (WFP).

5.10 On SSR, the UK have provided support using Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) funds for a Defence Review in Uganda.

Effectiveness of outputs

5.11 The Programme, although well targeted and managed, is not fully meeting the Programme goal. This is described as: 'A sustained reduction in the number of people's lives affected by violent conflict and a reduction in the potential sources of future conflict'. The Programme has not been able to deliver the first part of this goal as yet.

However, it has been more successful in the second part in terms of addressing potential future sources of conflict.

Effectiveness in reductions in number of people's lives affected by violent conflict

5.12 The main mechanisms for addressing this have been support to stabilisation and reconciliation efforts, in particular, support to the Betty Bigombe process, and closer co-ordination arrangements between key donors. Locally driven peace efforts through ARLPI, KM and MEGA FM have made a significant contribution.

5.13 The Betty Bigombe process has had great potential but has not yet delivered a lasting ceasefire nor led to a reduction in the number of lives affected by violent conflict. In terms of some indicators – for example IDPs – the number of people's lives affected has increased over the past couple of years. Operation Iron Fist and the GoU's belief that the military option should be its main strategy, the persistence of the LRA in continuing the conflict, and the undermining of peace talks in January 2005, have all contributed to a continuing humanitarian crisis. To a large part, this can be attributed to the intransigence of the parties rather than a lack of effectiveness of the Programme.

5.14 In the period from November 2004-end January 2005, a number of meetings took place between Bigombe and Kolo in the presence of the UK and other international observers. A series of ceasefires were agreed between the LRA and the GoU. However the process suffered a major setback on 31 December 2004, when the GoU gave the LRA only six hours to sign a cease-fire agreement. When the LRA did not sign, Kolo was immediately attacked by helicopter gun ships on 1 January 2005 directly after the lapse of an agreed period of ceasefire.

5.15 Further, the ICC's issuing of arrest warrants for LRA leaders has arguably lessened incentives for LRA commanders to engage in further talks and may encourage the LRA to increase violence with further adverse impacts upon people's lives.

5.16 As referred to above, UK assistance to peace efforts and the reduction of future sources of conflict have been well-directed in that it has been co-ordinated with other donors. The Troika has co-ordinated their efforts to take forward the peace process with great effect at certain points.

5.17 As well as the Bigombe track, DFID support has made good use of CSOs able to influence the parties. ARLPI, MEGA FM and KM have had a considerable impact in facilitating and sustaining peace contacts between the LRA and the GoU. The ARLPI, working with traditional leaders, took a leading role between 2001-3 in fostering dialogue between the GoU and the LRA and in mid-2002 religious leaders held talks in Pader District with LRA commanders. As a consequence, a Presidential Peace Team was formed by the GoU and it declared a ceasefire applying to an area of Northern Uganda. However, since peace attempts failed in early 2003 it has become harder for the religious leaders or ARLPI to directly engage in dialogue with the LRA and the GoU.

5.18 Similarly, MEGA FM played an important role in persuading LRA to come out of the bush and report to the AC and in fostering a dialogue between the LRA and the GoU. KM

also had an important role in mobilising the international diaspora to support peace efforts and in persuading LRA in Southern Sudan that it was safe to return to Uganda and take advantage of the Amnesty.

Effectiveness in a reduction in the potential sources of future conflict

5.19 DFID's CRS Programme has made strides in terms of assisting local actors and processes to address potential future sources of conflict.

5.20 CSOPNU has considerably increased public awareness nationally and internationally of the causes of the conflict and perpetuating factors. While it is difficult to quantify the precise impact of this, Uganda is considerably better informed about what is happening in the North and more people are in a position to make informed choices as to what can be done to avert future sources of violence. The GoU, for example, has been compelled to debate issues which may not have been raised without CSOPNU campaigning and advocacy work.

5.21 MEGA FM has fulfilled a similar role in raising on air sensitive issues that are likely to be a factor in any future outbreak of conflict. It has broadcast programmes on human rights abuses, justice, corruption, and reconciliation issues, sometimes against the wishes of the authorities and the UPDF. It has exposed local officials and government officials to direct and hostile questioning from listeners on a range of issues leading to potential lines of accountability. Further, it has played a role in assisting in averting violence between the Lango and Acholis through broadcasting peace messages and giving air time to the authorities to appeal for calm following the killings at Barlonyo, Lira. By playing Acholi music which traditionally contains commentaries on social issues and conflict, it seems to have also contributed to reflection on the consequences and causes of the conflict.

5.22 A core element of UNICEF's programming, particularly in light of UPDF recruitment of child soldiers and the imprisonment of formerly abducted children, was the recruitment and deployment of a SCPO to Gulu in September 2003 through DFID funding. While SCiU and CHIPPU have undertaken work to enhance the participation of children and young people in the peace-building process. This holds out the prospect of developing approaches that engage the young in building peace and averting their involvement in future sources of conflict.

5.23 Finally, in general terms, DFID's support to CSOs has considerably increased capacities and expertise. MEGA FM, following its launch, for example, has established a large audience estimated at one million. Similarly, CSOPNU has had its capacities extended considerably and it has grown from the time of DFID's engagement from around 20 to over 50 members. ARLPI is now a CSO that has expanded and is internationally known and respected and which has won several peace prizes during DFID's support.

Areas of lesser impact

5.24 However, there are other areas where DFID supported projects have had less discernable impacts. These include:

- the reception and reintegration of ex-combatants;
- developing fully the independence and impartiality of CSOs;
- challenging human rights abuses in the UPDF.

5.25 It may be that some of these goals cannot be achieved by a conflict reduction/peace-building programme over a relatively short time frame, or may indeed be unachievable given dynamics and attitudes in Uganda. However, they are areas that would benefit from long-term targeting and support.

