



Gulu University

For Community Transformation

Background

From the socio-political and economic perspective, the establishment of Gulu University was issue-based and demand-driven to respond to the much needed high-level education and research, and to stimulate sustainable development in the war-ravaged region of Northern Uganda.

Vision: To be a leading academic institution for the promotion of rural transformation and industrialization for sustainable development.

Mission: To expand access to higher education, provide quality professional training for delivery of appropriate social services and conduct research geared towards rural transformation and conservation of biodiversity.



Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies

~ IPSS ~

In 2007, Gulu University elevated the Centre for Conflict Management and Peace Studies (CCMPS), established in 2003, to the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS).

IPSS works in line with the University's motto *For Community Transformation* and envisions peace and conflict from both the professional and practitioner's perspective. It is a new instrument for civil-society based peace building promotion with an interdisciplinary, action-oriented and community-centred approach.

IPSS engages in research and community outreach activities in the fields of peace, conflict, strategic studies, development, humanitarian interventions, and any other discipline that is relevant to the peace interests and needs of the community.

It is an innovative intervener and provides a forum for training and experience of new tools in peace work.



IPSS involves the community and promotes networking for peace work on national, regional and international level.



~ IPSS ~

Vision

To be a leading centre for academic and practical excellence in peace, legal and strategic studies.

Mission

To provide excellent quality research, training and dissemination that shall promote academic and practical growth in peace, legal and strategic studies through professionalism and sustainable response to social community conflicts.

Motto

Transforming communities for sustainable peace.





Community Outreach Peace Project ~ COPP ~

The Community Outreach Peace Project is a new peace initiative of Gulu University's Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies. It is currently cooperating with the German Development Service (ded) and its Civil Peace Service Program.

COPP's Overall Goal is to strengthen community peace building mechanisms for sustainable peace and development through community participation.

COPP targets the students of Gulu University, representatives of civil society, NGO staff; the marginalized, vulnerable, disadvantaged and susceptible groups as well as those who are interested to enrich their knowledge in conflict management and peace building skills either for private or professional reasons.

In this context, COPP adopts an innovative multi-programming approach for productivity in the community transformation process that blends theory and practice in peace training activities. It seeks to link knowledge and practice of peace as a larger component of development.



Mission

A peace project to transform communities in Northern Uganda for positive and sustainable peace through research, documentation, dissemination and outreach programmes.



Vision

A community enjoying sustainable peace and development.



Values

Integrity
Team spirit
Transparency
Trust
Accountability



Objectives

To support community-based peace-building development initiatives.

To research, document and disseminate relevant information in the field of peace building and conflict transformation.

To enhance advocacy and networking that can influence policies and decision making.

Peace Education Movies Series

A variety of movies has been shown to a students' audience at IPSS and Main Campus of Gulu University.

The movies gave insight into conflict situations in different parts of the world and showed efforts for peace building, reconciliation and struggles for the respect of human rights. They also highlighted the topics of political leadership and good governance as well as the role of culture and tradition in conflict and peace.

The objectives were to inform and sensitise the audience about issues of concern in the field of peace and conflict, to encourage critical reflection and to induce a learning process through the sharing of perspectives, ideas and thoughts.





Radio Peace Education

For a vital civil society which has the capacity to promote positive change, the capability of making informed choices is crucial.

The radio, is a useful tool for the dissemination of information and knowledge and for community sensitisation.

COPP developed a programme for Radio Peace Education, where lecturers, students and experts held a number of sessions at Mega FM, informing the community about issues concerning peace, conflict and human rights. The listeners were encouraged to call, ask questions and participate in the debate.

The discussions were held in the local language, Acholi, to make the programme understandable to the majority of the listeners.

Story Telling

The two decades of armed conflict have changed almost all aspects of people's lives in Acholiland. This goes along with a loss of cultural norms and values.

The richness and wisdom of Acholi culture used to be passed over to the next generation at the fireplace, the *wang-oo*. Due to camp life and the dangers of war, nowadays *wang-oo* only practiced in rare occasions.

In order to preserve and revive Acholi culture, COPP records the stories of elders - the "living encyclopedias" - and makes them accessible to the public.



Public Debates and Dialogues

Building peace and promoting development is a task for all members of the society and should not be restricted only to the people. Public Debates are a forum for dialogue and community participation in the formation of policies.

COPP organised a number of debates and dialogues on the themes of gender, land disputes, culture and national reconciliation, among others.



Baseline Survey

A Baseline Survey was conducted in Amuru and Pader districts, with the objectives of introducing COPP to the community, identifying the needs, problems, concerns, fears and priorities of the community, identifying development intervention gaps, providing data for further project activities and providing a stepping stone for community involvement in development programmes and in initiatives towards return, resettlement, re-integration, rehabilitation, reconstruction.