5.26 **Reintegration.** The reintegration of ex-combatants has been a highly ineffective process in Northern Uganda. This can be largely put down to problems in the AC, delays in World Bank support, and the limited nature of what is being attempted. DFID has provided technical assistance to the AC in an effective manner. However, although AC funding has been secured, the start up of MDRP has been seriously delayed with very serious consequences for reporters and the reintegration process, although MDRP has recently provided the AC with US\$4.2m.

5.27 While the AC has played a part in publicising the Amnesty Act and persuading reporters to pass through the Amnesty process, it has been severely constrained by resources issues, failures to take on its full mandate, and slow delivery, including considerable backlogs in terms of disseminating assistance to reporters. In July 2005, there was a backlog of 11,000-12,000 reporters including many ex-LRA. The AC has been charged to oversee reintegration but World Bank funds, central to this process, have been disbursed slowly. The funds have been available for around two years and were released for Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) in March 2005.⁵ There are differing accounts as to the reasons behind this. Over the past 2-3 years there has been virtually no credible reintegration.

5.28 **Child soldiers.** Project work regarding the reception and reintegration of former child combatants and income generation schemes for ex-child combatants and other war affected youth, has also been hampered by a proliferation of agencies working in this area, resource shortages, short-time frames, and a lack of sustainability. There is little evidence that former combatants are being accepted and reintegrated into their communities or camps. Indeed, there is acute resentment against them with the potential for future discord. Efforts to rehabilitate ex-child soldiers in Uganda are inadequate and need to be considerably improved. It is understood that resources devoted to psycho-social support is weak and short-term, and sometimes involves poorly-trained staff, and there have been complaints regarding agencies failing to connect with traditional reconciliation mechanisms.

⁵ International Crisis Group, 'Shock Therapy for Northern Uganda's Peace Process', Africa Briefing, no. 23, 11 April 2005, p. 7.

5.29 **CSOs and independence.** There is a need for CSOs in the North to adopt a more challenging attitude to the GoU and the organs of the state. It is recognised that this is not an easy task and CSOs and individuals face the danger of being targeted by those with vested interests in certain issues not being aired. Progress has been made on this by organisations such as CSOPNU and MEGA FM who through the support of DFID and others have raised issues that they would previously not have been raised. But there is a need to go further and to continue challenging corruption, UPDF human rights abuses, and the culture of impunity in the north, and not to defer to local and national authorities.

Is the Programme and its support being implemented and co-ordinated in an effective and efficient manner?

5.30 In general terms, the Programme purpose – ‘The provision of appropriate, timely and effective support to conflict reduction and peace building in Northern Uganda’⁶ – has been met. However, there are areas where individual project management could be enhanced.

5.31 Regarding donor co-ordination, DFID/UK has been a highly effective actor. The 2000 Project Completion Report states a number of outputs which have been largely achieved. These are described as:

- **UK joined up working:** Influencing agenda developed between FCO/DFID and applied with regular updates.
- **Donor co-ordination:** Active participation in coordinating groups on the North, technical working group on conflict, and regular meetings and information exchange with other donors and civil society.
- **Influence with Government of Uganda:** Ongoing dialogue with GoU on the need for the development of its strategy to ending the conflict including the need for greater synergy between the security response and alternative approaches.⁷

5.32 However, DFID has had to operate within a framework of donor co-operation that has not been optimal. Donor co-ordination has not generally been fully effective in reaching agreement and a common consensus. Indeed, donor disagreements and differing national perspectives have had negative impacts, not least in terms of some donors seeking to develop ‘niche’ areas where they have comparative advantage, but where assistance may not be a priority, or may be wasted. Further, there has not been an agreed strategy on how to support GoU departments. A number of donors have complained about lack of consultation or information-sharing over the launch of Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI) by the USA in mid- 2003. This programme has been largely uncoordinated with other donors.

5.33 However, balanced against this, the success story of donor co-ordination, at least until early in 2005, has been the Troika, which despite some differences of national emphasis, played a major role in supporting the Bigombe process.

⁶ DFID Uganda, Acholi-Land Conflict Reduction Framework: Project Completion Report (PCR) V1.0, 23 March 2005, p. 2.

⁷ DFID Uganda, Acholi-Land Conflict Reduction Framework: Project Completion Report (PCR) V1.0, 23 March 2005, p. 5.

5.34 Another donor co-ordination issue is the lack of an overall strategy within DTGNARC which seems to engage more with technical details of programming rather than strategy or the political context. Observers have noted the need for an overall strategy to guide assistance to the North.⁸

5.35 In terms of internal UK co-ordination, DFID Uganda and the HC have conducted joint work on the conflict at both diplomatic and project level. Internal co-ordination and relations between DFID and the HC have been good. This will need to be sustained with new staff at the HC. DFID Uganda has engaged with the GoU and has brought its influence to bear sometimes in co-ordination with others donors, civil society and the UN, on a number of occasions on issues ranging from the Amnesty to the peace process with some effect. However, it has proved hard to reach common donor pressure points on certain issues.

5.36 There has also been effective information exchanges between FCO and DFID centrally on the conflict and its resolution. Working relationships with UKMIS NY on issues connected to the UN General Assembly and UKMIS NY meetings on Northern Uganda is said to be good. DFID Uganda notes that consideration needs to be given as to how this level of co-ordination can be sustained and further strengthened particularly in regard to cross-Whitehall linkages and ways to strengthen joint analysis and planning between Whitehall and Kampala.⁹

Management of projects

5.37 In terms of DFID Uganda support, management, and oversight of projects, it has generally achieved a good balance between giving scope for CSOs to develop their own agendas and capacities whilst retaining oversight. However, there are individual project areas where there may be scope for improvement.

5.38 In terms of CSOPNU, there are concerns regarding a top-down approach. The internationals are the main drivers of many of the activities of CSOPNU. There is a perception that local NGOs have failed to take ownership of the network.¹⁰ However, at the same time, some local NGOs allege that INGOs are exerting too great an influence within the network.

5.39 ARLPI has acquired a prestigious reputation and credibility at home and abroad. However, there have been problems of late in terms of matching earlier achievements and also in terms of the structure and organisation of the ARLPI. There seems to be a possible

⁸ Leaving aside difficulties inside DTGNARC which have emerged over the past two years

– the DTG was initially quite successful

– donors have had an impact in raising the profile of the conflict and have brought advocacy to bear on the GoU on key issues. The various technical groups have done valuable work in taking forward planning on governance and other issues.

⁹ DFID Uganda, Acholi-Land Conflict Reduction Framework: Project Completion Report (PCR) V1.0, 23 March 2005, p. 5.

¹⁰ These observations were made by three different INGOs interviewed in Uganda with knowledge of CSOPNU's work.

loss of project drive. The aim of developing a peace centre through funds from a peace prize may not be the best use of resources which might be better spent on project work. Further, it has been seriously delayed with a site still not identified in early July 2005 and the ARLPI unable to say when it might be completed.

5.40 Other issues have centred around management and organisational difficulties including, it is alleged, poor inter-personal relations, the leaving of key staff, top-down approaches and failures to connect management with staff at the bottom, and unclear procedures and accounting.¹¹ However, ARLPI say steps are well underway to address some of these issues including refocusing ARLPI activities.

Constructing common positions

5.41 Constructing common advocacy positions has sometimes proved difficult. CSOPNU, for example, has had difficulties in developing a common advocacy position rapidly in response to a given event – to an extent understandably given the number of CSOs within it. And it has not always proved easy to reconcile differing views within the network particularly in terms of what might be called ‘Acholi’ and ‘non-Acholi’ perspectives. The same was initially the case with KM where Acholi participants were divided over the best response to the conflict in the North. However, this is no longer the case.

Independence from government and outspokenness

5.42 MEGA FM has come under increasing pressure from local officials, the government, and the UPDF, to not broadcast on issues the authorities regard as sensitive or controversial. The early ground-breaking contacts made by MEGA FM that enabled the LRA and government officials to communicate have been virtually terminated, it is understood.

5.43 Officials, for example, have blocked attempts to air LRA statements on air. Further, like other radio stations and forms of media in the North it is coming under increasing pressure in the run up to the 2006 presidential elections. A form of self-censorship seems to have emerged. This has had a knock-on effect on public perceptions and there are indications that the radio station is increasingly being seen by some of its audience as not fully independent given the influence of the authorities. DFID Uganda note that a major piece of research into some of these issues is underway.

5.44 It is further noted by DFID that MEGA FM’s position may be a sensible approach to programming in both the context of the conflict and the political situation.¹² However, while recognising the prudence of this approach, it is suggested that if progress is to be made in standing up to corruption, human rights abuses, and poor governance, risks will need to be taken.

5.45 To a greater or lesser extent these kinds of pressures have been felt by other DFID-supported CSOs in Northern Uganda.

¹¹ See for insights into these issues: P.O CACD (Psychosocial), ‘Children and Young People for Peace Project: Half-Annual Review Meeting’, Report, 3 February 2005.

¹² Comment received from DFID Uganda.

6 RESEARCH TASK 2

To draw out relevant lessons for the strategic direction and management of DFID's conflict reduction programmes in Uganda and elsewhere, and for other key players in this area, and to identify possible areas for future DFID follow up work in conflict reduction and peace building.

6.1 Overall, the Programme in Northern Uganda is well managed and strategically directed. However, a number of lessons emerge from its activities that can be applied to both improving strategic direction and management in Uganda and elsewhere. These lessons also have utility for other key players operating in conflict reduction and peace-building activities. Among the critical aspects of strategic management and direction of relevance are:

- the vision, role and direction of DFID Programmes;
- the effective allocation and management of resources;
- the improvement of performance and monitoring;
- enhancing DFID's capacity for effectiveness and reputation as an international development organisation.¹³

Analysis of lessons-learnt for DFID Country/Regional and Thematic Programmes derived from the Ugandan Experience

6.2 Good practice suggests these should be pursued within a framework which emphasises:

- Strengthening national structures and the development of national solutions;
- Careful attention to detail, to strategic management, and to adopting a long-term perspective;
- Maintaining/building a supportive international environment and constructive regional setting.

Specific lessons regarding policy and project activities include:

DFID and HMG

6.3 Effective communication and co-operation between HCs and DFID offices in-country increases the possibilities of bringing leverage and influence to bear on critical programming issues. The close co-operation between the two in Uganda has enabled pressure to be brought to bear on SSR and UPDF abuses in the north and also, equally importantly, to persuade the GoU to negotiate with the LRA. Joint HMG work also persuaded LRA representatives to communicate with the GoU. This approach of joined-up working has lessons elsewhere where working relations may not be as closely integrated.

¹³ These principles were taken from the DFID Management Board's TOR on DFID's website (see: www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/mbtors.asp).

6.4 A further HMG lesson is that relations between in-country desks and Whitehall can potentially have important programme implications. It appears that the official HMG position on the ICC and its activities in Uganda do not necessarily tally with the view on the ground that ICC indictments would be likely to be detrimental to short-term peace efforts. If these fears were borne out it could seriously hamper the Programme.

6.5 The HMG CPP framework of funding with its yearly cycles and administrative demand, and country rather than regional focus, does not appear to be suitable for the type of multi-year projects undertaken in Northern Uganda that require longer time frames. This also applies to other country programmes.

6.6 Last, are the PSA-derived goal/purpose used in Uganda sufficiently precise and measurable to be meaningful indicators of progress in Uganda and other conflict-affected countries? *

6.7 According to current best practice, indicators should meet SMART criteria – they should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. They should also:

- be based on focused consultations with those partners and social groups most affected by an initiative;
- be informed by the widest possible dialogue with affected populations to ensure socially-responsible programming;
- incorporate 'leadership' indicators which are integral to an effective strategy.