The survey covered various main and satellite camps in the two districts and informed about demography, economy, provision of services through governmental and non-governmental programmes, health situation and education.



Conflict Analysis Workshops

Northern Uganda is ravaged by a variety of conflicts, out of which the resolution of some is more pressing than of others.

COPP organised and facilitated Conflict Analysis Workshops in Pader and Amuru with the local district officials to identify the different conflicts, and thereby identify a starting point for intervention and planning of conflict resolution activities.

Community Exchange Programme

While the LRA war has mainly affected the Acholi sub-region, people from other districts also suffered from violence and poverty caused by the armed conflict. Although now there is a situation of relative peace in Northern Uganda, conflicts in and between communities frequently erupt, especially along district and tribal boundaries.

The Community Exchange Programme targets this situation in order to promote harmony and understanding between the communities at district borders and to explore options for sustainable conflict resolution.

Joint activities are organised in order to improve communication between the communities, create new and positive bonds and to find a way of resolving problems together.

The programme has so far been piloted in the border regions of Pader-Kotido, Gulu-Oyam and Amuru-Adjumani.



International Peace Day 2008

Together with the people of Ajulu IDP camp, COPP organised the International Peace Day's celebration in September 21st, 2008 at Sir Samuel Baker's Fort (Fort Patiko). Cultural dances were performed, a public dialogue took place and the evening was filled with cinema and disco.





Gulu Walk

Since 2005, thousands of people in Gulu and in other cities all over the world have been walking to raise awareness for the war in Northern Uganda and the situation of the children growing up in such an environment.

COPP also showed presence during Gulu Walk 2008, October 25th. The theme of the March was *Youth and Children in Peaceful homes*.



16 Days of Gender Activism

The 16 Days of Gender Activism, December 2008, ran under the theme *Community can prevent sexual violence, men can make a difference*. COPP organised a public debate on the engagement of men in the prevention of sexual and gender based violence.

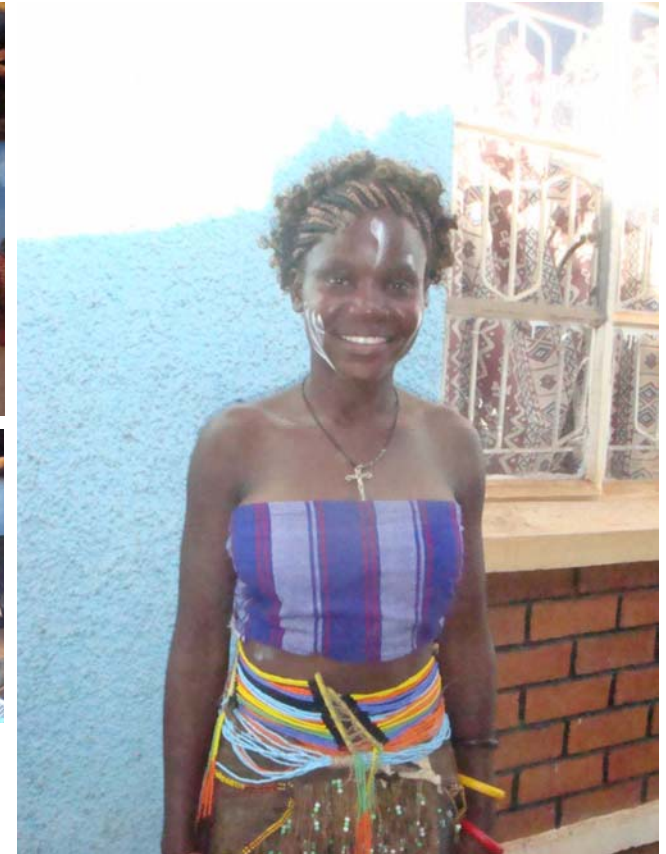


Human Rights Week 2008

COPP contributed to the Human Rights Week 2008, December 3rd-10th, organized by various stakeholders. A movie was screened for a student's audience, followed by a discussion about the international dimension of human rights and their enforcement.

Cultural Gala 2008

In cooperation with the Student's Guild of Gulu University, COPP organized a Cultural Gala in 2008. The students' cultural associations presented traditional dances and a debate was held about the potential of culture for peace building.



Provincial Peace Week 2009

The fourth Provincial Peace Week, organized by Gulu Archdiocese Nebbi, Arua and Lira (GANAL) and the Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), took place in Gulu from January 13th-17th. The theme of the week was "Combatting Poverty – Building Peace". COPP facilitated group discussions on poverty, peace, conflict and culture, providing thereby a forum for the community to participate in development and peace building.



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