DFID and other international donors

6.8 A lack of common donor approaches or strategies in terms of programmes directed at conflict in the North has hampered progress. In Uganda, there are a host of cross-cutting projects and programmes which are not necessarily connected and in some instances are duplicative. Common frameworks or understandings on areas of co-operation/delineation are vital for effective assistance, Uganda suggests. However, there are positive lessons in terms of co-ordination in Uganda that DFID could take on board. The Troika that has co-operated closely to take forward peace efforts in Uganda is the type of mechanism that could be duplicated in other countries.

DFID and national governments

6.9 Experience in Uganda suggests that the influencing of national governments is critical to make progress on conflict reduction and peace-building. Leverage, political pressure, incentives and influence have been brought to bear on certain issues such as UPDF indiscipline through the Defence Review and also training and advocacy on human rights. However, widespread suffering continues unabated in the North including continuing UPDF abuses in the camps and elsewhere.

* The overall aim of the PSA is the "elimination of poverty in particular through achievement by 2015 of the Millennium Development Goals". The PSA sets out targets that the DFID needs to research by 2008 and helps DFID assess whether its on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

DFID and CSOs

6.10 A lesson from Uganda is that INGOs leading CSO projects are not necessarily the best way forward. In Uganda there have been complaints from national CSOs regarding ineffective oversight. Over time, as the security situation and the needs of the affected population allow, the largely emergency relief mode of assistance relying on the work of INGOs to implement projects should be replaced by an approach in which national governments and CSOs play the leading role. Until then, basic services provided by INGOs should be maintained while the development and strengthening of a viable local capacity is encouraged, sustained, and expanded.

DFID and INGOs

6.11 Links in Uganda with UN agencies and the IFIs have not always been fully developed. In part this can be said to be due to the late arrival of some UN agencies in response to the crisis that unfolded in the North. DFID Uganda was one of the first international governmental agencies to respond. Further, it is understood that there have been differences in emphasis on appropriate responses to the crisis in the North. A lesson from this is that an important priority in DFID's strategy should be to establish early co-operation mechanisms to compliment and co-ordinate strategic analysis, programme and policy priorities, resource allocations, and responses over the long-term.

DFID and regional co-operation

6.12 The regional elements of DFID programming in Northern Uganda have paid dividends including the KM engagement with civil society in Sudan to persuade LRA there to return to Uganda to surrender, and also GoS and GoU contacts to address the issue of LRA bases in Sudan. These examples underline the lesson that many conflicts in Africa and elsewhere have significant regional dimensions and can only be addressed with cross-border links at the level of civil society, the national level, and through regional initiatives and organisations. The latter mechanism has not yet been fully utilised in Uganda but may need to be if peace efforts continue to be stalled.

DFID and cross-sectoral/project engagement

6.13 A lesson from Uganda is that co-ordination is vital with the UN and other donors in ongoing conflicts. In particular, in key areas such as civilian and child protection and IDPs where individual donors may have limited leverage. This includes information-sharing and co-operation over politically sensitive transitional strategies and human security approaches to move IDPs out of the camps.

6.14 The above findings also point to lessons for DFID Uganda and other actors involved in conflict reduction and peace-building.

Recommendations for DFID Uganda

6.15 Increase support for key national government departments supposed to be engaged with conflict reduction and national recovery.

6.16 Continue constructive and functioning links with the UN, the IFIs, and other donors, including bodies and individuals with responsibility for child protection and other vulnerable groups, to step up advocacy and political pressure.

6.17 Consider engaging more with regional organisations, initiatives, mechanisms, and actors both in terms of conflict reduction efforts and peace-building.

6.18 Increase monitoring of key issues such as IDPs and war-affected children with other agencies to design transitional strategies and innovative approaches to move IDPs out of dysfunctional camp settings.

6.19 Continue to push for shared donor approaches and co-operative strategies particularly in relation to critical areas such as IDP protection, women, children and peace-building strategies to end violence.

6.20 Maintain continued oversight of CSO projects and consider further or new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and strategies in areas where there may be under-performance.

6.21 Draw upon expertise and experience, including from other developing countries, to derive lessons-learnt and ideas that can be applied to areas in Uganda where less progress is being made or new interventions may be required.

Lessons for other actors

6.22 The UN should consider coherent framework strategies for early and timely interventions that co-ordinate and complement the efforts of national actors and other stakeholder groups in on-going conflicts.

6.23 The situation in Uganda seems to indicate that a heavy reliance on narrow 'military solutions' such as Operation Iron Fist often have only limited utility in bringing conflict to an end even when the threat in military terms is small. The LRA had at its height only a few thousand fighters. Even though the GoU has intermittently engaged in peace efforts, a lesson that might be learnt here is that multi-dimensional approaches that acknowledge and address the wider political, social, and cultural issues including reconciliation, human rights and protection, offer the best chance of reducing violent conflict in the long-term. They also have the capacity to deal with the root, structural and trigger factors that lead to violent conflict. The lack of understanding and engagement of the GoU in promoting reconciliation, national recovery, and development, which is being left to donors and other agencies, is an area of concern.

6.24 A lesson from Uganda is that CSOs need to maintain pressure on, and constructive engagements with governments, despite the risks involved if they are to change prevailing attitudes in government and elsewhere in terms of impunity, corruption, abuse, and denial of human rights. At their early vulnerable stage of development, support and advocacy from donors and other international agencies is vital. Uganda suggests there are poor long-term prospects of peace-building and conflict reduction if CSOs are unable to maintain momentum.

Identify possible areas for future DFID follow-up work in conflict reduction and peace building

6.25 CICS believes that DFID Uganda's work is directed at the right targets. There are no obvious areas of activity within its conflict reduction and peace-building remit that are not being covered to some extent. However, the Programme might benefit from re-orienting the focus on certain aspects of projects. These are outlined below:

- Support to reintegration including continued support for MDRP;
- More focused and robust advocacy may be necessary to break deadlocks in countries in conflict. Uganda points to the need in the face of a long-term humanitarian emergency for donors to work together even more to draw attention to human rights abuses and a culture of impunity, and in the case of Uganda, to one of the most serious IDP situations in the world. Exposure of such issues by the current UN Representative of the Security General for the human rights of IDPs, and in the UNSC by the UK, which pushed for the destruction of homes to be discussed in the SC, can be achieved despite opposition from other states;
- More efforts directed at the mainstreaming of gender awareness. This should be directed at analysis of conflict and peace-building projects, and the policies of the international community, and Ugandan stakeholder groups;
- Further efforts to promote shared awareness, information, and understandings of the severe conditions in IDP camps. Also, there is a need to develop pragmatic transitional strategies to overcome chronic suffering;
- The elaboration of detailed implementation support plans to be undertaken if peace efforts led to a cease-fire or agreement, including DDR and confidence-building;¹⁴
- More support to the identification and implementation of appropriate justice and reconciliation strategies, particularly to strengthen local strategies and promote greater understandings at the national level. A particular target should be reconciliation initiatives at the national level;
- Elements in the UPDF and some politicians have vested interests in the conflict continuing. Are there corruption and good governance initiatives which can be undertaken that might begin to address this?.

¹⁴ For options in terms of international support to grouping and demobilising LRA see: Dylan Hendrickson, Anton Barre, Morten Petersen, and Bernard Phillips, 'Scoping of Options and Issues for the Establishment of an International Presence in Support of an LRA Gathering', King's College, London: DFID, Uganda Office, 25 September 2004.

7 KEY QUESTIONS

What were the objectives of DFID Uganda's programmes in Northern Uganda, and how did they change over the period?

7.1 The objectives of DFID's Uganda programmes are covered in section 4. DFID objectives on programmes have not changed substantially over time. The originally formulated objectives seem to be generally well targeted and thought through. However, there is evidence of changing emphasis in response to changing circumstances on some programmes. In the case of, for example, the transition from Save the Children Denmark to SCiU. ARLPI objectives have reoriented from a heavy engagement in peace talks and with the LRA to an emphasis on issues such as cross border links, community-coping mechanisms, and women and non-violent conflict reduction. Where other organisations have sought to engage with the LRA and the peace process, as at MEGA FM, there has been further evidence of altered objectives and lines of programming.

When was conflict reduction and peace building explicitly recognised as an objective of the DFID Uganda programme?

7.2 This was recognised in 1999 through the 'Conflict Reduction Strategy for Acholiland' and re-affirmed in 2003 through the 'Conflict Analysis and Strategy for Acholiland.'

To what extent did DFID's programmes contribute to Uganda's progress towards conflict reduction and peace building? Were there any elements that contributed negatively? Opportunity costs / counterfactuals to consider?

7.3 The first part of this question is covered in Section 5. In terms of the second part, there is little evidence that the DFID Programme has contributed negatively. However, possible negative ramifications could be postulated in terms of whether DFID support to some CSOs has created a situation where they have failed to develop independence and are dependent on DFID and internationals for guidance and thus may not be sustainable. Generally speaking this has not been the case – indeed DFID Uganda has given NGOs space to develop lines of work without interference that it would not necessarily see as a priority.

7.4 A further potential negative revolves around the proliferation of external agencies in the North. There is evidence that the rush of donors, INGOs, and NGOs into the North over the past year, in particular seeking niches, has led to the development of assistance for which there is not necessarily a need. However, there is no evidence that this particular criticism could be levelled at DFID.

7.5 DFID may wish to consider, as stated earlier, whether the approach of sub-contracting management to INGOs to supervise local NGOs is the most effective approach in some contexts or whether there are mechanisms that could improve on existing arrangements.

7.6 A greater emphasis on a 'military solution' is another option. Would greater support to countering the LRA and in particular the capture of Kony create opportunities for peace? The USA has provided intelligence and logistical support to the UPDF, but the UK has not pursued this kind of strategy or direct support to the UPDF. A contributory factor has been the fact that many of the fighters in the LRA are children. Further, there is a danger that greater military engagement might have further humanitarian implications for civilians in the North. While the taking of Kony might have the impact of leading to the crumbling of the LRA – as with UNITA – and a ceasefire/peace deal, this is by no means certain with the possibility of an equally ruthless commander emerging.

To what extent did DFID attempt to make / succeed in making conflict reduction and peace building more pro-poor?

7.7 A fundamental rationale for DFID engagement in ending the conflict in the north is for pro-poor objectives. Poverty levels in the North are the highest in the country and DFID analysis suggests that the conflict is the single most important reason that poverty has persisted. This has underpinned DFID Uganda making the recruitment of conflict advisers and the development of conflict interventions a priority.

7.8 The work directed at child protection and other child issues under UNICEF and SCiU is directed at a constituency that is inherently poor – disadvantaged children and child soldiers – and this programming has some explicit pro-poor dimensions. Indeed, the depth of poverty in the North means that virtually all programming potentially has an impact on the poor.

How successful was DFID in working with the other donors on conflict reduction and peace building?

7.9 DFID has worked successfully with other donors on many aspects of conflict reduction/peace-building. The greatest success has been the Troika and the valuable work that the UK has undertaken with other donors in supporting the Betty Bigombe process. The three donors have managed to co-ordinate their support in an effective manner.

7.10 A possible shortfall has been the alleged reluctance to connect or fully inform other donors in terms of the Bigombe process, but if this is the case this can probably be justified, at least until recently, on the limits to manoeuvre this would have involved. However, by summer 2005 the case for widening peace efforts regionally or internationally, or indeed both, has probably become a strong one.

7.11 On a number of conflict reduction/peace-building projects that DFID is engaged in there have been informal lines of support and co-operation. There has been cross donor consultation and support on projects relating to ARPLI, AC, and MEGA FM, for example. It is understood through interviews with the major donors in Uganda, that DFID Uganda has good informal lines of contact with other donors.

7.12 However, it would appear that it has proved difficult to engage in coming up with a strategy or approach that links donor programmes. It is understood that DFID has pressed for this type of approach, but efforts have not proved entirely successful although the EC has compiled a matrix of donor activities. One of the areas of difficulty has been disagreements as to what extent the situation in the North justifies moving ahead with development or national recovery. The EC takes the position that the time has come to plan and start implementing such an approach, and UNDP seems to take a similar position, but other donors emphasise this less.

7.13 While donors have co-ordinated approaches to press the GoU on some key issues, such as the Amnesty Act, they have not been fully effective in areas such as the illegal eviction of communities from their land, the longstanding plight of IDPs in camps, and UPDF human rights abuses.

Did DFID have explicit gender objectives in its Northern Uganda Programme and how successful was DFID in incorporating gender into it?

7.14 Evidence of a gender approach can be found in some of the project activities and in internal recruitment and organisation. For example, regarding the former, ARLPI has noted that women's capacity to engage in non-violent approaches to conflict will be enhanced. This will be done through increasing collaboration and learning between women's networks in the region. However, DFID does not have explicit gender objectives in its Northern Uganda programme.

7.15 Some projects, such as those co-ordinated by SCiU and UNICEF, have taken account of gender issues in accordance with institutional practices. And there is some evidence of more representation of women in positions of authority than would have been the case without DFID support. MEGA FM, for example, has a high representation of women in various levels of its media work. However, at the board level there is only one woman. However, the general impression formed was that in many organisations supported by DFID, traditional perceptions that men should take the lead in directing work still had some force.

7.16 In assessing the various projects and looking at objectives, goals, purposes, and OVIs, there is limited reference to gender. DFID Uganda, in addressing a serious humanitarian situation in the north, has engaged with and addressed gender and gender-related issues, but in an unstable conflict/emergency situation it has not specifically prioritised a gender approach. The fact that DFID has not prioritised such an approach does not mean that its support is not having an impact on women. However, there may be opportunities for DFID to give consideration to targeting more certain gender and related issues. Gender issues related to the IDP camps could be an area of greater engagement. It was estimated in October 2003 that about 80% of the IDPs are women and children.¹⁵ The costs of a lack of support for gender issues in the camps across many agencies have

¹⁵ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Poverty Eradication Action Plan 2004/5-2007/8, Kampala, 2004, p.105.

seen the continued suffering of women, neglect of children, damage to family structures, and ill-health. There seems to be little evidence of rigorous gender specific approaches to female dependents of ex-combatants and their reintegration into communities or camps. They encounter particular difficulties in re-establishing themselves in communities, and in finding husbands and livelihoods, due to gender prejudices and tend to become outcasts.

7.17 DFID programming in terms of gender might consider:

- A greater emphasis on women's engagement in peace-building.
- Women protection issues could be given greater priority particularly in the camps.
- Reintegration of female dependents of ex-combatants needs to be targeted and supported systematically.
- DFID-supported projects would benefit from a greater representation of women.

What lessons can be drawn for the future of DFID programmes in conflict reduction and peace building? For donors and other governments?

7.18 See recommendations section 6.2 onwards, which addresses this question.

What further work could usefully be done to arrive at more objective and robust conclusions?

7.19 Surveys into the extent to which CSO interventions, as through CSOPNU, are succeeding in influencing public perceptions of the conflict and opportunities for peace.

7.20 Research into the structures and approaches of donor co-ordination and how they might be enhanced or improved.

7.21 Reviews of INGO and CSO co-operation and co-ordination in Uganda and opportunities for improvement.

7.22 Suggestions as to how stronger advocacy and influencing positions can be established with the support of DFID.

ANNEX I

RECOMMENDATIONS ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS IN THE NORTHERN UGANDA PROGRAMME

Amnesty Commission

- Support to the AC by donors and others need to be stepped up. There is a strong case for a more joined-up donor approach to supporting the AC, particularly in relation to the GoU, which seems to be increasingly dismissive of the AC.
- A strategy for engaging with the AC at a time when the ICC is increasingly active and indictments potentially damaging to the amnesty process.
- Boosting the capacity of the AC to take on more of its remit and overcome its resource and expertise shortfalls would be extremely useful, not least with MDRP underway.
- The amnesty process needs to be strongly linked with traditional justice and reconciliation processes.

Bigombe process and peace efforts

- More support for Betty Bigombe if current peace efforts are persevered with. One idea put forward was a Secretariat to assist her along with wider national and regional engagement.
- A revitalised or new track to renew peace efforts if the Bigombe process is terminated.
- Renewed confidence-building to re-establish a degree of LRA trust and an exit strategy for commanders and troops.
- DFID engagement in the above tracks in conjunction with other key players.

MEGA FM

- The placement of a new consultant or DFID support to assist MEGA FM in its development and strategic direction.
- Continued DFID engagement in MEGA FM including DFID possibly sponsoring programmes on MEGA FM to maintain a stake and give opportunities to engage with the authorities when required.
- DFID to consider adopting a stronger advocacy role in support of MEGA FM.
- There may be a potential DFID contribution in supporting training or greater understanding of the role of the media in a democratic society directed at local authorities and the UPDF.
- MEGA FM to undertake more programming on issues of public services, accountability, and rights.
- Measures to progress MEGA's independence and to encourage bolder approaches and more risk-taking on controversial issues.

SCiU

- ❑ Stronger measures are required in Uganda to reduce the stigmatisation of groups like night and street children and ex-child soldiers in communities and with respect to the authorities. Despite the efforts being made by DFID and other donors and stakeholders to highlight the situation of children and young people, they continue to be targeted and suffer the consequences of neglect and abuse. This implies that greater advocacy and publicity is required to draw attention to these abuses and exert pressure on those abusing to stop.
- ❑ Consideration of how SCiU can adopt a more effective co-ordination role if efforts at internal restructuring/re-organisation are not successful.
- ❑ Measures to ensure that CSOs engaging in child peace-building issues are not experiencing shortfalls in funding and resources, as seems to be currently the situation.

KM

- ❑ KM should continue to contribute, along with other CSOs, in engaging in regional efforts to build peace through its networks. Given past efforts of the KM in engaging regional actors, there may be a role for KM to assist if Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) countries, for example, have a role in any revitalised peace efforts or peace-building. KM contacts in these countries and advocacy could draw attention to cross-regional opportunities for peace.
- ❑ KM could have a future role in reaching out to the LRA in order to keep the options for a sustainable peace alive if the Betty Bigombe peace efforts falter.

CSOPNU

- ❑ Mechanisms for developing common positions need to be strengthened within CSOPNU.
- ❑ CSOPNU needs to continue to exert increased pressure from within Uganda for peace in Northern Uganda and national reconciliation. CSOPNU, like other CSOs supported by DFID, should take a robust position in bringing pressure to bear on the authorities for peace building.
- ❑ Local ownership of CSOPNU needs to be strengthened. The internationals are the main drivers of many of the activities of CSOPNU. There is a feeling that local NGOs have failed to take ownership of the network.
- ❑ The relationship between steering committee members and the membership at large needs to be improved. In 2003, in recognition of shortfalls in capacity/co-ordination, CSOPNU set out to improve its capacities through recruiting a full time co-ordinator, training selected staff, and improving communications over a 18 month period. This has led to improvements, but it would seem there is further progress to be made.
- ❑ DFID, some CSOs suggested in interviews, could play a stronger role in terms of sharing information and facilitating links to other organisations, such as other donors.

ARLPI

- ❑ Some of ARLPI's suggestions for re-focused work are useful and are worth supporting including women's capacity to engage in non-violent approaches to conflict, coping mechanisms for people in camps, peace through cross border approaches, and a re-engagement in any new peace talk track.
- ❑ A restructuring, re-energising, and strengthening of the organisation following the exit of key staff. It is understood that this is underway.
- ❑ Thought needs to be given to whether, as ARLPI has expanded and gained in national and international prestige, there is emphasis, to some extent, on institution building at the expense of its grass roots work. The using of peace prize funds to build a peace centre could be arguably better diverted to project work.

UNICEF

- ❑ Child protection needs to be further strengthened in conjunction with the placement of other agency protection officers who are being deployed.
- ❑ Further advocacy and training needs to be directed at the UPDF, militias, and the LRA to protect children.

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Internal review of DFID's engagement with the Conflict in Northern Uganda

Terms of Reference for a consultancy for DFID's Evaluation Department

BACKGROUND

1. Across a range of indicators Uganda's progress since the mid nineteen eighties has been remarkable. High levels of personal insecurity and political instability, such a feature of Uganda's early post independence era, declined dramatically in the country during the nineteen nineties. Economic growth since 1991 has averaged 6.5% per annum and has benefited the poor. Over the period 1992-2002, absolute poverty¹⁶ was reduced in Uganda from 56% to 38%. Commitment to poverty eradication remains strong.

2. However, against this positive background, the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment of 1999 found that the poor see conflict and insecurity as a continuing major cause of poverty. The 2002 Household Survey showed that poverty levels in the north were 68%, 30% above the national average. Parts of northern Uganda, particularly the Acholi sub region, have been affected by conflict involving the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) for much of the last 18 years. The LRA, under the leadership of Joseph Kony, has been active since late 1987 and emerged out of the remnants of Alice Lakwena's "Holy Spirit Movement" (HSM).

3. Decades of war have had a severe impact in the area in both socio-economic and psychosocial terms. A key feature of the LRA insurgency has been the targeting of civilians and the abduction and forced conscription of children in large numbers (over 20,000 of which approximately 8,000 remain unaccounted for). Over 1.4M people have been internally displaced by the conflict and are heavily reliant on humanitarian assistance. Key public services such as health and education have been severely disrupted and the recruitment and retention of skilled public servants is a major problem in the affected districts. Levels of private sector investment are low. In 2002 the conflict spread to Eastern Uganda causing widespread displacement and the destruction of livelihoods and property in the districts of Kaberamaido, Soroti and Katakwi.

4. Over the last 12 months the permissive environment for the LRA in southern Sudan has fundamentally changed with the signing of the south Sudan peace agreement and ongoing military action by the UPDF in areas of the south with the agreement of Khartoum. Over the last six months approximately 1,200 LRA combatants have come out of the bush and several senior LRA commanders have either been killed or captured. However it is still too early to judge whether this means that the LRA is irreversibly weakened. Since late 2004 attempts to initiate dialogue and develop a peace process have been ongoing led by former Uganda minister Betty Bigombe, with political, technical and financial support from the UK, Netherlands and Norway. There is some evidence to suggest that the LRA may be looking for exit strategies and that the Government is again willing to allow non-military options to also be pursued but the process is extremely difficult and fragile. The recent involvement of the International Criminal Court, which has now begun formal investigations in northern Uganda, has also added a new, and uncertain, dimension to conflict dynamics.

¹⁶ Measured as the proportion of households falling under a nationally defined definition of poverty

5. In 1999 the British High Commission and DFID Uganda conducted a joint analysis of the conflict and subsequently developed a "Conflict Reduction Strategy". This was updated in June 2003. This document has guided HMG response to the conflict and is attached at Annex 1. The Goal of UK support has been, in line with our wider PSA targets, to contribute to "a sustained reduction in the number of people whose lives are affected by violent conflict and a reduction in the potential sources of future conflict". The purpose of our involvement has been "the provision of appropriate, timely and effective support to conflict reduction and peace building in Northern Uganda". Against this we have supported a range of activities which have been clustered around interventions in the following core areas:

i. Development of closer co-ordination arrangements, common understandings and approaches

- Founding member of a Kampala based Donor Technical Group on northern Uganda
- Development of common approaches and influencing strategies with BHC Kampala and other like minded donors (most notably the Netherlands, Norway and Ireland)

ii. Promotion of human rights, international humanitarian law, accurate information and the role of civil society

- Support to Save The Children Fund work in northern Uganda on child protection, rights and the reintegration ex-child combatants
- Support to the NGO umbrella group Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda – national level research and advocacy.
- UNICEF - funding for the placement of a senior child protection officer in northern Uganda
- Turn key funding and development of FM Radio in northern Uganda

iii. Targeted support to reconciliation and stabilisation processes with an emphasis on locally driven initiatives

- Support to the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
- Support to the UK based diaspora group – Kacoke Madit
- Support to the Uganda Amnesty Commission
- Technical, financial and logistical support to peace attempts by Mrs Betty Bigombe

6. Since 2001 DFID Uganda has spent approximately £1.7M million in support of conflict reduction and peace programmes in the north, and will have spent a total of approximately £2.7 million when the existing programme ends in March 2005. In addition to these specific activities FCO, MoD and DFID staff have spent a great deal of time trying to influence Government of Uganda (GoU) approaches to the conflict and working to build common positions with other donors. The UK also sits on a local committee of the World Bank Multi-Country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (MDRP), which is shortly to provide support to the Amnesty Commission (over three years) for support of the resettlement of former combatants.

7. In addition to its conflict reduction portfolio DFID Uganda has provided approximately £11M in humanitarian assistance in northern Uganda over the past two years. Details are available in the DFID Uganda humanitarian strategy (attached at Annex 2).

OBJECTIVES

8. Against this background, the objectives of the consultancy are:
- To review DFID's programme in northern Uganda from 1999 to present with a view to reaching preliminary conclusions on its effectiveness in assisting the conflict reduction process and in relation to their stated objectives including poverty reduction.
 - To draw out relevant lessons for the strategic direction and management of DFID's conflict reduction programmes in Uganda and elsewhere, and for other key players in this area, and to identify possible areas for future DFID follow-up work in conflict reduction and peace building.

KEY QUESTIONS:

9. In preparing the report, the consultant(s) will consider the following key questions:
- What were the objectives of DFID Uganda's programmes in northern Uganda, and how did they change over the period?
 - When was conflict reduction and peace building explicitly recognised as an objective of the DFID Uganda programme?
 - To what extent did DFID's programmes contribute to Uganda's progress towards conflict reduction and peace building? Were there any elements that contributed negatively? Opportunity costs/counterfactuals to consider.
 - To what extent did DFID attempt to make/succeed in making conflict reduction and peace building more pro-poor?
 - How successful was DFID in working with the other donors on conflict reduction and peace building and pro-poor objectives?
 - What lessons can be drawn for the future of DFID programmes in conflict reduction and peace building? For donors and other governments?
 - What further work could usefully be done to arrive at more objective and robust conclusions?

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

10. The main resource for the review will be the consultant's time, hence work will mainly be done on secondary sources, including the Uganda Country Assistance Plan(s), existing evaluations and other reviews, project completion reports etc. A preliminary list of documents will be prepared prior to the consultancy.

11. The consultant(s) will work closely with DFID Uganda, The Africa Conflict & Humanitarian Unit, Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department, Policy Division, the DFID Conflict Network and Evaluation Department (EvD). EvD will help assemble the data and work with the consultant(s) on methodology and general progress of the review. EvD will arrange desk space and DFID access to 1 Palace Street HQ if required.

12. Interviews will be carried out with accessible DFID colleagues who were engaged in the programme during the period, and with other donors, as far as feasible. One visit to Uganda will be undertaken as part of the review. The timing of this visit will be agreed with DFID Uganda.

13. Assessment of impact of the programme will be possible only to a limited extent and will inevitably be somewhat subjective. The consultant(s) will liaise with EvD on methodological issues (e.g. briefing meeting to agree methodology, inception report discussion etc) as the review progresses.

TIMING

14. The consultant(s) will allocate up to 25 days to the review over the period May to the end of July 2005. We expect the level of consultant to undertake this assignment to be a mix of 'Senior professional' and 'Research assistant'.

OUTPUTS

15. An inception report will be presented after 5 – 7 days work following an initial literature review. The inception report will be 3 – 5 pages long, and will make proposals for the conduct of the review during the main phase. The Inception Report should be sent electronically to John Murray (j-murray@dfid.gov.uk).

16. The final report will not be more than 25 pages long, excluding annexes. A draft report will be presented to the Heads of Evaluation Department, Africa Conflict & Humanitarian Unit, DFID Uganda and Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department not later than 13 July 2005. Following discussion a final report will be completed by 25 July 2005.

DFID CONTACT POINTS

17. The Review will be managed by the Sustainable Development and Governance Team in DFID's Evaluation Department - contact will be John Murray. Other key DFID contacts will be DFID Uganda - Graham Carrington, Africa Conflict & Humanitarian Unit - Phil Evans and the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department - Mike McCarthy.

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK Government department responsible for promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty. The central focus of the Government's policy, based on the 1997 and 2000 White Papers on International Development, is a commitment to the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals, to be achieved by 2015. These seek to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

DFID's assistance is concentrated in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, but also contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development in middle-income countries, including those in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

DFID works in partnership with governments committed to the Millennium Development Goals, with civil society, the private sector and the research community. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies, and the European Commission.

DFID has headquarters in London and East Kilbride, offices in many developing countries, and staff based in British embassies and high commissions around the world.

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